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CHARTER PETITION

Revised Petition With
Material Revisions from the Petition
Authorized by the California State Board of
Education on
January 14, 2016

For the Revised Term July 1, 2016
Through June 30, 2021

Submitted to the California State Board of
Education and the California Department of
Education Charter Schools Division
on April 13, 2016

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This petition seeks authorization to create a new school called Ross Valley Charter (“RVC” or “Charter”). It has been developed by parents, teachers and supporters of Ross Valley School District’s Multi-Age Program (“MAP”). RVC philosophy and curriculum will grow from the 19-year history and experience of MAP. This petition is supported by all six of the current MAP teachers and most of the current parents from the Program, along with other community members. Parents of more than 220 prospective students have already signed forms indicating interest in enrolling their children at RVC.

Mission

Ross Valley Charter will provide a public school option that leverages a progressive education model emphasizing deep inquiry and exploration, hands-on, immersion-based experiences, and active learning-by-doing approaches to prepare students to collaborate effectively in teams, think critically, seek information to solve problems, and be lifelong learners and culturally competent members of our diverse global community.

Core Beliefs

- Students learn best when constructing their own knowledge in a social context that offers rich and challenging content, collaboration with fellow students and parents, and teachers acting as facilitators of this process.
- Student voice, choice, and engagement are critical to supporting student agency and knowledge construction.
- A thriving and joyful learning community has inclusive decision-making structures that foster teacher and parent engagement, collaboration, and shared ownership of the committed work of graduating students who are critical thinkers and creative problem solvers prepared for the 21st Century.

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

- **Multi-age Classes**—Two grade levels will be 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.
- **Transdisciplinary Curriculum**—Curriculum will rely heavily on project- and problem-based learning, long-term units of study integrating many curricular areas, going in depth and examining a topic from many angles, and increasing students’ engagement and interest.
- **Deep Learning Through the Gift of Time**—Students will be given long blocks of time in which to work on projects. Teachers will have long weekly meetings in

which to collaborate, discuss student progress, and engage in professional development.

- **Educating the Whole Child**—The focus will not be just on academic growth, but also physical and social-emotional development.
- **Connected Community**—Students, teachers, staff, and parents will all be considered integral parts of the school community. Teachers will focus on developing a strong community within the classroom as well as within the whole program, and will encourage students to see their role as a member of the larger community as well.
- **Authentic Assessment**—Students' ongoing classwork and projects will be assessed to show academic growth and progress toward Common Core State Standards, which reflect the importance of 21st Century skills such as problem solving, collaboration, and communication.
- **Collaboration and Collective Responsibility**—Students will have many opportunities to work with a partner or small group. Teachers will spend time working together weekly to plan curriculum and events.
- **Differentiation**—With two grade levels in one classroom, teachers will focus on individual learning progress, customizing instruction and guidance to accommodate students' needs.
- **Cultural Competency**—Students will learn about people from different cultures and backgrounds throughout history and contemporary society. Teachers and students will model appreciation for differences and inclusion of all members of the school community.
- **Choice**—Students will 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 will do at least one service learning project per year that the students help to identify, plan, and carry out.

RVC Graduate Profile

We strive for RVC graduates to embody the following attributes:

- **Independent and Confident**—RVC students will approach situations with confidence and drive. They will be self-motivated and take initiative for their own learning. They will be comfortable taking risks. They will understand themselves as learners. They will learn how to own responsibility for their own learning, develop curiosity about the world, and know how to find information to satisfy their curiosity.
- **Collaborative Problem Solvers**—RVC students will have interpersonal skills enabling them to work productively with a partner or group. They will be perceptive listeners and consider others' ideas. They will integrate multiple perspectives. They will apply what they've learned, and seek new information, in order to solve unfamiliar problems.
- **Effective Communicators**—RVC students will read, write, speak, and listen with confidence and compassion. They will have strong skills to express themselves accurately and clearly. They will know that different situations call for different behaviors and modes of communication.
- **Creative and Adaptive Thinkers**—RVC students will know that there are many ways of approaching a situation. They will explore multiple possibilities and go beyond seeking a single right answer. They will apply what they've learned, look for patterns, exercise their imaginations, and develop innovative solutions. They will have confidence to try something, have it fail, learn from it, then try something different. They will remain curious.
- **People who Persevere**—RVC students will embrace challenges. They will be willing to work through difficult situations and problems. They will recognize the benefits that come from persisting, and will experience satisfaction from working hard and achieving their goals. They will understand that learning is a lifelong pursuit. They will be motivated to be lifelong learners.
- **Caring Community Members**—RVC students will take responsibility for their own behavior. They will be 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 will have a sense of belonging and recognize our interconnectedness.
- **Solid in Foundational Academic Skills**—RVC students will be strong readers and enjoy reading for pleasure and to seek 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 and science skills and will be able to apply them appropriately in novel problem situations.

Background

Two decades ago, a group of parents in the Ross Valley School District (“RVSD” or “District”) and the RVSD created an Alternative Education Program, organized under Ed Code 58500, now known as the Multi-Age Program (“MAP”). The Program has grown and matured over the years, providing a progressive education alternative to the students of Ross Valley.

MAP currently has six classes serving about 130 students in kindergarten through fifth grade, and a waiting list of about 100 students throughout these grade levels. The MAP teachers are a stable, experienced, and committed staff, each with 5-19 years of experience teaching in the Program.

In April 2015, the RVSD school board voted to discontinue MAP’s status as an Alternative Education program. Creating a charter school appears to be the best way to ensure that free, multi-age, progressive education remains available to the many Ross Valley families who desire it for their children. The motivations of the development team are to:

- Enroll about 220 students in nine classes to better meet the large demand for progressive, multi-age education in the District.
- Ensure autonomy so teachers can focus on working together to develop innovative curriculum and instruction.
- Clearly define and articulate the parents’ and teachers’ responsibility and authority in the school’s governance.
- Enable the adults in the school 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 the community with a rich and positive cultural diversity experience that is part of a 21st Century education.

Plan For Charter

Ross Valley Charter will enroll any interested students who live within the District boundaries, and 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).

RVC plans to rent a facility within District boundaries.

RVC 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 Roni Adams, Rana Barar, Kate Crist, Conn Hickey, Kristi Kimball, Chris Lyons, Sharon Sagar, and Andrea Sumits. Information about their relevant experience is included in Appendix F.

RVC will manage its own business services and will strive to pay its teachers using the District's pay scale. In addition to the current six MAP teachers, who have all signed this petition and intend to teach at RVC, the Charter School will hire three additional classroom teachers. It will also hire a full-time School Director and an Office Manager, as well as several part-time or contracted teachers and other employees or contracted specialists: ELD Teacher, Intervention Teacher, Spanish Teacher, Family Outreach/Support Coordinator, PE Teacher, Counselor, and Yard Supervisors. (Job descriptions are in Appendix I.) RVC would like to continue a relationship in order for the YES Foundation (www.yestokids.org) to provide Music and Art classes for RVC students, but if that doesn't happen, RVC will fundraise for Art and Music teachers, possibly phasing them in over time.

This petition is signed by six teachers who intend to teach at RVC. Their signatures appear in Appendix A.

The RVC Development Team seeks to have a positive, cooperative relationship with its authorizing entity, whether District, county, or state.

This proposed material revision starts with the RVC petition as amended by the technical amendments and condition contained in the CDE staff report and recommendation to the State Board of Education. These changes have already been approved by CDE staff.

ASSURANCES AND AFFIRMATIONS

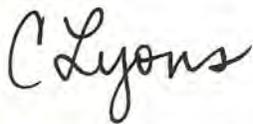
As the authorized lead petitioners, we, Chris Lyons and Jason Morrison, hereby certify that the information submitted in this petition for a California public charter school to be named Ross Valley Charter (hereinafter “RVC” or “Charter” or “Charter School”), and to be located within or near the boundaries 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 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 students will be admitted 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, non-college 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)]
- 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. (“ESEA”)
- 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]



Chris Lyons

Date



Jason Morrison

Date

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This petition seeks authorization to create a new school called Ross Valley Charter (“RVC”). It has been developed by parents, teachers and supporters of Ross Valley School District’s Multi-Age Program (“MAP”). This petition is supported by all six of the current MAP teachers and most of the current parents from the Program, along with other community members. More than 220 parents have signed forms indicating they are interested in enrolling their children in RVC. The school’s philosophy and curriculum will grow from the 19-year history and experience of MAP.

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 acts as a guide and facilitator who collaborates, co-learns, and researches with the students. It was also modeled after the similarly multi-aged Ohlone Elementary School, a 600-student Alternative Education School in the Palo Alto School District.¹ The District approved three classrooms of the Innovative Learning Community in 1996 as an Alternative Education Program under California Ed Code 58500, to be housed at Manor School. This program, later renamed the Multi-Age Program, has grown and matured, providing a progressive education alternative to the students of Ross Valley for 19 years.

MAP currently has six classes serving about 130 students in kindergarten through fifth grade, and a waiting list of about 100 students throughout these grade levels. The MAP teachers are a stable, experienced, and committed staff, each with 5-19 years of experience teaching in the Program. 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 have transitioned well when they have moved on to middle school, as reflected in their grade point averages.

In April 2015, the RVSD school board voted to discontinue MAP’s status as an Alternative Education Program. Creating a charter school appears to be the best way to ensure that free, multi-age, progressive education remains available to the many Ross Valley families who desire it for their children. The motivations of the development team are to:

- Enroll about 220 total students in nine classes to better meet the large demand for progressive, multi-age education in the District.
- Ensure autonomy so teachers can focus on working together to develop innovative curriculum and instruction.

¹ <http://ohlone.pausd.org/welcome>

- Clearly define and articulate the parents' and teachers' responsibility and authority in the school's governance.
- Enable the adults in the school 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 the community with a rich and positive cultural diversity experience that is part of a 21st Century education.

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, county, or state 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, county, or state to address any questions or concerns about this charter petition in order for an authorizing agency to make the findings necessary for charter approval for the proposed five year charter term from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2021.

PETITIONER TEAM

The members of the Charter Petitioner Team and RVC Board of Directors and their areas of expertise are summarized in the following chart, including a list of named founders, to date. More detailed information about each team member’s relevant background can be found in Appendix F, along with information about additional consultants and advisors who have worked to develop this petition.

Name	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	RVC Board Member	RVC Identified Founder
Roni Adams		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X		X	
Rana Barar	X		X			X		X			X			X	X
Liz Canning		X	X				X				X	X			X
Kate Crist		X	X						X			X		X	
Conn Hickey	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	
Kristi Kimball		X	X		X			X				X		X	X
Kathy Lake	X					X		X				X	X		X
Chris Lyons		X	X			X		X	X	X		X		X	X
Jason Morrison	X					X	X	X				X			X
Sharon Sagar	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Andrea Sumits		X	X			X		X		X				X	X
Arielle Sumits	X						X	X				X	X		X
Chris Tony							X					X			X
Rebecca Wicker		X	X	X				X							X
Jennifer Wolf							X								X
Guadalupe Alvarez											X				
Christina Amini	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							
Scott Hummel		X	X				X					X			
Emily Korrell		X	X	X				X							
Barry Price		X	X		X			X							

Ross Valley Charter Material Revision Petition

Name	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	RVC Board Member	RVC Identified Founder
Deb Read							X						X			
Amanda Sheeren		X					X			X						
Adam Smith	X				X								X			
Erika Smith		X	X					X			X					
Sonya Stanley	X	X	X							X						
Alice Treves		X						X								
Angela Vidinsky		X					X					X				
Nina Watson		X	X					X								
Belynda Webb Marks							X						X			
Catherine Woodman												X				
Madeleine Wood		X										X				

ELEMENT 1 – EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Governing Law: (i) “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)

Mission

Ross Valley Charter will provide a public school option that leverages a progressive education model emphasizing deep inquiry and exploration, hands-on, immersion-based experiences, and active learning-by-doing approaches to prepare students to collaborate effectively in teams, think critically, seek information to solve problems, and be lifelong learners and culturally competent members of our diverse global community.

Educational Philosophy

Multi-Age Program Heritage

Ross Valley Charter is based on the practices and experiences of the Ross Valley School District’s Multi-Age Program and its 19 years as an Alternative Program. Elements of this heritage inform the contents of this charter petition and references to MAP appear throughout the document for that reason.

MAP is rooted in the tradition of progressive education. According to Alfie Kohn², renowned expert on education, schools that practice progressive education incorporate these eight important components: attending to the whole child, community, collaboration, social justice, intrinsic motivation, deep understanding, active learning, and taking kids seriously. Progressive education programs emphasize learning by doing, curriculum focused on thematic units, problem solving, group work and development of social skills, collaborative and cooperative learning projects, integration of service learning projects, de-emphasis on textbooks in favor of varied learning resources, assessment by evaluation of children’s projects and productions, a more

² <http://www.alfiekohn.org/article/progressive-education/>

flexible curriculum influenced by student interest, and intrinsic motivation. MAP has embodied these features since its inception.

A recent Stanford University study has shown that student-centered practices found at progressive schools highly benefit all students. "The numbers are compelling," said Stanford University Professor and SCOPE Faculty Director, Linda Darling-Hammond. "Students in the study schools exhibited greater gains in achievement than their peers, had higher graduation rates, were better prepared for college, and showed greater persistence in college. Student-centered learning proves to be especially beneficial to economically disadvantaged students and students whose parents have not attended college."³

RVC will emphasize the following practices:

- **Multi-age Classes**—Two grade levels will be 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.
- **Transdisciplinary Curriculum**—Curriculum will rely heavily on project- and problem-based learning, long-term units of study integrating many curricular areas, going in depth and examining a topic from many angles, with a goal of increasing students' engagement and interest.
- **Deep Learning through the Gift of Time**—Students will be given long blocks of time in which to work on projects. Teachers will have long weekly meetings in which to collaborate, discuss student progress, and engage in professional development.
- **Educating the Whole Child**—The focus will not be just on academic growth, but also physical and social-emotional development.
- **Connected Community**—Students, teachers, staff, and parents will all be considered integral parts of the school community. Teachers will focus on developing a strong community within the classroom as well as within the whole school, and will encourage students to embrace their role as a member of the larger community as well.
- **Authentic Assessment**—Students' ongoing classwork and projects will be assessed to show academic growth and progress toward Common Core State Standards, which reflect the importance of 21st Century skills such as problem solving, collaboration, and communication.

³ <https://ed.stanford.edu/news/new-research-shows-effectiveness-student-centered-learning-closing-opportunity-gap#sthash.z47NjQop.dpuf>

- **Collaboration and Collective Responsibility**—Students will have many opportunities to work with a partner or small group. Teachers will spend time working together weekly to plan curriculum and events.
- **Differentiation**—With two grade levels in one classroom, teachers will focus on individual learning progress, customizing instruction and guidance to accommodate students' needs.
- **Cultural Competency**—Students will learn about people from different cultures and backgrounds throughout history and contemporary society. Teachers and students will model appreciation for differences and inclusion of all members of the school.
- **Choice**—Students will 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 will do at least one service learning project per year that the students help to identify, plan, and carry out.

RVC Core Beliefs:

- Students learn best when constructing their own knowledge in a social context that offers rich and challenging content, collaboration with fellow students and parents, and teachers acting as facilitators of this process.
- Student voice, choice, and engagement are critical to supporting student agency and knowledge construction.
- A thriving and joyful learning community has inclusive decision-making structures that foster teacher and parent engagement, collaboration, and shared ownership of the committed work of graduating students who are critical thinkers and creative problem solvers prepared for the 21st Century.

Additional RVC 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.
- 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, and music.

- Parents play an essential role in their children's education and they are welcome to be active and integral members of our school community.
- It is vital for teachers to have time to collaborate with colleagues and parents.

How Learning Best Occurs

RVC will be based on the Multi-Age Program's practices and philosophy, specifically that 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.
- 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.

RVC Graduate Profile

RVC values skills that motivate students to be lifelong learners. We strive for RVC graduates to be:

- **Independent and confident**

RVC students will approach situations with confidence and drive. They will be self-motivated and take initiative for their own learning. They will be comfortable taking risks. They will understand themselves as learners. They will learn how to own responsibility for their own learning, develop curiosity about the world, and know how to find information to satisfy their curiosity.

- **Collaborative problem solvers**

RVC students will possess interpersonal skills enabling them to work productively with a partner or group. They will be perceptive listeners and consider others' ideas. They will integrate multiple perspectives. They will apply what they've learned, and seek new information, in order to solve unfamiliar problems.

- **Effective communicators**

RVC students will read, write, speak, and listen with confidence and compassion. They will have strong skills to express themselves accurately and clearly. They will know that different situations call for different behaviors and modes of communication.

- **Creative and adaptive thinkers**

RVC students will know that there are many ways of approaching a situation. They will explore multiple possibilities and go beyond seeking a single right answer. They will apply what they've learned, look for patterns, exercise their imaginations, and develop innovative solutions. They will have confidence to try something, have it fail, learn from it, then try something different. They will remain curious.

- **People who persevere**

RVC students will embrace challenges. They will be willing to work through difficult situations and problems. They will recognize the benefits that come from persisting, and will experience satisfaction from working hard and achieving their goals. They will understand that learning is a lifelong pursuit. They will be motivated to be lifelong learners.

- **Caring community members**

RVC students will take responsibility for their own behavior. They will be 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 will have a sense of belonging and recognize our interconnectedness.

- **Solid in foundational academic skills**

RVC students will be strong readers and will 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 and science skills and will be able to apply them appropriately in novel problem situations.

What It Means To Be An Educated Person In The 21st Century

Ross Valley Charter 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 a coherent body of knowledge⁴ that facilitates knowing how to access information, acquiring knowledge, and applying it to solve novel 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 be culturally competent 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.”⁵

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 RVC to enable students to become self-motivated, competent, lifelong learners.

Students To Be Served -- Target Student Population

RVC will educate kindergarten through fifth grade students who reside in the Ross Valley School District (San Anselmo and Fairfax, California) and students who reside outside the RVSD as space allows. We anticipate that most of our students will go on to middle school at White Hill Middle School.

⁴ See Shift 3 in “Key Shifts in English Language Arts”, Common Core State Standards, <http://www.corestandards.org/other-resources/key-shifts-in-english-language-arts/>

⁵ 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.

If RVC receives apportionment for students in a Transitional Kindergarten ("TK") program, it will accept applications for TK children who will have their fifth birthday between September 2 and December 2. The Charter School's TK will be the first year of a two-year kindergarten program that will use a modified kindergarten curriculum that will be age and developmentally appropriate, to be developed prior to the first day of instruction.

The Multi-Age Program has attracted students from across the Ross Valley School District for 19 years, and has had a waiting list of about 100 students⁶ Program-wide for many years. In 2015-16, MAP will consist of six classes: two kindergarten/1st grades, two 2nd/3rd grades, and two 4th/5th grades, with an expected enrollment of around 135. We expect most of the MAP students who are still in elementary school in 2016 to apply to Ross Valley Charter. The parents of 84 current MAP students (94% of those who will still be in elementary school in 2016) have completed forms indicating that they plan to apply to RVC (Appendix B).

We plan to begin the 2017 school year with 222 students. This will consist of 3 blended TK/K/1st classes of 24 students, three 2nd/3rd classes of 24 students, two 4th/5th classes of 26 students, and a ninth class of 24 students in either 2nd/3rd, 3rd/4th, or 4th/5th, depending on the first year applicant pool. The budget is based on this class being 3rd/4th grades.

We feel confident that we can attract this many new students on an ongoing basis because MAP has had an average of 45 kindergarten applications each year during the last five years (see chart below). This has resulted in a waiting list that has averaged 24 students per grade over the last five years. As of the date of the petition submission, the parents of 222 students have signed forms indicating that they are meaningfully interested in attending RVC (see Appendix B).

In January 2016, RVC opened its first enrollment period for the projected fall of 2016 opening and received 277 applications.

After the first year we are confident that we can attract the 36 kindergartners every year required to keep our enrollment at our target of 222. The following table shows the number of Kindergarten applicants over the last five years, which indicates that enrollment assumptions are reasonable.

	Total Number of MAP applicants	Number of Available slots
2011	45	20
2012	53	20
2013	57	20

⁶ As of March 2015; the District has not released application and wait list numbers since then.

2014	24 ⁷	20
2015	48	24

Over the last five years, MAP has had an average of 45 kindergarten applications, 9 more than the 36 needed to sustain RVC’s ongoing enrollment numbers. Although the charter school will be somewhat different than the MAP program on which it is based, we believe that this demand is reflective of a similar demand for RVC. As can be seen in Appendix B, the parents of 39 prospective kindergartners have already signed forms indicating they are meaningfully interested in attending RVC in 2016, with very little marketing or outreach.

RVC will have much more marketing ability than the MAP program has had and will have a marketing budget. RVC will also be able to attract students from neighboring districts. We are confident that parents in nearby school districts will be attracted by the prospect of a small, free public school that offers a proven progressive education.

MAP parents have been very satisfied, keeping their children in the Program as reflected by average year over year retention rate of 97.5% for all grades over the last 5 years, which includes parents moving out of the district. This data is illustrative of the satisfaction that can be created among parents in the kind of educational and community model we are proposing for RVC.

School Year	% Retained
2010-11	98.7%
2011-12	98.1%
2012-13	96.6%
2013-14	97.3%
2014-15	97.1%
5 Yr. Avg.	97.6%

RVC will strive to enroll a student population that is somewhat more ethnically and socio-economically diverse than the population in the Ross Valley School District. We believe that we will be able to attract students from underserved communities in Ross Valley, who would particularly benefit from the progressive education approach of RVC. We will work to achieve a percentage of ethnically and socio-economically diverse students greater than the District average. For details on how RVC 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.

⁷ In 2014 no outreach was done to area preschools and no mention of the Program was made at District kindergarten orientations, which resulted in lower than normal applications.

The following chart shows the English Learners and Free or Reduced Price Meal recipients among the current students in the Ross Valley School District. RVC will attempt to attract students in these subgroups greater than the District average. As part of our commitment to Cultural Competency described below in Element One, we believe it is important to educate our students in a diverse student community. 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 Charter School.

	Ross Valley School District	Ross Valley Charter (target for 2017-2018) out of 222 students
English Learners	3.9% (90 students)	6% (14 students)
Free or Reduced Price Meal recipients	9.9% (230 students)	12% (27 students)

The following chart shows the racial and ethnic diversity of the current students in the Ross Valley School District.⁸ RVC 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% (234)

⁸ 2014-2015 demographic information from <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>

Components of Our Learning Environment

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

Multi-age Classes

RVC students will be in classes with two grades together (typically K/1st, 2nd/3rd, 4th/5th). They will stay with the same teacher for two years, which will enable them to develop a deep, trusting relationship with their teacher. It also will mean they typically 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 will be no need for a "getting to know you" period; students will immediately pick up where they left off academically, with teachers knowing what they need to focus on from the start. Multi-age 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 will also get the opportunity to alternate between being a younger and an older student in their classes. The younger students will learn from the older and more experienced students. The older students will model behavior and help welcome the younger children, which will support our school culture of students learning from one another and relying upon each other. When a student asks a teacher a question, the teacher will encourage the student to ask a peer who will be able to help. Children will 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. RVC students will become comfortable being in a community with learners at all stages, and with this exposure, they will gain respect for individuals learning at their own pace. They will 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 are able to achieve.

Transdisciplinary Curriculum

The idea of transdisciplinary literally means beyond all the disciplines but connected to all the disciplines by a unifying issue or topic of inquiry. Basarab Nicolescu in *The Transdisciplinary Evolution of Learning*⁹ writes about a new kind of education for the 21st Century emphasizing four pillars:

⁹ http://basarab-nicolescu.fr/Docs_articles/AERA_April_1999.pdf

- Learning to know—This is the capability of making connections, adapting to changes, and knowing how to learn. Most notably, this refers to the inquiry-based approach to learning such as the scientific process or research and information fluency.
- Learning to do—Transdisciplinary learning is framed in the idea of project-based learning or performance tasks that demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge in a creative manner.
- Learning to live together—The interconnectedness of the world makes this aspect even more urgent for a need to be able to collaborate on a local and global scale.
- Learning to be—The life-long journey of self-discovery must be part of the process of learning.

Our students will enjoy conceptual learning from multiple perspectives. Transdisciplinary learning means that learning is presented without the boundaries of traditional subjects and across the disciplines wherever there are natural links. To accomplish this and help students to achieve deep learning, RVC teachers will frequently incorporate hands-on activities, project-based learning, field trips, visual and performing arts, and community events. The Common Core State Standards and related academic skills will form the basis of all instruction. Teachers will reflect together, adjusting instruction constantly to the learning needs of the students. Formative assessment will provide consistent, ongoing data on student progress and mastery of skills. When students are deeply engaged they will be 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.¹⁰

Project-based learning is one of the seeds that will help to grow our progressive educational philosophy. Students will work independently or collaborate with partners or in small groups to ask questions, formulate hypotheses, research, propose and determine solutions, and present them articulately. Children will be active participants in the construction of their knowledge, and will become deeply engaged and motivated. Project-based learning helps students develop important 21st Century Skills, such as the ability to work in teams, solve complex problems, and apply knowledge from one lesson or discipline to others.

An example of a transdisciplinary unit of inquiry is the K/1st 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

¹⁰ Strobel & van Barneveld, 2009; Walker & Leary, 2009; <http://www.edutopia.org/pbl-research-learning-outcomes> . “Project-Based Learning Research Review” (2012).

laws)". This might fall under a big idea such as "Information from human lives in the past informs decisions made today." Our K/1st students will hear and read stories from the Middle Ages, 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 ultimately will 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 will encourage him/her to pursue it and teach others.

In-depth studies such as these will engage our students and help them to fully understand and investigate a topic over several months. We will incorporate many disciplines including math, writing, reading, science, art, music, and movement into the unit. Many language arts, math, science, and social studies standards will be addressed through similar transdisciplinary units.

Deep Learning Through the Gift of Time

Students will benefit from the flexible use of time during the school day and across the school year. Our students will have long learning blocks to facilitate in-depth thinking, conversations, collaboration, and creative projects. The RVC daily schedule will include instructional learning blocks of 1.5-2 hours, while maintaining more instructional minutes than are required by law. The students will also engage in long-term units of study and projects, lasting weeks or 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 will delve deeper into the subject, make more connections, and revise thinking. Eventually they will be 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 Csikszentmihalyi¹¹ calls the "flow state," in which learners become engrossed in learning without regard for time. 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.¹² RVC will have long blocks of time, and will give students the opportunity to return to projects and activities over many days or weeks in order to investigate topics deeply.

¹¹ Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, Harper and Row, New York.

¹² Marzano, Robert J. (2003) *What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Print.

Having two years in the same class is also a gift of time. Because teachers will have two years with each student, and the second year with the same teacher is when many students make tremendous growth, teachers will be able to 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 many benefits of this practice¹³, often called “looping,” including:

- Teachers gain extra teaching time. “Getting-to-know-you” time becomes virtually unnecessary during the second year.
- Teacher knowledge about a child’s intellectual strengths and weaknesses increases in a way that is impossible to achieve in a single year.
- Long-term teacher/student relationships improve student performance.
- Students have reduced apprehension about the new school year and the new teacher after the first year.
- Students reap benefits from time spent on developing social skills and cooperative group strategies in subsequent years.
- Looping permits students to get to know one another well, facilitating social construction of knowledge.
- Long-term relationships result in an emotional and intellectual climate that encourages thinking, risk-taking, and involvement.
- English language learners adjust to their new school and become comfortable with their teacher, developing confidence in their newly acquired language.
- Looping encourages a stronger sense of community and family among parents, students, and teachers.

Recess is an opportunity for children to relax and guide their activity in different ways. With long 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 play in optimal brain development.¹⁴ “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.”¹⁵

Adults will also benefit from long periods of time to be creative and productive. Our master schedule will include clustered specialists so that students at the same grade span (i.e. 4th/5th grade) will have a rotation of classes (for example: PE, Art, Spanish) on the same morning. This will allow the teachers of that grade span to plan together for an uninterrupted, extended period every week while their students are rotating through

¹³ <http://www.brown.edu/academics/education-alliance/sites/brown.edu/academics/education-alliance/files/publications/looping.pdf>

¹⁴ Siegel, Daniel, M.D., foreword for Cozolino, Louis (2013) *The Social Neuroscience of Education: Optimizing Attachment and Learning in the Classroom*, WW Norton & Company.

¹⁵ 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.

those classes. In addition, students will have an early student release (1:15 pm) every Wednesday so teachers can meet from 1:30-4:00 pm. These long weekly staff meetings will allow teachers and the School Director to manage the weekly “nuts and bolts” as well as engage in deep conversations, do all-school planning, work in smaller groups to have discussions about individual students, analyze assessment results, and engage in 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 will allow the teachers to improve student learning. More information about Professional Development for our teachers is found later in this section.

Educating the Whole Child

Our goal is for RVC 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 social-emotional learning (“SEL”) can have a positive impact on 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 the following:

- 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
- Reduced emotional distress: fewer reports of student depression, anxiety, stress, and social withdrawal¹⁶

RVC will use likely the Toolbox social-emotional learning curriculum (published by Dovetail Learning, Inc.) to teach children 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 will remind students to use their “breathing tool” to center and calm themselves, or their “garbage can tool” to let go of insignificant irritations, for example.

Through regular class meetings, students will have the opportunity to process social and emotional issues, problem-solve, and resolve conflicts. Students will sit in a circle, and each child will get a turn to give input, ask a question, or give suggestions. In the lower grades, teachers will also use puppets to demonstrate challenging situations and

¹⁶ <http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/outcomes>

how they might be handled. In the middle grades, students may use role-playing. By the time students are in the upper grades, they will have gained confidence in confronting uncomfortable situations and will be encouraged to use “I statements” and ask for what they need to resolve conflicts. Older students will be able to help younger students to negotiate interpersonal conflict.

Our teachers will devote attention to the emotional needs of individual students. They will contact parents when they feel that would be helpful, and will consult with our counselor to help when children need more assistance than the teacher can provide. RVC recognizes 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 will be set up to accommodate this. Children will not be assigned desks nor required to sit in one place for long periods. Rather, our classrooms will 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 will sit in a circle in order to facilitate group discussions, and other times they will be focused on, and facing, the teacher for reading aloud or instruction. Sometimes the students will use white boards, notebooks, or clipboards at the rug, and other times they will 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 will be given 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 will be incorporated into the students’ learning by using movement games, activities, dance, yoga, and opportunities to be outdoors for a quick run or game. This activity will sometimes relate to a unit of study, and will sometimes be 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.¹⁷

We understand the value and importance of nature, and incorporate outside learning when possible. For example, younger students may have an outside center as one of their choices, they may do a math game or activity outside, and they may take class walks to observe and appreciate the changing of the seasons or another science

¹⁷Medina, John (2009) *Brain Rules*, Pear Press. See also <http://www.brainrules.net/exercise>.

concept. Often, individual or small groups of students will choose to read, write, or work outside.

Connected Community

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

Students will eagerly anticipate and fondly recall our annual school events and traditions. These will include the following events and activities:

- Critter Carnival, in which each class will create 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 will plan and carve a jack-o-lantern together
- Gratitude Feast, in which each class will prepare a part of a homemade-in-the-classroom meal featuring fall season ingredients that they will 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 will 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 will 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 will come together to play, enjoy each other's company, and celebrate our graduating fifth graders with meaningful rituals

The students will feel a sense of security and joyful anticipation in the repetition of these annual traditions, and they will experience them differently at each age and stage of academic development. The younger students will grow to appreciate the significance of these events, and will 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 soup at the Gratitude Feast.

Our annual Open House will be 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. Open Houses may include a medieval village, an ancient Hawaiian village, an ocean ecosystem, the National Parks system, an Australian ecosystem, a rainforest, a Gold Rush town, or Colonial Williamsburg.

Students will 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 will deepen their own understanding of the information they have learned.

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

Parents will be an integral part of the RVC community. The first and most important connection is between the parent, the student, and the teacher. Since this relationship is a two-year relationship for each child, teachers will have the opportunity to understand, with considerable depth, the parents' perspective and insights into their students and their learning preferences and needs.

We will also welcome and encourage parent participation in any aspect of the school that they find of interest. Parents may participate in the life of the School in a variety of different ways depending on what works for them. Some parents may serve on the Charter School's Board of Directors, helping to shape the future of the school. Others may serve on the Leadership Council, assisting with the day-to-day functioning of the school.¹⁸ There will be no requirement for participation. Typically, parents become involved because of the satisfaction they receive from being connected and part of the small learning community.

Some parents may help out regularly in the classroom (e.g., weekly, every other week, monthly), working with students and/or supporting the teacher. Teachers will give orientation meetings so parents will know how the classroom functions and how to assist children, in order to be informed participants in the classroom. Parents may 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, woodworking, and more. Some parents may assist with projects focused on specific classrooms or the entire school, class plays and events, or Open House events; some may drive on field trips; others may do committee or project work at home. We acknowledge that some parents will not be able, or will choose not, to participate. Volunteering will not be a requirement or expectation.

We realize that some parents, particularly those whose primary language isn't English, may feel intimidated about participating in school events or activities or helping in the classroom. Our Family Outreach/Support Coordinator will provide parents with the

¹⁸ 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.

support they need to engage in school events and activities of their choosing if at all: support for translation, child care, or timing of activities can make the difference between a parent being able to participate or not.

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

- 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.” Our experience has shown that beyond these benefits, parents often truly enjoy helping at school, and they develop positive relationships with children that last for years.

Authentic Assessment

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

Much of our students’ work will be based around projects. During project work times, teachers will continually assess students as they work individually, with partners, and in groups. Often at the end of a unit of inquiry, 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 as well as their ability to work collaboratively with others.

Students and teachers will maintain a portfolio of each child’s work throughout their years at RVC. Students and teachers will choose items to be placed in their portfolios and reflect on their experiences and growth during the school year. At year-end portfolio

review conferences, students, teachers, and parents will have an opportunity to reflect on and appreciate that year's growth and set goals for the next year. Graduating fifth graders will take home their portfolios as a representation of their growth and development during their elementary years.

Collaboration and Collective Responsibility

Collaboration will be important on many levels at RVC. We will 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 will continue to develop these skills as older students by participating in partner work and small-group projects. We will help students to process what worked well and what was challenging about working with others, and students will 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)."¹⁹

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

- 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
- Acknowledging others' skills, 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
- Checking for agreement and understanding
- Notifying others of changes or problems in a timely manner

¹⁹ Johnson, DW & Johnson, RT (1999). *"Making Cooperative Learning Work"*, Theory into Practice, College of Education, The Ohio State University.

- Making procedural suggestions to encourage progress towards goals

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

The RVC teachers will cherish time spent meeting together and collaborating. They know that they will 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 and their students. As a small staff, they will take the approach of “it takes a village to raise a child” and will consider their students to be everyone’s responsibility. They will keep an eye on children throughout the years, they will share information about them and their families that may be helpful, and they will 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.²⁰

Because teacher collaboration time is so highly valued by the RVC community of teachers and parents, we will structure our weekly school schedule to allow for clustered specialist classes so teachers at the same grade span will have common planning time each week. The schedule will also 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.

We also value parents and teachers collaborating together on behalf of the children. The National Parent-Teacher Association identifies shared power as an important factor in developing family-school partnerships, suggesting that families and schools mutually accept their responsibility as “equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.”²¹

²⁰ Commission on Effective Teachers and Teaching report to the National Education Association 2011. “*Transforming Teaching: Connecting Professional Responsibility with Student Learning.*”

²¹ Parent-Teacher Association, “National Standards for Family-School Partnerships.”
http://www.pta.org/files/National_Standards.pdf.

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 curriculum²².

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 must meet students where they are developmentally. Indeed, because of this significant span in ages, the imperative for implementing differentiated approaches is "hardwired," with the curriculum and teaching approaches reflective of this dynamic.

An example of differentiation is when our students will do independent reading sessions as part of our Reading Workshop. Students will choose books of their own interest and at their own independent reading level, as determined by individual assessments. The students might all be reading books from the same genre, such as Historical Fiction or non-fiction books, but each student will read a book at his or her own appropriate reading level. During Writing Workshop, students might be writing in the same genre, such as personal narrative or persuasive letters, but they will be focusing on different skills according to their own development, and may choose their own topic within a genre. We will expect children to progress at their own rate, and we will 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. Although we will meet students where they are developmentally, our goal is to support all students so they are able to meet or exceed the expectations of the Common Core.

Teachers will also organize centers, in which different activities will be happening in a class at the same time. Often these activities will be open-ended, so children can access them different levels, and either a teacher or a parent will be available at centers to provide support so that students can work at their appropriate level. Students may stay at a center for as long as needed to complete a task then move on to another center when they are ready. Working in centers will help students to gain confidence and independence so that when they reach the older grades, they will be able to manage their time while working independently or with a partner or small group. Students will learn to do what is needed to accomplish a task, and take initiative, without awaiting instruction from a teacher.

In the older grades, students will often work in collaborative groups to do research, create a project, and prepare to present their learning to others. Students may

²² Hall, Tracey. "Differentiated instruction." Wakefield, MA: National Center on Accessible Instructional Materials (2002).

contribute to the group effort by reading aloud text to the others, taking notes, having discussions, creating a poster or Prezi or other visual presentation, making a model, writing a song, making costumes, etc. Each group will approach their task based on the strengths and abilities of the students in the group, so the work will be naturally differentiated.

In addition, students may 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 typically accepted and embraced in multi-age classes, so competition and comparison is diminished. Rather, children will be encouraged to focus on and celebrate their own growth and improvement. Students will be taught that their intelligence can be developed through effort. They can focus on improvement instead of worrying about how smart they are in relation to their classmates. They will be encouraged to work hard to learn more and get smarter. They will learn that the goal is not immediate perfection; it is 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.²³ A brief explanation of what a growth mindset school looks like is in Appendix J. The MAP teachers have found that because they have celebrated students’ effort and progress, children seem to feel safe and relaxed in the classroom, and are able to appreciate the successes of themselves and others without as much feeling of competition. When students are able to focus on their own learning, they can make more growth.

The Common Core State Standards include a series of rigorous expectations for students in each grade level, and thereby provide benchmarks as to where students ought to be. These standards have become targets for all students to meet or exceed in our differentiated classes. Teachers will use a variety of assessment data to identify students that need additional support in order to reach the standards, and work with them individually and in small groups frequently and with targeted instruction.

Cultural Competency

The founding members of RVC are committed to the ongoing process of fostering the awareness, attitude, knowledge, sensitivity and skills necessary to attain cultural competence. We define cultural competence as the will and ability to create, nurture, and sustain authentic relationships across differences.²⁴ By adopting standards, policies, practices, and attitudes that support cultural competence, RVC intends to create a community that genuinely embraces diversity and values difference.

As a starting point, we believe it is critical to examine our own perceptions, prejudices, and biases. RVC stakeholders will use the following scale of cultural competency²⁵ to reflect on current levels of competency, and will engage in professional development

²³ <http://www.mindsetworks.com/webnav/whatismindset.aspx>

²⁴ Adapted in part from national diversity educator Gary Howard

²⁵ Culturally Proficient Inquiry: A Lens for Examining Educational Gaps by R. Lindsey, Stephanie Graham, R.C. Westphal and C. Jew. Published 2008 by Corwin Press

from E3—Education, Excellence, Equity, or a similar organization, to embark on a critical inquiry process about the impact of educational content, pedagogical methods, and assessment measures when working with a diverse population of learners.

Figure 1.1 The Tools of Cultural Proficiency

The Essential Elements					
<i>Standards for Planning and Evaluating</i>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess Culture: Identify the cultural groups present in the system. • Value Diversity: Develop an appreciation for the differences among and between groups. • Manage the Dynamics of Difference: Learn to respond appropriately and effectively to the issues that arise in a diverse environment. • Adapt to Diversity: Change and adopt new policies and practices that support diversity and inclusion. • Institutionalize Cultural Knowledge: Drive the changes into the systems of the organization. 					
Cultural Proficiency Continuum					
<i>Change Mandated for Tolerance</i>			<i>Change Chosen for Transformation</i>		
Destruction	Incapacity	Blindness	Pre-competence	Competence	Proficiency
<i>Eliminate differences.</i> The elimination of other people's cultures	<i>Demean differences.</i> Belief in the superiority of one's culture and behavior that disempowers another's culture	<i>Dismiss differences.</i> Acting as if the cultural differences you see do not matter or not recognizing that there are differences among and between cultures	<i>Respond inadequately to the dynamics of difference.</i> Awareness of the limitations of one's skills or an organization's practices when interacting with other cultural groups	<i>Engage with differences using the essential elements as standards.</i> Using the five essential elements of cultural proficiency as the standard for individual behavior and organizational practices	<i>Esteem and learn from differences as a lifelong practice.</i> Knowing how to learn about and from individual and organizational culture; interacting effectively in a variety of cultural environments. Advocating for others
<i>Reactive Behaviors, Shaped by the</i>			<i>Proactive Behaviors, Shaped by the</i>		
Barriers			Principles		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unawareness of the need to adapt • Resistance to change • Systems of oppression and privilege • A sense of entitlement 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture is a predominant force. • People are served in varying degrees by the dominant culture. • There is diversity within and between cultures. • Every group has unique culturally-defined needs. • People have personal identities and group identities. • Marginalized populations have to be at least bicultural. • Families, as defined by culture, are the primary systems of support. • The diverse thought patterns of cultural groups influence how problems are defined and solved. • The absence of cultural competence anywhere is a threat to competent services everywhere. 		

This inquiry process will help us to identify achievement and access gaps. The resulting honest and insightful discussions will lead to the adoption of actions and practices to help us meet the needs of traditionally underserved populations.

Culturally proficient educators understand that underperforming students have been underserved by the educational system. Conversations must shift from how students are underperforming to how stakeholders are underserving students and families. This shift is the first step in developing a pedagogy for closing the gap.

We believe that all students benefit when learning with and from people with different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. We plan to do outreach and build community relationships to encourage more ELL students and families to enroll in RVC. Additionally, promotional materials will be designed to attract families who value diversity and inclusiveness.

We will select, develop, and implement curriculum that reflects diverse perspectives and languages and provides inclusive, accurate portrayal of historical events and cultural groups. Teachers will encourage students to share their values and heritage and take pride in their cultural traditions. Students will be engaged in conversations and study to promote and develop their understanding of social justice issues. Furthermore, RVC students will take Spanish classes from kindergarten through fifth grade, which will include an appreciation of Spanish-speaking countries around the world.

RVC educators will strive to stay informed about, and sensitive to, the cultural needs of its students. We will encourage communication and participation by all parents to create shared expectations for educational success.

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.²⁶

“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*.²⁷

RVC values choice on many levels. Our parents will choose to send their children to RVC. Our teachers will choose to teach at RVC, and will have flexibility in how they

²⁶ <http://www.alfiejohn.org/teaching/cfc.htm>

²⁷ 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.

address the Common Core State Standards. Our students will 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, how to handle situations while working and playing with other children, what to make during Maker Time, etc. as well as which examples of work they'll place in their portfolios at the end of the year. We feel that regular opportunity to make choices empowers our students to be active, thinking participants at school, not passive recipients of knowledge.

Here are examples in which we will allow student choice in curriculum, learning, and classroom structure:

- At the beginning of each school year, students will participate in developing class agreements on behavior.
- During units of study, students may choose a particular aspect of a topic they want to learn more about.
- Each class will have regularly scheduled Maker Time so children can choose what project they'd like to work on, either individually or with others.
- Students often will 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 will be given choice on the topic they'll write about within a particular genre.
- Within Reading Workshop, students may choose the books they read.
- Students often will generate a list of ideas or options from which they make a choice. For example, students might choose the role they might assume in a period study such as the Middle Ages or Colonial America, a national park they want to learn more about, a poet they want to study, or organizations for which they could fundraise for or support the Care Share project.
- 4th/5th grade students will take turns being the class "cooks" and they will 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."²⁸

Educational expert Alfie Kohn 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

²⁸ Constance Kamii, "Toward Autonomy: The Importance of Critical Thinking and Choice Making." *School Psychology Review*, vol 20, 199 p. 387.

how (and when) their learning will be evaluated, how the room will be set up, how conflicts will be resolved, and a lot more.”²⁹ We believe it is important to allow children to make developmentally appropriate choices whenever possible to build that capacity and prepare them for adulthood.

Service Learning/Action

When students have understood a new concept or learned new skills, they demonstrate their understanding through taking action on what they have learned. This action often has a goal of applying the learning in the service of another person or group. Thus RVC students will choose a class action each year as a result of their learning, which takes the form of a community service. Hart’s Ladder of Participation³⁰ describes student-initiated action, supported and developed with adults, as the ultimate goal of community service, where a goal is to steer away from simply raising money, toward the performance of a true service.

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

Classes may choose service actions such as the following examples:

- Make 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)
- Visit local senior centers to sing to and visit with the residents
- Collect books for a low-income school in San Rafael
- Collect shoes for local residents and children in Nicaragua
- Collect bikes and scooters for local children in need
- Participate in a broom pull at the Marin Watershed District

RVC would like to establish relationships with local agencies and organizations such as The Canal Welcome Center or The Cedars to encourage future service learning. These activities provide real, meaningful assistance to those in need, and will help our students recognize their role as caring citizens of the world.

²⁹ Kohn, Alfie. 2006. *The Homework Myth*. Cambridge: Da Capo Press, at page 178.

³⁰ <https://ilk.media.mit.edu/courses/readings/participation-ladder.pdf>

Map Educational Program Data

Standardized test results are one method of assessing student achievement. Although MAP has placed more of an emphasis on authentic assessments and performance tasks than “fill in the bubble” tests, MAP students have performed similarly to other students in the District. In the past three years for which data are available, MAP students had the following results on the California Standards Tests (“CST”).

Math: Advanced or Proficient

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
MAP wide	80%	83%	84%
RVSD	81%	83%	80%

English-Language Arts: Advanced or Proficient

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
MAP wide	77%	87%	78%
RVSD	86%	86%	84%

Middle School Data

MAP students have adjusted well when they move on from 5th grade into White Hill Middle School. As a snapshot of how MAP students have transitioned 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	Greater than 3.50	Greater than 3.00	Greater than 2.50	2.49 or lower	Total Students
Former MAP students	74.2%	88.7%	98.4%	1.6%	62
All White Hill Students	66.5%	84.4%	94.1%	5.9%	675

Curriculum and Instruction

Ross Valley Charter 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 will be learned and reinforced using classwork that is inherently interesting to the children whenever possible. Skills and knowledge will be relevant and meaningful for students so they experience and acquire a love of learning.

The curriculum in our multi-age classrooms will be 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 will all be called upon to create songs, skits, poetry, dance, art, games, and other audience-interactive representations of students' knowledge. Students will teach each other on a regular basis, so they need to know their subject matter well. Teachers will collaborate on curriculum and instruction practices to ensure consistency over the six-year program.

Classroom Physical Environment

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

Students will not have individual desks. Instead, there will be 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 may be chosen by kids as working and playing areas.

Materials and supplies will be shared by students in each class. There will be a central area with pencils, paper, scissors, rulers, etc. supplied with the expectation that students can retrieve what they need when they need it and return it when they are finished. There also will be ample art supplies (markers, crayons, oil pastels, colored pencils, glue sticks, construction paper, paint, fabric, etc.) available for students to use as needed. K/1st and 2nd/3rd grade classes will also have "creation stations" stocked with a variety of 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 during Maker Time and as part of their academic learning.

Teachers' Role

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

RVC teachers will function as highly motivated guides, facilitators, and coaches. They will act more as a “guide on the side” than a “sage on the stage.” They will support student learning by presenting students with a question, problem, or situation, to work on together, puzzle it out, research, make mistakes, and continue trying. Teachers will provide support and resources, ask questions, and encourage dialogue. They will also facilitate discussions regarding process and collaborative skills. Teachers will encourage students to question and wonder about things, seek information, make connections, and support each other. Teachers will be on the lookout for students with a special interest in a topic that they might like to pursue individually, and will help to make time available for that pursuit.

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

The teachers will 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 the following:

- 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.³¹

Two of the founding teachers have attended multi-day trainings in project-based learning, and plan to use its theories and practices at RVC.

Our teachers will integrate and differentiate curriculum and instill life-long learning habits by encouraging students to look for the larger meanings in everyday events. Students

³¹ Buck Institute of Education website: www.bie.org

will often realize that new information from other curricular areas is helpful in making their current understandings more profound, and teachers will help them to see the connections between different aspects of a topic, or different topics altogether.

RVC believes that empowering teachers is critical as a strategy for implementing the Common Core State Standards. The Center for American Progress³² makes the following recommendations to districts implementing the standards:

- Create teacher leadership roles at the classroom, school, and district levels.
- Allocate time for teachers to collaborate.
- Create systems for embedded teacher professional development.
- Give teachers an active role in the selection and development of Common Core instructional materials.

RVC teachers will be expected to embrace the Common Core State Standards and will be given time and resources to do so.

English-Language Arts

RVC will have a well-developed, content-rich curriculum that will be consistent with the expectations in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English Language Arts and Literacy. Our balanced literacy approach will serve 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), and Donald R. Bear, et.al (Words Their Way, 2011), we will educate children with rich, literacy-based instruction. As students progress from “learning to read” to “reading to learn,” they will be exposed to greater amounts of informational reading through nonfiction texts in content areas across the curriculum. Students will learn to identify key ideas and details, appreciate the craft and structure of various texts, and integrate knowledge and ideas within a range of texts. The text types used in our classrooms will include stories (folktales, legends, fables, fantasy, myths, novels, etc.), drama (scripts), poetry, nonfiction, historical fiction, and scientific and technical texts.

Teaching guided by the expectations of the CCSS ensures that students will gain adequate exposure to a range of fiction and non-fiction texts and comprehension tasks. Students advancing through the grades will read grade-appropriate and increasingly complex texts, as outlined in the CCSS and further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.

³² <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education/report/2015/04/28/111762/teacher-leadership/> ;
April 28, 2015

Reading

Five out of six founding teachers have been trained at the Lucy Calkins Reading and/or Writing Institutes, Teachers' College, at Columbia University in New York. Our students will be guided by a consistent, common language for our approach to teaching reading and writing throughout the grades. For example, when we ask our students to choose a book at their "just right" level, they will know what we mean, no matter which grade they are in. Each classroom will have a well-stocked library, which will be leveled consistently using Fountas and Pinnell levels throughout grades K-5.³³ Students may visit other classes if they are looking for a particular book or author that their classroom doesn't have, and we will regularly add new books to our libraries to keep them up-to-date. Given that each teacher will read with and assesses our students' growth frequently over the two-year period in their classes, the teachers will be able to address students' needs on an individual level. Teachers will also keep records throughout each student's years in elementary school to observe their growth over time, and will discuss a student's progress with previous or subsequent teachers if that is needed.

Our goal is for each student to read at or above grade level. Teachers will systematically and explicitly teach decoding and comprehension skills throughout the grades, and will help to increase students' vocabulary through reading aloud, previewing new vocabulary, and reading with students individually and in small groups. We will teach students how to use context, as well as using roots and affixes, to derive word meanings. We also teach students to monitor their comprehension by going back to the text, using graphic organizers, and highlighting and annotating what they're reading to prepare for discussions. We will emphasize teaching students to gather evidence from a text to support a claim.

Teachers will monitor students' reading levels by assessing them several times each year, and will give additional focused instruction to students who are below grade level. They will encourage students to read books at their independent reading level to increase the volume of books they read and to increase fluency. They will also choose texts that are slightly above students' independent reading level to read closely with support, sometimes reading a text several times for different purposes. Teachers will support students who are struggling readers to ensure that they have access to the increasingly complex text that is expected at each grade level as part of Common Core.

During Reading Workshop, teachers will 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 particular genre like historical fiction, close reading of a non-fiction text). Then students will read independently for an extended, uninterrupted period of time (with reading times increasing as the students progress through the grades), while teachers confer with individual or small groups. All teachers will spend time at the beginning of the school year to ensure children understand the expectations of independent reading time so that students are focused on their reading and the teacher is able to work with students

³³ <http://www.fountasandpinnellleveledbooks.com/>

without interruption. Classes will work on building stamina so they can read for increasingly longer periods of time as the year progresses. At the end of Reading Workshop sessions, 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 will have a reading partner at a similar reading level, and they will talk regularly to discuss and compare various elements of their books. Students will sometimes read in book groups—several children with either the same or similar books, which they will then discuss.

Informational (non-fiction) texts will be read both during independent reading time, as part of transdisciplinary units, and read aloud by the teachers. Often during a unit of study, students will read both fiction and non-fiction texts related to the topic. Students will be specifically taught how to read informational texts, focusing on text features such as the table of contents, glossary, index, graphics, and maps, as well as text structures such as problem/solution, cause and effect, compare/contrast, and time sequence. Teachers will also focus on academic vocabulary that appears in a variety of content areas. By third grade, about half of the reading students will do at school will be non-fiction. Informational books and articles are an excellent source of grade-level appropriate complex texts that students will read regularly. Students who are reading below grade level will be supported so they can access these more challenging texts.

Teacher read-aloud time will be a very important part of our reading curriculum. Teachers will choose books or articles to read aloud to their classes that will complement their Science or Social Studies curriculum, demonstrate an author's craft, or simply provide the pure joy of experiencing a great story, and nurture a love of books. Read-alouds will often be interactive, with the teacher pausing to ask questions. Students then will "turn and talk" to their reading partner about their thoughts, which will typically require higher-level thinking and inference, not just basic comprehension. Often these questions and responses will lead to fascinating class discussions, and sometimes individuals will be 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 will typically be picture books. As the children get older, a variety of picture books, novels, poetry, and non-fiction books will be read aloud to them. It will be a treasured time of day for students and teachers, helping to teach valuable literacy skills, and contributing to our students' love of reading.

Some classes will perform a play based on what they are reading, further deepening their understanding of the character, setting, dialogue, and interactions between characters. These plays may be performed for other classes, as well as for family and friends, and some may include elaborate costume and set-making, while others will be simpler. Some older students may write scripts for plays, which their classmates will perform.

In the upper grades, classes will sometimes focus on a particular genre. For example, for a month, a 4th/5th grade class might focus on historical fiction. The teacher will read

aloud an historical fiction novel and the class will discuss the story, and also analyze the techniques the author employed to combine accurate historical information with fiction. Individual students will then choose historical fiction stories to read on their own or with a partner. They will 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 will be asked to write a reflective piece, with the hope that they would like to read more books in that genre on their own.

Writing

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

RVC students will be taught how to cite multiple sources in their writing. They will read several books, articles, or websites on a particular topic and take notes, then create informational pieces and opinion pieces, citing evidence from the texts to defend their claims. Using sources and explaining their significance is crucial to constructing well-defended arguments. Students will also be taught to cite from the text while speaking and writing about stories they have read. For example, a student may claim that a particular character is responsible, and will cite several examples of the character doing responsible things as evidence.

When students write stories, they may also include information they've obtained from various sources. For example, a student may write a story with a dolphin as a main character, and would read articles or books about dolphins in order to describe the dolphin and its habitat and actions accurately.

During Writing Workshop, the teacher will start 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 persuasive 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 will proceed with extended periods of uninterrupted writing. The teacher will confer with individual

students or work with small groups of students on a particular aspect of writing. At the end of the workshop, students may gather as a group to wrap up the session, and perhaps share their writing with a partner or the whole class.

At the end of a writing unit, students will 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 will have celebrations presenting an opportunity to read or listen to each other's pieces.

In the lower grades, students will use the Handwriting Without Tears program to learn proper handwriting techniques. By third grade, they will transition from printing practice to cursive practice. In the upper grades, students will do a majority of their writing on computers. They will use Google docs so their writing can be shared with their teacher or writing partner for comments and editing. They will 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 and stamina to produce strong pieces of writing on the computer.

All classes will write poetry. In upper grade classes, this will occasionally become a major focus, with a culminating poetry evening. Families will be invited to attend this cafe-style gathering where students take turns reading individual poems they have authored, and groups will recite poems by well-known authors.

Writing will often be integrated into larger units of study. Students may do research and write informational pieces on science or history topics, or they may write opinion pieces about what they are studying. Some students will choose to share their learning with the class by writing short skits or creating posters that include written pieces.

Class time will be 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 may create newsletters about the activities in their classrooms, they may write to friends and relatives in other states to learn about their region, and some students may write plays, fictional stories, and poetry on their own.

Speaking and Listening

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

Students will 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. Sometimes that will be done as part of a group, and other times students will do individual presentations.

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

All RVC students will have opportunities to act in plays each year. Theatrical performances will be an integral part of our children's experiences, and students will experience several different approaches throughout their K-5 years. In K/1st grade, students will 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, students will have their own roles in a class play. In the upper grades, classes may perform plays written by adults or a student may write and direct a class play, and the students will design sets and costumes independently. Sometimes, a class will get inspired by a particular story and may decide to create a readers' theatre version of it (simple, without memorized lines, costumes or sets). Other times, the plays will be major productions with parents helping to create elaborate costumes and sets if available and willing.

Language

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

According to Donald Bear, "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."³⁴

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. Every classroom will implement a word study approach called Words Their Way for spelling and phonics. Students will be assessed at the beginning of the school year using spelling inventories, and the teacher will group together students who are working at the same level. These small groups (usually no more than five students) will go through a rotation of working with the teacher to become familiar with a set of words containing a particular spelling pattern, then will work with those words over several days. They will sort the words, practice spelling them using various methods, look for other words with the same pattern, and, in the upper grades, complete a spelling test. Students will be re-assessed during the year to see the progress they've made, and new groups may be formed to accommodate their needs.

³⁴ Bear, Donald. *Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction* (5th Edition). 2011.

Students will be directly taught grammar and usage rules, including complete sentences and paragraphing, capitalization, punctuation, letter writing conventions, and how to consult reference materials. These skills will sometimes be taught to the whole class through a “morning message.” Other times students will search their independent reading books for a particular item (i.e. commas) and compare and draw conclusions about conventional usage.

Often, vocabulary, grammar, spelling, word study, and other language specific skills will be 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 white board next to the rug area; and discuss its meaning, other similar words, or its Greek or Latin word parts. Language skills will often be taught along with Writing Workshop, or writing during projects, as it becomes useful. For example, a teacher may notice that many students are writing run-on sentences, so he/she will teach a physical lesson in which students “walk sentences” that are being read aloud from a simple story. They will 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.

Spanish Language

All students, starting in kindergarten, will have Spanish instruction weekly. Each class will receive one session per week, ranging from 30 to 45 minutes, depending on grade level. Our hope is that in future years, depending on our budget, we will increase to two sessions per week for each class.

The goal of the Spanish language curriculum is exposure to basic Spanish sounds and basic Spanish vocabulary development. In kindergarten through third grade, thematic units will focus on food, home, school, hobbies, and more. Instruction will rely on rhyming, singing, storytelling, role-playing, and finger-play to develop and reinforce basic thematic vocabulary. Thematic units will also be used in fourth and fifth grades, but will, when appropriate, connect to the social studies and science curricular units. A greater focus on grammar, conjugation, and writing will be incorporated at this level.

As with all other curricular units in the multi-age classroom, Spanish language units will rotate through complementary, but distinctive, “year A” and “year B” themes. Although Spanish language curriculums are available for purchase, we believe a made-to-fit, teacher-designed curriculum will better suit the unique needs of the multi-age classes at RVC.

Students who are native Spanish speakers may not participate in Spanish language class. They may be opted out of Spanish language instruction in favor of English language instruction with the ELD teacher, or they may participate in Spanish classes and be given the opportunity to shine as model Spanish speakers. These decisions will be made on a case-to-case basis, considering each EL student’s CELDT level and language needs.

Mathematics

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

We will draw from a variety of mathematical methods, materials, and manipulatives for math. We will 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), as well as online resources. Because the math Common Core standards are relatively new, many publishers are still developing math curriculum to align with them. We will evaluate the available programs for our math curriculum using EdReports.org (an independent nonprofit that is evaluating publishers of Common Core-aligned materials) and other resources. There are ever growing data bases of free on-line resources available from the many organizations, including the state of California, that are devoted to Common Core implementation.

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

RVC teachers will focus on the CCSS Mathematical Practices, which are as follows:

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
4. Model with Mathematics
5. Use appropriate tools strategically
6. Attend to precision
7. Look for and make use of structure
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

It is a priority for our students to develop strong problem-solving skills. Teachers will provide time for students to grapple with problems, search for strategies and solutions,

and learn to evaluate their own results. A primary focus in the class will be on the students' thinking processes, and they will have frequent opportunities to share their thinking process, including their mistakes.

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

- Have an interest in finding solutions to problems
- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
- Develop confidence to try various strategies
- Be willing to risk being wrong at times
- Accept frustrations that come from not knowing
- Persevere when solutions are not immediate
- Understand the difference between not knowing the answer and not having found it yet

Upper grade teachers will focus on specific problem solving strategies such as the following examples:

- 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 will 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 will 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 will lead 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 will produce a poster showing their thought process and results, and they may take turns presenting them to the class.

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

In the middle and upper grades, students will be grouped by grade level for math. Our founding 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 will be scheduled at the same time in 2nd/3rd classes and also in 4th/5th classes.

Social Studies

We will 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.³⁵ Our units of inquiry will often be based on Social Studies standards, with literacy, science, and math instruction woven in. The curriculum in our multi-age classes will be on a two-year rotation, including standards for both grades during the two years spent in each class.

Our youngest students will begin with investigations into our world's ancient people and civilizations. K/1st grade students will focus on pre-historic humans and the Middle Ages. These units integrate reading, writing, art, language, culture, music, dance, and mathematics, and will 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 will continue in 2nd/3rd grades as the focus turns to ancient people of our own continent, Native Americans, and in particular the Miwok Indians. Social justice will be taught through a study of activists from Rosa Parks to Cesar Chavez. Family heritage will be a large focus in 2nd/3rd, with students doing individual projects to learn more about their family's culture and history. They will also learn about producers and consumers, Marin County, and map skills.

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

Teachers will use a variety of resources to support learning in Social Studies, including fiction and non-fiction books, on-line resources, write-on/wipe-off maps, short videos about different time periods, and simulations.

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

³⁵ <http://www.socialstudies.org/standards>

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

- K/1st—Grace Cathedral (Middle Ages 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

Schools around the country are beginning to transition to the new Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). 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 find the Scientific and Engineering practices to be particularly well-aligned with our philosophy:

- Asking questions (and defining problems)
- Planning and carrying out investigations
- Analyzing and interpreting data
- Obtaining, evaluating and communicating information
- Constructing explanations (and designing solutions)
- Developing and using models
- Using mathematical and computational thinking
- Engaging in argument from evidence

Our main science units will be aligned with NGSS as follows:

K/1st grade:

- Weather—Students will develop an understanding of patterns and variations in local weather and the purpose of weather forecasting to prepare for, and respond to, extreme weather.

- Pushes and Pulls—Students will apply an understanding of the effects of different strengths or directions of pushes and pulls on the motion of an object to analyze a design solution.
- Needs of Plants and Animals—Students will develop an understanding of what plants and animals (including humans) need to survive and the relationship between their needs and where they live.
- Sound and Vibration—Students will develop an understanding of the relationship between sound and vibrating materials.
- Light and Shadow—Students will develop an understanding of the relationship between the availability of light and ability to see objects. The idea that light travels from place to place will be understood by students at this level through determining the effect of placing objects made with different materials in the path of a beam of light.
- Structure and Behavior of Plants and Animals—Students will develop an understanding of how plants and animals use their external parts to help them survive, grow, and meet their needs as well as how behaviors of parents and offspring help the offspring survive. The understanding will be developed that young plants and animals are like, but not exactly the same as, their parents.

2nd/3rd grade:

- Plant growth—Students will develop an understanding of what plants need to grow and how plants depend on animals for seed dispersal and pollination.
- Habitats and Diversity—Students will compare the diversity of life in different habitats.
- Properties—Students will develop an understanding of observable properties of materials through analysis and classification of different materials.
- Erosion—Students will apply their understanding of the idea that wind and water can change the shape of the land to compare design solutions to slow or prevent such change. Students will use information and models to identify and represent the shapes and kinds of land and bodies of water in an area and where water is found on Earth.
- Weather and Seasons—Students will be able to organize and use data to describe typical weather conditions expected during a particular season. By applying their understanding of weather-related hazards, students will be able to make a claim about the merit of a design solution that reduces the impacts of such hazards.

- Life Cycles—Students will develop an understanding of the similarities and differences of organisms' life cycles.
- Inherited Traits and Adaptation (evolution)—Students will develop an understanding that organisms have different inherited traits, and that the environment can also affect the traits that an organism develops. Students will be able to construct an explanation using evidence for how the variations in characteristics among individuals of the same species may provide advantages in surviving, finding mates, and reproducing. Students will develop an understanding of types of organisms that lived long ago and also about the nature of their environments. Students will develop an understanding that when the environment changes some organisms survive and reproduce, some move to new locations, some move into the transformed environment, and some die.
- Force and Motion (including electricity and magnetism)—Students will be able to determine the effects of balanced and unbalanced forces on the motion of an object and the cause and effect relationships of electric or magnetic interactions between two objects not in contact with each other. They will then be able to apply their understanding of magnetic interactions to define a simple design problem that can be solved with magnets.

4th/5th grade:

- Waves—Students will use a model of waves to describe patterns of waves in terms of amplitude and wavelength, and know that waves can cause objects to move.
- Erosion—Students will develop understanding of the effects of weathering or the rate of erosion by water, ice, wind, or vegetation. They will apply their knowledge of natural Earth processes to generate and compare multiple solutions to reduce the impacts of such processes on humans. In order to describe patterns of Earth's features, students will analyze and interpret data from maps.
- Form and Function—Students will develop an understanding that plants and animals have internal and external structures that function to support survival, growth, behavior, and reproduction.
- Reflected Light—By developing a model, students will describe that an object can be seen when light reflected from its surface enters the eye.
- Energy—Students will be able to use evidence to construct an explanation of the relationship between the speed of an object and the energy of that object. Students will develop an understanding that energy can be transferred from place to place by sound, light, heat, and electric currents or from object to object through collisions. They will apply their understanding of energy to design, test, and refine a device that converts energy from one form to another.

- **Matter**—Students will learn that matter is made of particles too small to be seen through the development of a model. They will develop an understanding of the idea that regardless of the type of change that matter undergoes, the total weight of matter is conserved. Students will determine whether the mixing of two or more substances results in new substances.
- **Ecosystems and Energy Flow**—Through the development of a model, students will be able to describe ways the geosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere, and/or atmosphere interact. They will describe and graph data to provide evidence about the distribution of water on Earth. They will develop an understanding of the idea that plants get the materials they need for growth chiefly from air and water. Using models, students will describe the movement of matter among plants, animals, decomposers, and the environment, and that energy in animals' food was once energy from the sun.
- **Shadows and Seasons**—Students will be expected to develop an understanding of patterns of daily changes in length and direction of shadows, day and night, and the seasonal appearance of some stars in the night sky.

We believe that our founding teachers' years of experience teaching a hands-on, inquiry-style approach, and our emphasis on students being instrumental in taking charge of their own learning, will help us to smoothly make the transition to NGSS.

We also appreciate the convergence of math, science, and language arts standards as represented in this diagram:

Relationships and Convergences

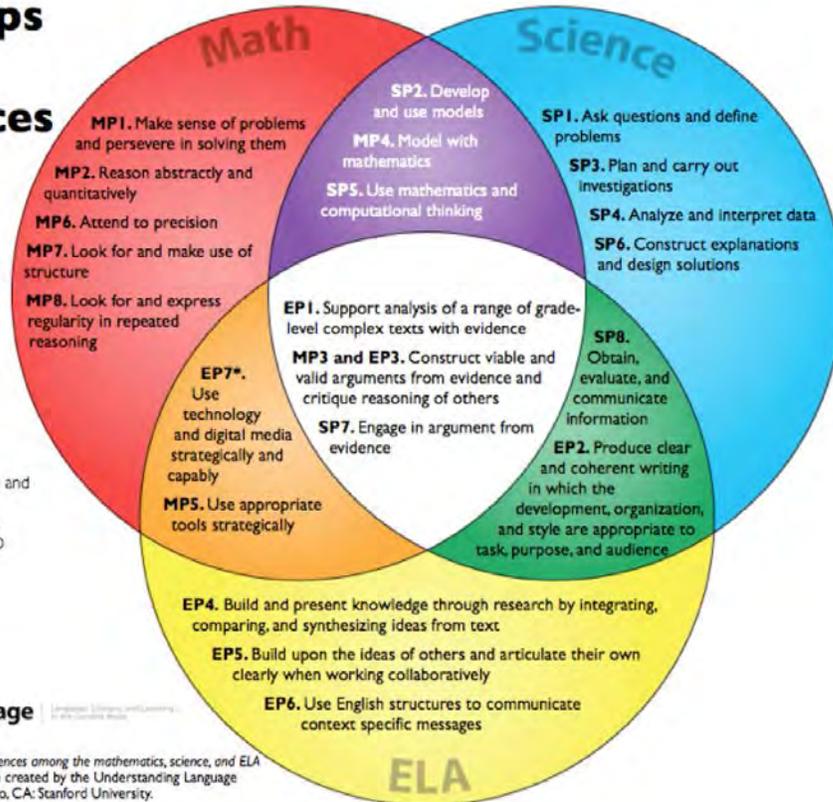
Found in:
1. CCSS for Mathematics (practices)
2a. CCSS for ELA & Literacy (student capacity)
2b. ELPD Framework (ELA "practices")
3. NGSS (science and engineering practices)

- Notes:**
1. MP1–MP8 represent CCSS Mathematical Practices (p. 6–8).
 2. SP1–SP8 represent NGSS Science and Engineering Practices.
 3. EP1–EP6 represent CCSS for ELA "Practices" as defined by the ELPD Framework (p. 11).
 4. EP7* represents CCSS for ELA student "capacity" (p. 7).

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Suggested citation:
Cheuk, T. (2013). *Relationships and convergences among the mathematics, science, and ELA practices*. Refined version of diagram created by the Understanding Language Initiative for ELP Standards. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University.



Students will share what they know in science, and what they'd like to know, while working in groups and partners, and also during Science Talks, in which students sit in a circle and everyone has a chance to speak. Teachers will ask an open-ended question and then let kids share their ideas by steering, but not dictating, the discussion. Reading and writing will be integrated into science through the use of non-fiction texts, and the use of science notebooks, in which students write and draw what they are learning or designing. Math will also be integrated while doing experiments and designing models.

RVC students will begin the school year by studying a living creature. Each class will focus on a particular critter, such as ants, butterflies, rodents, goldfish, chickens, or snakes. Students will study their critters 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 will teach the other classes about what they have learned at an annual Critter Carnival. Students will do skits, poems, songs, or student-led lessons. In the younger grades, the teacher will lead students in preparing their presentation. In the upper grades, students will determine what form their presentation will take and they will write, prepare, and practice it with minimal teacher guidance.

The teachers' role will be 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 will encourage our children's curiosities and provide them opportunities to explore and investigate the natural world around them. In the K/1st grade Middle Ages Unit, for example, students will plant wheat in our outdoor garden, harvest it, and grind it into flour to make bread. The reward of linking the science of growing the wheat to the science of baking the bread is truly integrated experiential learning.

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

- K/1st grade—Slide Ranch, Windrush Farms, Tara Firma Farm, open space hikes
- 2nd/3rd grade—Agate Beach tide pools, Exploratorium
- 4th/5th grade—Crissy Field, Audubon Canyon Ranch

Given that the K-5 Next Generation Science Standards have been adopted in California but are still new, curricula and science kits are still in development. Our intention is to eventually choose and purchase a more comprehensive science curriculum to match the new standards. A committee of teachers will review options once they have been developed and bring a recommendation to the rest of the staff for discussion, and then will make a recommendation to the Board of Directors. Meanwhile, our founding teachers will use a variety of previously acquired resources and information from workshops including those from Lawrence Hall of Science, Academy of Science, Exploratorium, Great Explorations in Math and Science (GEMS), and California Education and the Environment Initiative (EEI), along with resources found online. These resources will be shared with newly hired teachers until a more comprehensive science curriculum is purchased.

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

At RVC, 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.³⁶ 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.

We have budgeted for three sets of 27 laptops, such as Chromebooks, in charging carts shared between our 4th/5th grade classrooms, plus 3 laptops/Chromebooks permanently in each classroom above K/1st, with reliable internet capacity to support all 100 devices in use at once. The 2nd/3rd grade classes will have access to the class sets that will be housed in the 4th/5th classrooms.

³⁶ <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 won't use computers or iPads in the classroom. K/1st classes will 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 will sometimes use an overhead projector during instruction.

In 2nd/3rd grade, students will begin keyboarding practice but most instruction will still be done without the use of computers. We will have three laptop computers such as Chromebooks in each classroom, plus access to class sets that will be housed in the 4th/5th grade classes. We prefer 2nd/3rd grade 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 2nd/3rd grade classes will have Maker Time in which the students will use various materials to create projects of their choosing. Second and third grade students will begin the process of learning to access and evaluate Internet websites with the close guidance of their teachers. Using a visual presenter, teachers will access and share information related to units of inquiry from sites such as Google, YouTube, National Geographic, and BrainPOP. Internet resources will be viewed in the same vein as other resources—another avenue for learning that needs to be critically evaluated. Teachers will be careful to pre-screen any websites used to further student learning. Some students will begin creating computer-based presentations, such as PowerPoints or Prezis, but this will usually done at home with parental guidance.

In 4th/5th grade, we will have class sets of Chromebooks in each room, so students will always have access to a computer. Students will continue to practice keyboarding skills, and most of their writing will be done using word processing. They will use Google docs to enable sharing and collaborating of written pieces with other students or the teacher. Our older students will also use the internet regularly for research, and further learn about the proper use of internet searches, and how to distinguish reliable sources. They will create presentations using on-line programs such as Prezi. They will also learn how to use websites such as EasyBib to cite sources when doing research and writing papers. Teachers will use a classroom presenter and will model computer and internet skills for students. Students will also use these tools when doing classroom presentations. We still value hands-on creativity for our older students, and they will do arts and crafts projects related to our curriculum, such as sewing "pioneer pillows," weaving baskets, and creating models of Native American homes. Often these projects will inspire children to further pursue similar projects. Students will create projects using other art tools, and do woodworking, electrical circuitry, gardening, and cooking during weekly Maker Time.

We understand that computer programming and robotics may be in many of our students' futures and we are interested in providing our students with technically oriented educational 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.”³⁷

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 will help students to develop physical skills. Older buddies will work with younger students to practice throwing, catching, shooting, and kicking a ball, and will 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 master schedule will provide time for regular physical education classes (200 minutes every two weeks) 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.³⁸ Examples of brain and body breaks include doing a yoga pose, stretching, freeze dance, running outside for a few minutes, or forming a physical “pretzel” which helps to integrate both sides of the brain. Students will have two long recesses per day, and some teachers may choose to take their students outside for another short break in the afternoon.

Social and Emotional Learning

Our teachers will 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. Children will 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

³⁷ Brown, Stuart L., and Christopher C. Vaughan. Play: How It Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul. New York: Avery, 2009.

³⁸ Ratey, J. J., & Hagerman, E. (2008). Spark: the revolutionary new science of exercise and the brain. New York: Little, Brown.

simple and the language is shared, children can adopt the tools and master them quickly. Toolbox starts with each child building self-knowledge and self-mastery; it improves empathy and 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.³⁹

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

We will 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 will do a community service project each year. The students will choose an animal, a group of people, a condition, or an environmental situation to help. During our annual Care Share, the students in each class will be reconfigured into small groups to explain to children from the other classes what they have learned and how they have helped.

³⁹ www.dovetaillearning.org/

Resources and Methods Used in Subject Areas

subject area	K/1 st	2 nd /3 rd	4 th /5 th
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 transdisciplinary 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 transdisciplinary 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 (i.e., 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 writing • grammar and punctuation skills integrated • writing in various forms as part of units of study (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 writing • grammar and punctuation skills integrated • writing in various forms as part of units of study (i.e. letters, poetry, informational writing, essays, etc.) • cursive handwriting practice • word processing for most writing
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

<p>listening & speaking</p>	<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 • group and individual presentations • communicating with buddies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • class meetings • reading, writing, and math partners • group and individual presentations • communicating and assisting with younger students
<p>math</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with numbers 1-19 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 (EEI) 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"> • Units and activities based on Next Generation Science Standards • EEI units • field trips including Chabot Space Center, Exploratorium, Lawrence Hall of Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Units and activities based on Next Generation Science Standards • 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 • use 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 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 era for Open House

<p>art, music, dance, performances</p>	<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 program self-directed choice time Art and Music classes class plays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> art, music, dance integrated into curriculum singing in classroom, with buddies, and at whole-school traditions self-directed maker time Art and Music classes class plays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> art, music, dance integrated into curriculum singing in classroom, with buddies, and at whole-school traditions self-directed maker time Art and Music classes class plays or poetry nights
<p>technology</p>	<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.⁴⁰ We consider family time to be highly valuable and believe that our class schedule will provide ample time to build and practice skills while at school. Our developmentally appropriate approach will keep homework to a minimum, and will increase it gradually as students get older.

⁴⁰ Kohn, Alfie. *The Homework Myth: Why Our Kids Get Too Much of a Bad Thing* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2006).

Our kindergarten and first grade students will not have regular homework, other than encouragement to read with their parents. Books from the classroom will be 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 will then write and draw about. They may also practice their lines for a play using a script at home. Also, students may prepare for Open House by learning about a job in the Middle Ages or an animal from the rainforest, by preparing a costume, and by practicing their role.

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

In fourth and fifth grade, students will begin having a small amount of nightly homework, typically math, but also sometimes writing or continuing work on an in-class project. Two or three times each year, students will have a long-term project to do at home, which will involve reading, research, writing, and/or producing a finished product or preparing a lesson to teach others. Examples may include researching an explorer and creating a journal from the explorer's perspective, learning about a particular body system and writing about it for a class book then presenting what they learned to the class, or doing research on an area of interest then preparing to teach a small group about it in a hands-on lesson.

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.⁴¹

Proposed School Schedule

The RVC calendar will have the same approximate beginning and ending dates as the District calendar, and the same holiday and vacation schedule. See a sample 2016-17 calendar in Appendix G.

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 G for a Day In the Life of a K/1st grade student and a 4th/5th grade student.

The times in these daily schedules may be adjusted, and are used here simply as an example. Our school day may begin earlier or later depending on factors such as

⁴¹Duke University Study: Homework Helps Students Succeed in School, As Long as There Isn't Too Much (today.duke.edu, Cooper Harris March 7, 2006).

location, proximity to White Hill Middle School (many families will have students at both campuses), traffic patterns, etc. The approximate number of school minutes will remain the same.

TK/K/1st Grade 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; TK dismissed
1:00 - 2:00	Instructional time
2:00	K dismissed
2:00-3:15	1st grade instructional time
235 instructional minutes for TK (including recesses) 320 instructional minutes for K (including recesses) 340 instructional minutes for 1st	

2nd-5th Grades 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	

TK/K/1st Grade 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; TK dismissed
1:00-1:15	Instructional time
235 instructional minutes for TK (including recesses) 275 instructional minutes for K (including recesses) 220 instructional minutes for 1st	

2nd-5th Grades 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	

TK/K/1st Grade 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; TK dismissed
1:00-2:00	Instructional time
2:00	K dismissed
2:00-2:15	1st grade instructional time
235 instructional minutes for TK (including recesses) 320 instructional minutes for K (including recesses) 280 instructional minutes for 1st	

2nd-5th Grades 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:

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

Approximate Instructional Minutes in RVC School Year:

	Transitional Kindergarten	Kindergarten	1 st -3 rd grade	4 th -5 th grade
125 regular days at 235 or 320 or 340 minutes/day	29,375	40,000	42,500	42,500
35 Wednesdays at 235 or 275 or 220 minutes/day	8,225	9,625	7,700	7,700
20 conference days at 235 or 320 or 280 minutes/day	4,700	6,400	5,600	5,600
TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES	42,300	56,025	55,800	55,800
Legally Required Minutes	36,000	36,000	50,400	54,000
Additional Minutes Offered by RVC minutes	6,300	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 conference days (students dismissed one hour early) during three different periods during the school year. Teachers will work to schedule different conference times to accommodate parent schedules if they are unable to meet during work hours. 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

Our teacher contract will include eight non-student days during each school year. These days will be used for a combination of work days in classrooms and professional development days, as determined by the teachers and the School Director.

Our schedule will be structured so that students in the same grade span will have one morning per week of clustered special classes (for example, Spanish, Art, PE) that they will rotate through. This will allow teachers at the same grade levels to have an extended amount of common planning and preparation time. Not only does this ensure that teachers are carrying out the mission of RVC, it will also give the less experienced teachers the opportunity to learn from the veteran teachers.

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 will include conducting school business (nuts and bolts), discussing school philosophy and direction, planning curriculum and/or events, working in grade level teams, discussing student progress and assessment results, engaging in 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 schools with similar progressive education programs.

Our founding six teachers are very experienced, with 11-26 years of classroom teaching each, including between 5-19 years of experience teaching in the MAP program. Throughout all their years of teaching, these teachers have had many opportunities for professional development in many areas. Here are a few highlights:

- Five of our teachers have trained at the Lucy Calkins Reading and/or Writing Institutes, Teachers' College, at 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 Ross Valley Charter.
- All six of our teachers have been trained in Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD).
- Two of our teachers have attended a three-day Project Based Learning training.

As part of the RVC culture, new teachers will be supported by our veteran founding teachers. Before school starts, new teachers will be assigned to a partner at the same grade level who will help guide the new teacher in curriculum development and classroom set-up. Experienced teachers will offer beginning teachers personal and emotional support during their challenging first year, and help them to understand the RVC culture. Experienced teachers will also guide the newer teachers in the expectations for activities such as Back to School Night, parent conferences, and progress report writing.

During the school year, new teachers will meet weekly with their grade-level team to focus on curriculum development, assessment results, and student needs. Grade-level teacher meetings will also include time for all teachers to reflect on their practices, and this open reflection time will be particularly helpful for newer teachers. "When a critical mass of teachers at one school are comfortable talking with each other about their teaching, the school's capacity to identify and address problems in student learning and other important issues rises dramatically."⁴² Veteran teachers will visit new teachers' classrooms at least once a month and give feedback.

⁴² DESIGNING SUPPORT for BEGINNING TEACHERS by Kendyll Stansbury and Joy Zimmerman, West Ed; http://www.wested.org/online_pubs/tchrbrief.pdf. 2000

The School Director will also focus on supporting new teachers. At least monthly, the School Director will visit new teachers' classrooms, and will follow up with each new teacher to discuss classroom management, curriculum, student needs, and to offer support. The School Director may also authorize release time so new teachers can observe other teachers' classrooms.

In addition, new teachers will be given the opportunity to attend workshops or conferences that they, along with the School Director and other staff, agree will be helpful to them to develop their skills teaching in a multi-age, progressive education setting, by implementing project-based learning, and by carrying out the goals of the School.

RVC teachers 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. RVC teachers 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
- Creative thinking and learning strategies
- Support for low-achieving students and special education
- Progressive education
- Emergency preparedness

Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)

The Charter School will comply with all requirements pursuant to California Education Code § 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii) including developing annual goals, for all pupils (i.e. schoolwide) and for each subgroup of pupils as identified in California Education Code § 52052, for each of the applicable eight (8) state priorities identified in California Education Code § 52060(d). Please refer to the table in Element 2: Measurable Pupil Outcomes for the schoolwide goals for relevant sub-groups and corresponding assessments. RVC 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. RVC 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.

Special Populations of Learners

Special needs: Ross Valley Charter will address the needs of all sub groups, including at-risk students.

Plan for Diverse Learners

The differentiated, child-centered approach that will be used at Ross Valley Charter has been designed to ensure that the learning style of each individual student is incorporated into the learning process. Our integrated instructional approach, which will include project-based learning, targeted instruction, and social/emotional learning, will allow teachers to create a differentiated and personalized learning program based on individual student profiles, including those of special needs populations (English Learners, Gifted, At-Risk of Low Achieving, Low Socioeconomic, and Special Education). To this end, teachers will implement individualized instruction based on data-driven assessments. The underlying belief that all students are capable of thriving academically, socially, and emotionally will guide our approach to having a solid platform of support for each learner. The following strategies will help RVC teachers to ensure that all students have equal access to learning:

Multi-age grouping (having the same teacher for two years) allows teachers to build a unique rapport with their students. Over a two-year span, teachers gain in-depth knowledge about a child's intellectual strengths and weaknesses, which supports improved student performance. Multi-age grouping provides the following opportunities for students:

- Creates a climate that encourages thinking, risk-taking, and involvement
- Enhances development of social/emotional skills and cooperative group strategies
- Facilitates better student construction of knowledge
- Results in greater language confidence in all students, including English Learners
- Provides opportunities for peer learning, leadership, and mentoring
- Encourages a stronger sense of community among parents, students, and teachers

Project-based learning is ideal for English learners because it develops and requires the use of strong communication skills, supports collaboration across language proficiency levels, and cultivates deep content area knowledge.

Flexible, small group instruction is an effective way of ensuring that all students have access to important content. Flexible grouping allows teachers to match students with different peers and/or adult guides for different types of activities to optimize trust and

learning.⁴³

Ample instructional planning time allows teachers to create individualized lessons and curriculum incorporating various teaching modalities to meet a range of needs.

Teacher collaboration through team planning, team teaching, and regular professional development sessions enables teachers to learn from each other's expertise when creating curriculum and handling learning differences.

Open communication between teachers and parents creates a culture of mutual understanding and common educational goals, and helps to bridge school and home life. All parents, including Spanish speakers, will be invited to help in the classroom, participate in school activities, and be an active part of the school community.

High expectations for all students, supported by clearly defined and articulated learning goals and objectives that are differentiated to match language proficiency levels, will help students attain successful outcomes.

Various forms of assessment will be used to guide, monitor, and evaluate instruction.

Academically Low-Achieving Students

Assessment and Identification: Teachers will assess each student's reading at the beginning of each school year. Teachers will 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 will identify students at the beginning of each year that need extra support in reading. This reading assessment will be repeated in November, March, and June to monitor progress of all students. For any students who are assessed as at or below grade level, teachers will read individually with them at least twice per month to monitor their progress, and will do additional assessments as needed to ensure they are not falling further behind.

Teachers will 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. Teachers will utilize checklists at each grade level for the three types of writing (informational, narrative, opinion) throughout the school year to monitor student progress in writing and to identify students who need additional support.

Teachers will use 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. Teachers

⁴³ <http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/41025/ 2011>

may use either unit assessments from an adopted math curriculum or teacher-created assessments based on Common Core State Standards. We will also review California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (“CAASPP”) test score data as available. Students will be considered academically low achieving under the following circumstances:

- 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/or math assessments

Family Notification: Teachers will meet with parents of low-achieving students at any time during the school year to discuss assessment results and concerns, including the beginning of the year after initial assessments are completed or any time a student is experiencing learning problems that need to be discussed. Conferences will be held in November with all parents to discuss student progress and goals. Progress reports will be sent again in March and June to update progress. However, teachers will contact and/or meet with parents or low-achieving students as needed during the school year to discuss student achievement and to identify learning problems that need parental support.

Intervention services: Low-achieving students will be fully integrated into the RVC student body, and receive additional instruction and support as needed. The engaging, active educational program at RVC will be designed to accommodate a full range of performance, including low-achieving students. Specific practices that will support low-achieving students include the following:

- *Hands-on, integrated curriculum and project-based learning* — This will provide concrete experiences to help students access content through a variety of modalities. Students will often work with partners or small groups, and this interaction helps to solidify new understandings. Teachers will support low-achieving students by choosing reading material at an appropriate level and/or will use videos of specific content to help students who read below grade level to access grade level content information.
- *Differentiated instruction practices* — Students will read at their “just right” level, writing assignments will be flexible enough to accommodate a range of abilities, and math problems will often be open-ended and flexible so students can arrive at answers in many different ways. Low-achieving students may be given modified or shortened assignments as needed, so they can demonstrate mastery of grade level standards without feeling overwhelmed by longer or more complex assignments.
- *Individualized reading support* — During independent reading time, teachers will meet with below grade level readers for longer durations and/or with greater frequency in order to accelerate their reading progress. Additionally, teachers will help each student to select reading material that is appropriate for each child’s

independent reading level. Teachers will confer with students to discuss reading selections and ensure children are selecting texts that are adequately matched to their independent reading levels, and will provide individualized instruction and support.

- *Individualized and small group instruction* — Teachers will provide individualized and small group instruction in all subjects to support students as needed. Teachers will often use “exit slips,” short written responses to questions at the end of a class, as a quick, informal assessment to identify students who need help in a particular skill, and meet with them individually or in small groups to provide extra instruction. Through observation in class and more formal assessments, teachers will identify students who need review of concepts and will spend extra time with those students.
- *Parent volunteers and learning centers* — Parents will be welcome, but not required, to volunteer in our classrooms. When additional adults are present in the classroom, teachers may be able to spend more focused time with low-achieving children, either individually or in small groups. In the lower grades, parents or older students may be available to read with individual children, which offers increased opportunity for students to read with support. Volunteers also may support students as directed by teachers at the lower grade levels during math, writing, and other subjects. Parents may provide assistance to teachers by being present at learning centers to answer questions as they come up, under the direction of the classroom teacher. Classroom teachers will provide instruction and guidance to those parents who will be working with students. Parent volunteers may serve to supplement the education provided by credentialed teachers, not replace it.
- *Teacher collaboration* — During professional development days and weekly faculty collaboration meetings, teachers will discuss the academic progress of low-achieving students to develop and refine intervention supports. Teachers will work together to compare work samples, analyze assessment results, and identify students who may need additional support.
- *Targeted writing support* — Students who demonstrate difficulty with writing will receive extra 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 will work with our Intervention Teacher (job description in Appendix I) to discuss the needs of all low-achieving students. Together, they will determine how best to support each student, either through push-in services or pull-out services. The Intervention Teacher may provide low-achieving students with a preview of upcoming content, extra skill practice, and/or review previously taught content. Frequent communication

between the classroom teacher and Intervention Teacher is crucial to best serve low-achieving students.

- *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 or guardians, 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 will be met by the engaging, challenging curriculum at Ross Valley Charter. The teachers will 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 will be used to identify students who are academically high-achieving. Reading will be assessed several times throughout the year using the TCRWP leveled reading assessment, writing samples will be analyzed, and math ability will be assessed throughout the year. In addition, teachers will review CAASPP test data from the previous year if available. Throughout the year, teachers assess students through qualitative measures such as checklists, observations, and project rubrics.

Students will be considered academically high-achieving under the following circumstances:

- Score high in the advanced category on the mathematics and/or language arts portion of the CAASPP
- Consistently perform significantly above their grade level peers on classroom work and assessments

Family Notification: Classroom teachers will meet with the parents of high-achieving students at any point during the school year to discuss their students’ progress. Teachers meet with all parents in November to discuss student performance and strategies for meeting the needs of their high-achieving student. Student progress will be monitored on an ongoing basis through a combination of teacher observation and classroom assessment. Classroom teachers will provide regular progress reports to parents and administrative staff.

Additional Supports: Academically high-achieving students will be fully integrated into the RVC student body and will receive additional support to keep them engaged and motivated. The personalized curriculum at RVC is designed to meet students where they are academically and to allow them to be challenged appropriately. Teachers will implement additional strategies to ensure that the needs of high-achieving students are met. These supports include the following:

- *Extra opportunities for enrichment in the core content areas*—Students who are reading significantly above their grade level may be given appropriately challenging content reading books, articles, or primary source documents. Students who are talented in math will be given more complex, in-depth problems, activities, or projects so they can apply their knowledge at a higher level.
- *Opportunities to go at a faster pace*—Using pre-assessments, teachers will ascertain what students already know about a particular unit of study so that high-achieving students can skip some class instruction and move on to more challenging work. High-achieving students may move faster through curriculum such as math by working independently, with a partner, or a cluster of high-achieving students, with the teacher providing support and materials.
- *Encouragement to independently pursue an area of interest*—Students will be given time, materials, and support when they desire to learn more about a particular topic. Sometimes high-achieving students will be clustered so they may work together on a project or open-ended assignment.
- *Extra opportunities for leadership and the development of mentoring skills with other students*—Students may work with classmates, or younger, or older students in other classes, on projects or activities in order to practice leadership and mentoring.
- *Individual and small group projects*—Often, high-achieving students will take on a particular aspect of a project and learn about it in great depth. We will allow students to have the time to do this challenging, motivating work and sometimes to extend their learning beyond the classroom.
- *Alternative ways to show their learning*—High-achieving students will be given the opportunity to show the depth of their knowledge in ways of their choosing. This might include doing an oral presentation, creating a skit or poem or song, making a poster or on-line presentation, building a model, etc. We will encourage students to be creative and to push themselves to do something new or challenging, and to share their knowledge with others.
- *Develop critical thinking skills*—We will encourage high-achieving students to problem solve (think logically and brainstorm solutions), question (analyze in-depth questions), evaluate their sources for reliability, and make decisions based on what they've learned, such as forming an opinion or taking a stance on a

topic. These critical thinking skills will be useful in independent projects as well as in group projects.

- *Take ownership of their learning*—We will encourage students to explore their passions and feel ownership of their learning. If possible, we will help high-achieving students to find mentors in the school or greater community to pursue their interest.

English-Language Learners

RVC will adhere to all applicable state and federal laws and regulations with respect to serving students who are English Learners (ELs). This includes annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, re-classification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing requirement. RVC will also implement policies to ensure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding English Learners and the rights of students and parents.

Students will be monitored in conjunction with the California English-Language Development Standards Tests (CELDT) levels. The state is in the process of developing the new English-Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC); RVC will transition to this new system when it becomes available. RVC will maintain a record of all students who participate in each administration of the CELDT/ELPAC test as specified in Education Code § 11512. CELDT/ELPAC testing will be used to fulfill the requirements for annual English proficiency testing and will comply with the accountability requirements under ESEA, if applicable to the Charter School. RVC will adhere to all legal requirements regarding oversight and administration of the CELDT/ELPAC test.

If RVC enrolls more than 21 EL students, we will voluntarily create an English Learner Advisory Council (ELAC).

Assessment and Identification of English Learners: In order to identify students who are English learners in a timely fashion and to provide appropriate instructional support and services, all parents will be required to complete a *Home Language Survey* upon enrollment at the school. (Cal. Education Code § 52164.1) Students whose primary language is not English will be assessed using the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) if they have not previously been identified as an English learner by a California public school or if there is no record of prior CELDT test results. CELDT testing will take place within 30 days of the start of the school year or within two weeks after the date of first enrollment at the school. The English language proficiency of all enrolled English learners will be assessed in accordance with the test contractor's directions and California Education Code guidelines.

Through conversations with the student and parents, teachers will attempt to gain a more complete understanding of the student's language profile, including languages spoken in the home and 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.⁴⁴

Students in all grade levels will likely have varying degrees of English proficiency, and many will require ongoing support in English Language Development. The California English Language Development Standards (CA ELD Standards) describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities in English as a new language that are expected upon exit from each proficiency level. Students will be considered under the following categories:

- *Emerging*—learning to use English for immediate needs as well as beginning to understand and use academic vocabulary and other features of academic language
- *Expanding*—increasing their English skills in more contexts, and learning a greater variety of vocabulary and linguistic structures, applying their growing language skills in more sophisticated ways appropriate to their age and grade level
- *Bridging*—continuing to learn and apply a range of high-level English language skills in a wide variety of contexts, including comprehension and production of highly technical texts. Students at the Bridging level are aligned to the California's Common Core State Standards, although ELs at all levels of English language proficiency fully participate in grade level tasks in all content areas with varying degrees of scaffolding in order to develop both content knowledge and English.

Family Notification: RVC staff will notify parents of the school's responsibility to conduct CELDT/ELPAC testing and will inform parents of CELDT/ELPAC testing results within 30 calendar days following receipt of test results from the test contractor.

Goals for English Language Learners: RVC will have three primary goals for our EL students working toward English proficiency. These goals are based on the overarching goals described in the ESL Standards for Pre-K-12 Students.⁴⁵ They are to use English:

- To communicate in social settings
- To learn and communicate academically in all content areas
- In socially and culturally appropriate ways

Achieving these goals will be part of students' development toward reclassification. School success requires that students acquire proficiency in interpersonal communication as well as in academic language development.

⁴⁴ 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.

⁴⁵TESOL. *ESL Standards for Pre K-12 Students*. Alexandria, VA: TESOL.[2006.].

Classroom Support for English-Language Learners

RVC will implement research-based instructional programs and strategies to meet the specific needs of English Learners. All EL students will be fully integrated into the regular classroom setting, with support for their language needs. Our engaging, hands-on approach is designed to reach all learning profiles, including English learners. We value the knowledge and experience that every student brings to the classroom. RVC teachers will encourage students to share that knowledge in a variety of ways so that students with limited English proficiency can participate and even assume leadership. Through the use of printed materials, audiovisual resources, spoken language, parents and/or other volunteer participants, teachers will strive to incorporate the home language(s) and culture of the students in the classroom as much as possible.

RVC teachers will use the CA ELD Standards. These standards are not intended to replace the Common Core State Standards for ELA but instead to amplify the language knowledge, skills, and abilities of those Common Core State Standards that are critical in order for ELs to simultaneously be successful in school while they are developing English. RVC teachers will receive professional development focused on the CA ELD Standards to ensure EL students are receiving the support they need in class.

RVC teachers will recognize and appreciate the particular needs of EL students and will continually evaluate our educational program with those needs in mind. In addition to the major program design features at RVC that benefit students who are English learners, RVC classroom teachers will employ specific Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (“SDAIE”) strategies in their classrooms. These strategies are beneficial for all students, not just English Learners.⁴⁶ Teachers will include the following strategies:

1. Vocabulary and Language Development

- Teachers will introduce new concepts by discussing vocabulary words key to that concept.
- Teachers will build on students’ background knowledge.
- Classrooms will reflect a language-rich environment (i.e. language charts, shared reading and writing experiences, other writing displayed throughout the room and used daily by students).

2. Guided Interaction

- Teachers will structure lessons so students work together to understand what they read, by listening, speaking, reading, and writing collaboratively about the academic concepts in the text.

⁴⁶ Adapted from Alliance for Excellent Education. (December 2005). Case study on the New Teacher Center, University of California at Santa Cruz; and Project GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design).

- Teachers will provide students with opportunities to negotiate meaning from language and text and to work in cooperative pairs or groups to develop problem-solving and social skills.
- Teachers will group students flexibly, at times working in heterogeneous groups and at times not.
- Teachers will provide students with regular opportunities to interact with their peers through collaborative learning activities, such as think/pair/share, partner and group projects.

3. Metacognition and Authentic Assessment

- Rather than having students simply memorizing information, teachers will model and explicitly teach thinking skills (metacognition) crucial to learning new concept.
- Teachers will use a variety of activities to check for student understanding, acknowledging that students learning a second language need a variety of ways to demonstrate their understanding of concepts that are not wholly reliant on advanced language skills.
- Teachers will make thinking “public,” modeling how an answer was arrived at, not merely what the correct answer is.

4. Explicit Instruction

- Teachers will utilize direct teaching methods to teach concepts, academic language, reading comprehension strategies, text patterns, vocabulary, written patterns, and decoding skills needed to complete classroom tasks.
- Teachers will use controlled vocabulary, sentence structure, visuals, and gestures as necessary and appropriate to make the presentation of content comprehensible.

5. Meaning-Based Context and Universal Themes

- Teachers will incorporate meaningful references from the students’ everyday lives and use them as springboards to interest them in academic concepts.
- Teachers will create classroom environments that provide authentic opportunities for use of academic language.
- Teachers will provide students with opportunities to activate and focus prior knowledge via inquiry charts (what do we know, what do we want to know), brainstorming, and linking ideas to resources or contexts that reflect students’ interests or backgrounds.

6. Modeling, Graphic Organizers, and Visuals

- Teachers will regularly utilize a variety of visual aids, graphic organizers, pictures, diagrams, summaries, and charts to help ELs easily recognize essential information and its relationship to supporting ideas.
- Teachers will provide students with a variety of strategies for organizing and retaining information associated with effective learning, such as graphic organizers and note taking.

ELD Teacher

In addition to classroom teachers addressing the significant academic needs of EL students, RVC will hire a part-time credentialed ELD Teacher to work with EL students. The ELD Teacher will collaborate weekly with classroom teachers to determine how best to support EL students. Typically this will entail pulling out small groups of students to give specific instruction related to topics being learned in class, but may also include “pushing in” to classrooms in order to support students as they work.

The ELD teacher will have a weekly schedule, and will typically work with small groups of about three to five EL students, four days a week for half an hour. Some of these sessions may be scheduled during a class’s Spanish language instruction time, as well as during regular class time, to be arranged with the classroom teachers.

During these small EL classes, the ELD teacher will scaffold concepts students are learning in class, preview and review vocabulary and concepts, and focus on language skills. ELD teachers will use a variety of visual aides such as objects, pictures, slides, short videos, and books in order to help expand vocabulary and conceptual understanding. The ELD teacher will also work on Common Core focus areas such as citing text evidence, using academic language, and reading nonfiction texts.

An example is a 2nd/3rd grade session on animal characteristics. The Next Generation Science Standard is: Use evidence to construct an explanation for how the variations in characteristics among individuals of the same species may provide advantages in surviving, finding mates, and reproducing. The ELD teacher would start by showing students pictures of different individual animals, and ask students if they know the name of the animal, and what they know or notice about the animal, to ascertain prior knowledge and stimulate interest. Then the ELD teacher would explain what vertebrates are, and explain that vertebrates have common structural features: they all have a skull, a rib cage, and vertebrae (backbone). Students would identify those bones on themselves and learn that they are vertebrates.

Next, the teacher would show slides of different types of feet/claws/hooves on various vertebrates and discuss with the students that animal feet have adapted to survive in their environment (for example: an elephant has a wide foot built to hold its weight, a rabbit foot is mostly just toes for fast running, a bird has claws to hold on to branches). Then the teacher would show slides with several animals that have a particular body part or adaptation in common. Students would be asked to identify and analyze a common structural feature found in the animals presented in each slide, and prove with evidence how the various characteristics may be advantageous to the animal's survival.

Students would be given a sentence frame to use to express their ideas: “_____ are animals with _____. This structural feature allows them to _____.” An example is: “Ducks, frogs, seals, and crocodiles are animals with webbed feet. This structural feature allows them to swim.”

Students would have the opportunity to “pair share” (collaborate with a neighbor) to do this work for several groups of animals.

At the end of the session, students would work individually on an exit slip with the assignment to analyze a cluster of animal pictures, and write sentences using the sentence frame to describe a structural feature and its use.

In this sample lesson, the ELD teacher used visuals, worked on vocabulary and concept development, gave language support in the form of a sentence frame, and fostered critical and creative thinking skills. Students analyzed and drew conclusions, and practiced citing evidence. They also got lots of practice in oral language, as well as written language in the exit slip.

The ELD teacher also may work with students on a classroom writing assignment by scaffolding the assignment, breaking it down into component parts (such as an introduction, transitional phrases, a conclusion, etc.), specifically teaching skills for those parts, and closely editing it with students, teaching and reinforcing written conventions individually as needed.

The ELD teacher and classroom teachers may decide that some EL students may attend Spanish-language classes, based on their CELDT level and classroom performance.

The ELD teacher will also be responsible for CELDT/ELPAC testing and reporting.

Additional Support for EL Students

The Family Outreach/Support Coordinator (FOSC) will be responsible for ensuring a strong home-school connection for EL families. This part-time staff member will serve as a liaison between teachers and parents of EL students in order to answer questions, identify needs, and help families feel connected to the school community. The FOSC will provide translation services during parent/teacher conferences as needed.

RVC will strive to be a welcoming, inclusive place for all students. Given the demographics of the Ross Valley community, we anticipate that most of our EL students will come from Spanish-speaking households. Important written communications will be translated, and Spanish interpretation and/or translation will be made available at school events whenever possible. Bilingual parent volunteers will assist with translation, when appropriate. In sensitive situations that require confidentiality (e.g. IEP meetings and conferences), a staff member (ELD teacher, Spanish teacher, or Family Outreach/Support Coordinator) will provide translation services. Students will not be used as translators.

RVC is committed to hiring instructional staff that 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. All six founding teachers who are planning to teach at RVC have CLAD certificates.

Reclassification of English Learners

RVC will evaluate the effectiveness of its education program for ELs by the following actions:

- Adhering to 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 availability of adequate resources

In addition, before the issuance of each progress report, teachers will summarize students’ mastery of standards for their current ELD level by analyzing assessment material collected throughout the quarter.

Reclassification criteria are outlined below:

- *Progress Report*—Meets or exceeds grade level standards in all ELA strands (Reading, Writing, and Listening/Speaking)
- *CELDT (or comparable scores on ELPAC)* —Overall performance level of 4 or 5 and skill area scores of 3 or higher in listening/speaking, reading, and writing
- *Teacher’s judgment*—This judgment may be based on teacher observation, review of student work samples, analysis of standards based progress reports
- *Smarter Balanced Test/CalMAPP*—Proficient or Advanced performance on the ELA section of the test
- *Parent Opinion and Consultation*—Notice will be provided to parents/guardians of their rights, and they will be encouraged to participate in the reclassification process. Teachers will provide an opportunity for a face-to-face meeting with the parents/guardians to discuss their child’s progress toward English language proficiency

RVC has set a reclassification target for annual student progress (see *Elements 2 & 3*). Students at RVC will be expected to progress one or two English language levels each year through targeted instruction and assessment. It is anticipated that students who are enrolled at RVC beginning in kindergarten will be re-designated as fluent-English proficient (RFEP) prior to middle school. Students who enroll at the school in subsequent years whose language development is still in the beginning or early intermediate stage will receive added intervention from the ELD Teacher through small group instruction targeted to meet their individual needs. The goal is that they will stay

on target to advance one to two levels or more per year such that they can be reclassified during their K- 8 career.

RVC will closely monitor EL students who are reclassified in order to ensure that EL students maintain their English proficiency level for at least two years after reclassification. The monitoring process will include: the Director will maintain a database of all reclassified EL students; the Director will meet at the beginning of each school year with the students' classroom teachers and the Family Outreach/Support Coordinator to ensure that all responsible parties know of reclassified students; if a reclassified student subsequently fails to meet grade level standards, the Director will work with the teacher to develop individualized interventions, which will typically follow a 3-step process including in-class modifications, referral to the Director for appropriately designed interventions, and a SST; and all efforts will be appropriately documented in the student's file.

Plan For Students With Disabilities/Special Education Students

RVC recognizes its responsibility to enroll and support students with disabilities who can benefit from its programs and who otherwise qualify for enrollment. RVC pledges to work in cooperation with the authorizer or SELPA to ensure that a free and appropriate education (FAPE) is provided to all students with exceptional needs. RVC will comply with all applicable state and federal laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement 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, RVC will comply with AB 602, authorizer guidelines, and all California laws pertaining to special education students.

RVC may initially be, by default, a public school of the authorizer for purposes of special education, pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b). However, RVC reserves the right to make written verifiable assurances that it shall 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.

If RVC operates as a school of the authorizer, RVC anticipates that a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") will be developed between the school and the authorizer, which shall delineate the respective responsibilities of RVC and the authorizer with regard to the funding and delivery of special education and related services.

With its educational philosophy, RVC believes that the best approach to educating high incidence special education students is for RVC to have as part of its educational team a special education certificated full-time staff member who shares the educational philosophy of the school and can be a team member with the other nine certificated classroom teachers, training them in the particular needs of the special ed students as well as implementing the Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) of the students

themselves. This will best enable RVC to serve students in the least restrictive environment.

To this end, if RVC operates as a school of the authorizer, the above mentioned MOU would delineate how such a division of responsibilities (eg., revenue and expenses, how this person would be selected, employed, and supervised) would work in the resulting, somewhat hybrid arrangement.

So long as RVC operates as a public school of the authorizer, solely for purposes of providing special education and related services under the IDEA pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b), in accordance with Education Code Section 47646 and 20 U.S.C. 1413, authorizer will provide special education services for students enrolled in the Charter School to the extent required by law. Specifically, the authorizer will (A) serve children with disabilities in the same manner as it serves children with disabilities in its other schools; and/or (B) provide RVC with an equitable share of state and federal special education funding to support special education instruction or designated instructors and services to students enrolled in the Charter School.

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

RVC will meet all of the requirements mandated within a student's IEP. The Charter School will seek to include all special needs students with typical students 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 Charter School will work with the authorizer and/or SELPA to provide an appropriate placement and services.

RVC will work with its authorizer and/or SELPA to make time and facilities available to meet the needs of the student's IEP. RVC will actively participate in all aspects of the IEP to enable the student to be successful, including the appropriate individual tutoring schedule, classroom modifications, accommodations, strategies, and techniques. The Charter School will make available each student's work products for analysis and evaluation of progress and will participate in the IEP reviews conducted by the authorizer, 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 RVC, which will then forward such written notice to authorizer and/or SELPA within two school days. The Charter School will encourage open communication between the parents and the authorizer and/or SELPA for any items related to the special education services. Students at RVC who have IEPs will continue to attend the Charter School, unless the IEP recommends otherwise.

In order to comply with Child Find requirements as specified by law, RVC will establish a referral and assessment process that brings together the parent/guardian, student,

and Charter School personnel to address any problems that interfere with a student's success at the Charter School. This process will entail search and serve, a Student Study Team, referral, assessment, and IEP review.

Search and Serve

Upon the commencement of RVC'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, RVC will work 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 will then convene the Student Study 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 Study Team composed of the student, the student's parent or guardian, the School Director, and an RVC faculty member 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 and/or accommodations, strategies and techniques to enhance that student's ability to be successful. If the Student Study 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. RVC 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 RVC with an existing IEP, RVC will notify the authorizer 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 meetings and pending agreements on a new IEP, RVC shall work with the authorizer and/or SELPA to implement the existing IEP at RVC 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. RVC's internal method for referral for assessment will be the Student Study 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 RVC within 15 days. RVC will notify the authorizer and/or SELPA (where applicable according to SELPA policies) of the assessment request within five days of receipt. Parents will be informed via the School Director or the Special Ed Teacher that special education and related services are provided at no cost to them.

If RVC, in collaboration with the authorizer and/or SELPA, concludes that an assessment is appropriate, the parent will receive a written Assessment Plan within 15 days, excluding school breaks longer than five school days. The parent will be given at least 15 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 IEP meeting held within 60 days (excluding school breaks longer than five school days) of receipt of the parent's written consent for assessment.

Assessment

The School Director will be responsible for gathering all pertinent information and sharing such information with the authorizer 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 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 are not limited to:

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

Unless conflicting with the authorizer or SELPA policies and procedures, RVC will assess students according to the following guidelines. If a conflict with authorizer or SELPA policies and procedures exists, then authorizer policies and procedures will govern.

- Parents or guardians of any student referred for assessment must give their written consent for the Charter School to administer the assessment.
- The assessment will be completed and an IEP meeting held within 60 days of receipt of the parent's written consent for assessment (excluding school breaks longer than five school days).
- 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 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.
- A multidisciplinary team will be assembled to assess the student, including a teacher who is familiar with 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. RVC, in coordination with the authorizer or SELPA, 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 Charter School will have an IEP that documents assessment results and eligibility determination for special education services.

RVC, in collaboration with the authorizer or SELPA, will ensure that all aspects of the IEP and school site implementation are maintained. RVC will provide modifications and accommodations (outlined within each child's IEP) in the general education environment, taught by the general education teacher. Students at the Charter School who have IEPs 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, or a representative selected by the parent in accordance with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- 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
- An authorizer OR SELPA Special Education Representative

- If the child was recently assessed, the individual who conducted the assessment or who is qualified to interpret the assessment results
- At the discretion of the parent, guardian, or the local educational agency, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the pupil, including related services personnel, as appropriate. The determination of whether the individual has knowledge or special expertise regarding the pupil shall be made by the party who invites the individual to be a member of the individualized education program team.

Others familiar with the student may be invited as needed. RVC 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 Charter 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 Charter School will ensure his/her participation using other methods, such as conferencing by telephone or meeting at the parent's home.

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

Upon the parent or guardian's written consent, the IEP will be implemented by RVC. The IEP will include all required components and be written on authorizer or SELPA forms.

The student's IEP will include the following:

- 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 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
- Accommodations necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the pupil on state and school 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
- When RVC 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 the individual student's 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 Charter School. Once the request is received, RVC 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 three times a year (which is the same frequency as progress is reported to all students and parents) 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

Even if the authorizer holds ultimate responsibility for providing Special Education services (so long as RVC operates as a school of the authorizer for purposes of special education), RVC is committed to assuring all IEPs are properly implemented and all students requiring services are adequately taken care of.

It is the goal of RVC, as stated in the introduction to this section, whether it acts as its own LEA for special education or operates as a school in the authorizer's LEA, to have as part of its education team at least one full-time teacher who will possess a Special Education Credential. This teacher, along with the School Director of RVC, will be the primary RVC representatives tasked with ensuring that all aspects of the IEP and any possible 504 plans are properly implemented. All teaching staff at RVC will also be involved in ensuring that all IEPs and 504 plans are properly implemented.

As an LEA for special education purposes and a member of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA, RVC will only hire employees to deliver instruction outlined in IEPs that are fully credentialed in California to provide those services. In the Petition Appendix pp 129-30 is the Job Description of the special education teacher RVC plans to employ. The minimum qualifications are: "Special Education Certification and at least 3 years of experience as a Special Education Teacher." Any NPS or NPA that provides educational services to RVC students with IEPs will have to provide proof of a current certification issued by the California Department of Education. In addition, all employees of any NPS or NPA that provides services to RVC will be appropriately credentialed or licensed as required by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. RVC will consult with the North State Charter JPA to get assistance with starting up its Special Education program and may use North State personnel to provide educational services as RVC builds its network of providers.

As a member of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA RVC will fully utilize the professional development services provided by the SELPA. Marin and Sonoma SELPAs also provide excellent professional development services and RVC will utilize them heavily for both its special and general education teachers. The El Dorado SELPA will assign a program specialist to RVC who will visit RVC and provide support to the teaching staff. RVC will develop a startup partnership with the North state Charter JPA and as part of that partnership will have access to additional professional development both in person and through webinars. This professional development includes but is not limited to in-service on Child Find, Compliance, Writing compliant IEP's, Transition Plans, 504's, MTSS and RTI, IEE's, Prior Written Notice and Manifestation Determinations in addition to other topics. As part of the consulting relationship with the JPA, RVC's staff will be assigned an experienced mentor who will visit the school regularly and will be available by phone or email on a daily basis if necessary. The Special Education Teacher at RVC will have a mentor from the JPA who is an Education Specialist and has worked in charters school for many years and has been an educational specialist for more than 20 years. This mentor can provide curriculum help as well as assistance writing compliant IEP's. If the staff at RVC needs access to instructional materials or assessments for a period of time, these can be provided through a check out system at the JPA. Should the need arise; the director of the North State JPA will be available to chair difficult IEP meetings. The JPA will also help RVC file MOE, Casemis, SEIS and Mental Health reports that are a necessary part of belonging to the EL Dorado Charter SELPA. The administrative assistant at the JPA has been filing these reports on behalf of numerous schools for many years. Over time, it is believed that RVC will require less assistance and will develop capacity to take on some of these tasks itself but in the meantime, the teachers and service providers that serve the students with disabilities at RVC will be well supported regardless of the needs or disabilities of the students they serve.

The School Director and the Special Ed teacher will have joint responsibility for the following (with the School Director having ultimate responsibility):

- Ensure that all aspects of the IEP are followed
- Arrange for the teachers of students with IEPs to attend the team meetings

- Communicate with parents about progress made toward attaining the goals stated on the student's IEP, and inform them of due process procedures and rights
- Perform a quarterly review to ensure that the objectives and goals of students with IEPs are being met
- Complete the requisite paperwork, updating and filing of necessary information for initial referrals, triennial evaluations, ongoing monitoring of student progress, and appropriate provision of any/all test modifications and SBAC accommodations as stipulated in the IEP and allowed by current California law⁴⁷
- Maintain a central file with all special education evaluation material and IEPs in accordance with FERPA and IDEA guidelines; and
- Provide a report of student progress to the board on the same schedule as students in general education

In addition to the above special education staff, RVC will, if operating as a school of the authorizer for special education services, also seek related services from the authorizer for special education students enrolled in RVC in the same manner as is provided to students in other authorizer schools, as will be outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding. RVC also reserves the right to contract with service providers outside of the RVSD/Marin County, when appropriate.

Reporting

RVC, in collaboration with the authorizer and/or the SELPA will collect and maintain the following information on developmentally 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 Language Learners
- The number of students provided with test accommodations if such reporting is required by California Law and/or regulation and the types and the number of students exempted from authorizer assessments and the reasons they were exempted if allowed by California law and/or regulation
- The settings in which students with disabilities receive their services, specifically including the portion of the school day that they receive services in general education and the portion of the day that they are not in general education
- The number of students with disabilities suspended "in-school" and out of school, organized by disability and length of suspensions
- The basis of exit from RVC of students with disabilities, i.e., attainment of diploma and type, exits from special ed, moved, etc.

All necessary procedures and practices to ensure confidentiality and accurate/timely reporting will be the responsibility of the RVC School Director. The School Director will

⁴⁷ See SmarterBalanced_Guidelines.pdf and SmarterBalanced_Guidelines_FAQ.pdf as referenced in <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/access.asp> [2015]<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/access.asp>

ensure that a central file with all special education evaluation material and IEPs is maintained and that this file is locked and confidential, in accordance with IDEA guidelines. 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 RVC must give written consent for the evaluation and placement of their child, be included in the decision-making process when a change in Special Education placement is under consideration, and be invited, along with teachers, to conferences and meetings to develop their child's IEP.

The Charter School will acknowledge any concerns or disagreements raised by parents within five days, 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 Charter 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 regarding placement, at least once per year. RVC will utilize the Notice of Procedural Safeguards used by the authorizer or SELPA in which it is a member.

Dispute Resolution⁴⁸

In the event that a parent/guardian files a request for a due process hearing or a request for mediation, the RVC shall defend the case.

⁴⁸ In the event that RVC opts to operate as an LEA in a SELPA other than Marin County, RVC 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 the Charter School, the authorizer and/or California State Department of Education if they believe that the Charter School has violated federal laws, state laws, or regulations governing special education.

Special Education Strategies for Instruction and Services

RVC will comply with the federal mandate of the “least restrictive environment”, meaning that the Charter School will make every attempt to educate special education students along with their typically developing peers. RVC will mainstream all of its students as much as is appropriate according to each IEP, offering a comprehensive inclusion program that incorporates specialized individual tutoring. Each student’s IEP requires unique modifications 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 Charter School. Qualified personnel will deliver the instruction outlined in each student’s IEP.

The regular education teachers will be assisted by the special education teacher and other special education professionals in developing understanding of the particular and specific needs of their special education students. Specific instructional materials and programs will be developed as appropriate for the special education needs of the specific children in the program.

The materials and programs used for particular students are created/assigned based on the specific needs and disabilities of each student. These are developed based on assessments and input from the IEP team including teachers and parents on an individual basis. Depending on the needs of the students some online programs such as Lexia, Dreambox, Raz kids, IREADY and others may be used. We will ensure that all of our programs are evidenced based. By using online programs, the student can access the program both at home and at school and each of the programs has some sort of system to track the student’s progress. Possible reading programs that may be used include but are not limited to, Read Naturally, High Noon, Spalding Phonics, Reading Milestones, Edmark, Orton Gillingham, PALS, Rewards, Lindemood Bell and others depending on the needs of the child. In addition, the students will participate in the general education classroom Common Core Based Curriculum with modifications and accommodations as necessary. These will be outlined in the IEP. Math programs include but are not limited to: Math U See, Touch Points, IREADY Math, Kahn Academy and many others. In many cases a student with disabilities can continue to participate in the regular classroom math program with accommodations and modifications that are developed during the IEP. If the staff at RVC needs additional help in the development of appropriate programs for students with disabilities efforts, RVC will ensure that they get the professional development and the chance for visitations to outstanding programs to help them improve their own programs.

Professional Development for RVC Staff

The School Director, regular 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 authorizer or SELPA.

So long as RVC operates as a “school of the authorizer” for special education services, the authorizer agrees to allow RVC staff access to all Special Education related professional development. RVC intends to seek professional development opportunities that are available to other employees of authorizer.

RVC also intends to seek professional development opportunities for its staff through potential trainings facilitated by the County Office of Education, colleges and universities, and private companies or agencies.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

RVC shall be solely responsible for its compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. All facilities of the Charter School shall be accessible for all students with disabilities in accordance with the ADA.

RVC 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 RVC. Any student, who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits at least one major life activity, is eligible for protections under Section 504.

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 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 504 team shall carry out the student evaluation, evaluate the nature of the student’s impairment, the meaning of the evaluation data, placement options, and accommodations 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 designed to provide a single, general, intelligent quotient
- Tests are selected and administered to ensure that when a test is given to a student with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, that 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 the IDEA, the 504 team will make a referral for assessment under the IDEA.

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 a free and appropriate public education. 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 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 reviews 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.

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 school-wide 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 has set high expectations for its students and staff. RVC’s goal is to have all students graduate from RVC:

- 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 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
- Be persistent and engaged in learning to continue on to middle school, high school, college, and beyond as lifelong learners who own their own learning.

Ross Valley Charter’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. RVC 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.

RVC has created 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. RVC 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.

Charter School Goals and Outcomes That Align With 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, both school-wide and for all pupil subgroups, as described in Education Code Section 52060(d), and specific annual actions to achieve those goals.

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."

The following chart delineates the RVC school-wide and subgroup outcome goals and performance targets aligned to the state's priorities that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school, methods for measuring progress and the individual(s) with primary responsibility for each, all aligned with the state's priorities defined in Cal. Ed. Code Section 52060(d). As the State and Authorizer finalize new standardized assessment tools (e.g., [assessments]) and new school performance measures (e.g., API), and finalize the format for the new Local Control Accountability Plans as applicable to charter schools, RVC will work with the Authorizer to ensure that it creates and updates its plans and goals accordingly. The LCAP shall not be deemed part of the charter, and therefore, annual amendments to the LCAP shall not be considered a "material revision to the charter" as defined on section 47607. Actions intended to ensure that the school meets these goals and targets are delineated throughout this charter petition (e.g., Element 1: Educational Program; Element 4: Governance and parental involvement; etc.) See the following chart for specific actions, their corresponding assessments and the school personnel responsible for their implementation.

In addition to the multiple measures of student progress throughout the year, indicated in the chart below, and described more fully in the sections that follow the chart, RVC will adapt its assessment rubrics to requirements that result from the updating of the No Child Left Behind law now happening in Congress, as well as the evolving state requirements described in the previous paragraph.

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	RVC will identify, attract, and build the capacity of teachers, leaders, and classified staff, in order to support students and families. All students will be 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.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 100% of RVC teachers are appropriately assigned, as reported in the annual SARC. 2. 100% of RVC teachers are fully credentialed, as reported in the annual SARC. 3. 100% of RVC teachers are highly qualified, as reported in the annual SARC. 	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Ensure all classroom teachers hold a valid CA Teaching Credential as defined by the CA Commission on Teaching Credentialing (CCTC) and appropriate EL authorization.	Personnel records, including documentation of required assessments, coursework, and credentials consistent with CCTC.	School Director
Verify all teachers are highly qualified as specified by §9101(23) of the ESEA.	Personnel records, including documentation of required assessments, coursework, and credentials consistent with CCTC.	School Director
Subject all new teacher candidates to a rigorous hiring process, which includes paper screening, interviews, and reference checks.	Successful completion of a rigorous interview process that incorporates feedback from multiple stakeholders including School Director, other teachers, and parents.	School Director, Board of Directors
SUBPRIORITY B – INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS		

GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	All RVC students, including all subgroups, will have access to a range of current instructional strategies and CCSS aligned materials that serve different styles, paces, and preferences.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	100% of RVC students have access to up-to-date, standards-aligned instructional materials in their classrooms, as reported in the annual SARC.	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Have school leaders and faculty research and create or obtain up-to-date, standards-based instructional materials aligned to CCSS.	Review of yearly scope and sequence and unit plans.	Teachers and School Director
Allocate budget to purchase needed curriculum materials.	School Budget.	School Director, Board of Directors
SUBPRIORITY C – FACILITIES		
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	School facilities will be maintained in good repair, as defined by California Education Code §17002.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	Good or Exemplary rating according to the State of California’s Facility Inspection Tool.	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Maintain and update facilities as needed to provide a safe, clean learning environment.	Annual Inspection with Facility Inspection Tool, daily spot checks, and regular walkthroughs.	School Director
Address safety hazards immediately and refer general needs items to the Board for review and prioritization.	Maintenance records. Improvement records as reflected in Board of Directors written records.	School Director
SUBPRIORITY D – TECHNOLOGY		
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	Teachers and students will have access to technology. RVC will ensure all students, including all subgroups, are proficient in grade-appropriate technology skills.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	1. RVC has three recharging cart with 27 student laptops (such as Chromebooks) to be shared by	

	<p>the 2nd/3rd and 4th/5th grade classes, all with wireless Internet access.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. 100% of classrooms have presentation technology. 3. 100% of classroom teachers have a laptop computer. 4. Internet uptime during school hours is 98% and response time is 10 seconds or less. 5. 100% of graduating 5th graders can write on computers using word processing and can conduct research online. 	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Provide three mobile computer carts with 27 laptops to be shared by 2 nd /3 rd and 4 th /5 th classrooms. Ensure that the number and type of student computers are sufficient for CAASPP testing.	Annual Inventory of Devices.	School Director,
Equip classrooms with presentation technology reasonably equivalent to Ross Valley School District.	Annual Inventory of Devices	School Director,
Provide each teacher with a laptop computer.	Annual Inventory of Devices	School Director,
Ensure reliable Internet access, based on a stable network infrastructure, and sufficient wireless bandwidth to support computers.	Internet Uptime percentage and average response time reports from Internet Service Provider and school routers.	School Director
Provide 4 th /5 th grade students with instruction and guidance in the use of computers for word processing and Internet research.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.	Teachers

STATE PRIORITY #2— IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS 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 RVC curricula will be aligned to the CCSS. The School will ensure that all students, including all subgroups, engage in relevant, motivating, personalized learning experiences that integrate collaboration, communication, creativity, and—in the upper grades—the use of technology.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of teachers share at least two model lessons each year in the Wednesday afternoon teacher meetings, which show alignment with CCSS. RVC students, including all subgroups, perform at comparable rates of proficiency in CAASPP testing as Ross Valley School District elementary students District-wide. 	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Align curriculum to CCSS.	<p>Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.</p> <p>Interim (trimester) assessment data and Smarter Balanced assessment results.</p>	Teachers, School Director
Incorporate CCSS curriculum alignment review into the agendas of Professional Development and Wednesday afternoon teacher meetings.	<p>Wednesday afternoon PLC meeting agendas.</p> <p>Professional development schedules.</p>	Teachers, School Director
Provide professional development and leadership opportunities around curriculum and instruction.	Professional development schedules.	Teachers, School Director
SUBPRIORITY B – EL STUDENTS & ACADEMIC CONTENT KNOWLEDGE		
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	All students, including all subgroups, will have access to instructional materials aligned to CCSS. RVC will provide specific support for struggling students in English Learner and other	

	student subgroups.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RVC EL Students perform at comparable rates of proficiency on annual CAASPP tests as Ross Valley School District EL elementary students District-wide. 2. 100% of students, including 100% of all subgroup students, have access to instructional materials aligned to CCSS. 3. 100% of classroom teachers receive professional development on scaffolding the CCSS for ELs. 4. 100% of teachers receive training in best practices to improve English Language proficiency. 	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Analyze data and monitor English Learner progress in academic content knowledge to provide timely interventions.	Baseline, formative, and interim assessment data in all subjects, and Smarter Balanced assessment results. EL student portfolios	Teachers, School Director
Require all staff (teachers and administrators) to receive training in CCSS-aligned best practices in curriculum and instruction highlighting needs of all subgroups.	Professional development schedules.	School Director
Train teachers in best practices to improve academic achievement among ELs, using Problem Based Learning (PBL) and GLAD strategies.	Professional development schedules.	School Director
Provide professional development for teachers and administrators on how to scaffold the CCSS for access for ELs.	Professional development schedules.	School Director
Provide a broad range of high-quality, standards-aligned instructional resources that facilitate ELs' access to core curriculum and expand their knowledge of the world. Provide	Annual Inventory of Instructional Materials and assessment rubrics.	Teachers, School Director, Leadership Council

curriculum and unit development aligned to both CCSS and ELD standards.		
Hire an ELD teacher to work directly with students and support classroom teachers in the implementation of CCSS content material.	Personnel records.	School Director
SUBPRIORITY C – EL STUDENTS & ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY		
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	All RVC EL students make progress to become proficient in English.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 90% of EL students will progress at least one English level each year, as measured by the CELDT or ELPAC test, through targeted instruction and assessment 2. 90% of EL students improve at least three levels in reading (using Lucy Calkins assessment) each year. 3. 95% of EL students show growth in writing ability on Lucy Calkins Units of Study writing checklists. 4. 100% of EL students receive ongoing support from classroom teacher and ELD teacher. 5. 100% of teachers receive training in best practices to improve English Language proficiency. 	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
RVC hires an ELD teacher to work with classroom teachers and students to support implementation of CCSS content material and literacy through ELD instruction.	Hiring records	School Director
ELD teacher works with classroom teachers to support EL students. Classroom teachers use the new CCSS EL standards to guide instruction of EL students. Teachers give individualized instruction with focused English Language support.	Regular check-ins with the ELD teacher and professional development agendas.	School Director

<p>EL students work with the ELD teacher as needed for support in reading and writing development, as well as content vocabulary and concepts.</p>	<p>Formative, interim, and summative assessment data (reading levels, writing checklists, math assessments, science and social studies assessments) and student portfolios.</p>	<p>School Director</p>
<p>Align curriculum to ELD standards.</p>	<p>Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.</p>	<p>School Director</p>
<p>Provide all English Learners with access to ELD teacher as needed for support in reading and writing development.</p>	<p>ELD teacher schedule.</p>	<p>School Director, Teachers, ELD Teacher</p>
<p>Analyze data and monitor English Learner progress in language development and provide timely interventions. Conduct ongoing assessments with special attention to fluency and correctness in reading, writing, speaking.</p>	<p>CELDT or ELPAC results.</p> <p>Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (“TCRWP”) leveled reading assessment.</p> <p>Lucy Calkins Units of Study writing checklist.</p> <p>EL Student portfolios.</p>	<p>Teachers</p>
<p>Train teachers in best practices to improve English language proficiency among ELs. Provide professional development for teachers and administrators on how to scaffold the CCSS for access for ELs. Provide training on integrated/designated ELD instruction and targeted interventions.</p>	<p>Professional development schedules.</p>	<p>School Director</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>		
<p>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</p>	<p>Parents will be an integral part of the RVC community and will participate in the governance and operation of the school. Parents will view RVC as receptive to their input and involvement.</p>	
<p>MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At least two parents serve on Board of Directors. 2. At least four parents serve on Leadership Council. 3. At least 80% of California School Parent Survey respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that RVC welcomes parents’ contributions and actively seeks the input of parents before making important decisions. 	
<p>ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL</p>	<p>METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT</p>	<p>PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE</p>

Hold annual elections among parents for the Leadership Council.	Leadership Council membership roster.	Leadership Council
Hold elections for two parent Board of Directors member nominees, to be considered for appointment by the then-existing Board of Directors to the two Board seats reserved for Parents.	Board of Directors membership roster.	Board of Directors
Identify and appoint additional parent Board of Directors members.	Board of Directors membership roster.	Board of Directors
Solicit parent feedback through annual (or more frequent) surveys.	CDE's California School Parent Survey or similar.	School Director
Conduct periodic community meetings to consult with non-Leadership Council and non-Board parents.	Parent meeting minutes.	School Director, Leadership Council
Train school staff in effective parent engagement practices.	Professional development schedules.	School Director, Leadership Council
Collect and respond to parent concerns in a respectful and timely fashion.	Parent feedback file.	School Director
SUBPRIORITY B – PROMOTING PARENT PARTICIPATION		
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	Parents will be welcomed to participate in classroom and RVC community events.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	At least 40% of parents choose to 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. Volunteering is not a requirement, but parents will be welcomed to participate.	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Encourage parental volunteerism at Back to School night.	Volunteer rosters. Back to School night packets.	Teachers, Leadership Council

<p>Welcome and encourage parental volunteerism by keeping parents informed of volunteer opportunities, parent educational offerings, and informational meetings, via the school newsletter.</p>	<p>Volunteer rosters. Archive of school newsletters.</p>	<p>Leadership Council</p>
<p>Provide translation services for school newsletters, parent meetings, and parent-teacher conferences as needed.</p>	<p>Budget and expense records.</p>	<p>School Director</p>
<p>Hire a Family Outreach/Support Coordinator to reach out to parents of socio-economically underprivileged, EL, and other parents to facilitate access and involvement.</p>	<p>Personnel records.</p>	<p>School Director</p>
<p>SUBPRIORITY C -- LCAP</p>		
<p>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</p>	<p>RVC will consult with parents on LCAP goals, actions, outcomes, and metrics.</p>	
<p>MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)</p>	<p>At least 50% of LCAP goals are generated through parent meetings.</p>	
<p>ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL</p>	<p>METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT</p>	<p>PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE</p>
<p>Conduct parent meetings to consult with parents (including non-Board and non-Leadership-Council parent members) during the LCAP development process. Conduct parent survey to gather feedback.</p>	<p>Annual LCAP. Parent meeting minutes. Parent Survey.</p>	<p>School Director, Leadership Council</p>

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, MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, SOCIAL STUDIES

GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	<p>Students will become proficient readers and writers of the English language.</p> <p>Students will become proficient in mathematical skills and content.</p> <p>Students will master concepts in Science and Social Studies.</p>
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MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 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. 2. 80% or more of Free and Reduced Price Lunch 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 3. 80% or more of all students are classified as being at or above grade level on TCRWP reading assessment. 4. 80% or more of all students meet grade level expectations in writing according to the Lucy Calkins Units of Study writing checklists. 5. 80% or more of all students demonstrate at least one year of growth on the Mathematics portions of the CAASPP assessments. 6. 80% or more of Free and Reduced Price Lunch students demonstrate at least one year of growth on the Mathematics portions of the CAASPP
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	<p>assessments.</p> <p>7. 80% or more of all students show mastery of math concepts on unit assessments.</p> <p>8. 80% or more of all students show mastery of science and social studies concepts on unit assessments.</p> <p>9. Low income pupils at RVC (i.e., those who qualify for Free and Reduced Price Lunch program) will on average score higher than RVSD low income pupils averages on CAASPP assessments.</p>	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Support student progress towards mastery of standards using inquiry-based transdisciplinary units that help students make connections between subject areas and individual concepts/skills. Teachers use research-based instructional methods.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans, and unit and trimester assessment data.	Teachers
Create an inclusive and supportive environment for all students by providing appropriate intervention and enrichment programs as needed.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans. Notes from Student Success Team meetings.	Teachers, Intervention Teacher, School Director
Analyze student CAASPP test scores and other diagnostic results and adjust instruction to ensure proficiency in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics.	Lucy Calkins Units of Study writing checklists and ELA and math Interim Assessments	Teachers
SUBPRIORITY B – API		
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	RVC will meet state requirements for academic performance schoolwide and for all subgroups.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	RVC meets state target of the statewide measure that will be established by State Board of Education (SBE) that will replace API, schoolwide and for all subgroups.	

ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Monitor all students to assure they are making expected progress.	Continuous monitoring of student growth, including all subgroups, using regular reading, writing, and math assessments, CRESST or another nationally normed formative assessments, which are aligned to CCSS.	Teachers
ELD Teacher and Intervention Teacher work with classroom teachers to support struggling students.	ELD Teacher weekly schedule. Intervention Teacher weekly schedule.	ELD Teacher, Intervention Teacher
SUBPRIORITY C – UC/CSU COURSE REQUIREMENTS (OR CTE) [NOT APPLICABLE]		
SUBPRIORITY D – EL PROFICIENCY RATES		
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	EL students will make progress toward EL proficiency each year.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	1. 90% of EL students increase CELDT or ELPAC level each year.	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Monitor EL students to assure they are making expected progress.	Reading, Writing, and Math formative assessments, CELDT or ELPAC scores. Student progress reports.	ELD Teacher, Teachers
Use the new CCSS EL standards to guide instruction of EL students.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.	Teachers
Give individualized instruction with focused English Language support.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.	Teachers
ELD teacher works with classroom teachers to support EL students, and with small	ELD teacher schedule.	ELD Teacher

groups of EL students.		
SUBPRIORITY E – EL RECLASSIFICATION RATES		
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	English Learner reclassification rates will meet or exceed the District’s EL reclassification rate for K-6	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	RVC meets or exceeds the RVSD 3 year rolling average percentage of EL students reclassified each year as a percentage of the previous year’s EL total.	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
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.	ELD teacher schedule. Reclassification statistics. Formative assessments in reading, writing, math.	Teachers, ELD Teacher
Provide ongoing monitoring and support of students after becoming reclassified.	Formative assessments in reading, writing, math, science, social studies. Interim Language Arts and math assessments. CELDT or ELPAC tests.	ELD Teacher
SUBPRIORITY F – AP EXAM PASSAGE RATE [NOT APPLICABLE]		
SUBPRIORITY G – COLLEGE PREPAREDNESS/EAP [NOT APPLICABLE]		

STATE PRIORITY #5— STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

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

- 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	RVC will maintain a high average daily attendance rate, schoolwide and for all subgroups.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	ADA rates are at least 96%.	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Monitor attendance records of students.	Monthly reports and School Director apportionment period attendance rates.	School Director
Educate parents about the importance of regular school attendance.	Parent meeting records. School newsletters.	School Director, Teachers, Leadership Council
Have a conference with parents of children who miss school regularly to encourage regular attendance.	Meeting records of School Director, Teachers, and/or Family Outreach/Support Coordinator.	Teachers, Family Outreach/Support Coordinator

SUBPRIORITY B – STUDENT ABSENTEEISM RATES

GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	RVC will have no chronic absenteeism (defined as missing 10% or more of school days) for reasons other than illness or approved leave.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	No RVC students are absent 18 or more school days in a school year for reasons other than illness or approved leave.	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE

Incorporate a social-emotional curriculum, such as Tool Box.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.	School Director
Conduct regular community building events and activities.	Master schedule.	School Director
Provide support for struggling students from ELD Teacher or Intervention teacher.	ELD Teacher schedule. Intervention Teacher schedule.	ELD and Intervention Teachers.
Note: All actions listed under Subpriority A of Priority #5 also apply to Subpriority B of Priority #5.		
SUBPRIORITY C – MIDDLE SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES [NOT APPLICABLE]		
SUBPRIORITY D – HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES [NOT APPLICABLE]		
SUBPRIORITY E – HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES [NOT APPLICABLE]		

STATE PRIORITY #6— SCHOOL CLIMATE		
School climate, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:		
<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	RVC will minimize pupil suspension rates by implementing various methods to help students who are struggling schoolwide and for all subgroups.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	RVC suspension rate is less than 2% in any given year, and less than 1% averaged over any given 6-year period schoolwide and for all subgroups.	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Refer children who are struggling emotionally or behaviorally for counseling.	Counseling referrals.	Teachers.
Note: All actions listed under Subpriorities A and B of Priority #5 also apply to Subpriority A of Priority #6.		
SUBPRIORITY B – PUPIL EXPULSION RATES		
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	RVC will minimize pupil expulsion by implementing various methods to support students who are struggling.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	RVC expulsion rate is less than 1% in any given year, and less than 0.5% averaged over any 6-year period schoolwide and for all subgroups.	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Work with parents of students who are struggling to consider other methods of support.	Suspension records. Records of School Director meetings with parents.	School Director.
Note: All actions listed under Subpriorities A and B of Priority #5 and Subpriority A of Priority #6 also apply to Subpriority B of Priority #6.		
SUBPRIORITY C – OTHER SCHOOL SAFETY AND SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS MEASURES (SURVEYS)		

<p>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</p>	<p>Students and adults in the RVC community will participate in creating an environment in which students feel connected and physically and emotionally safe. Students, teachers, and parents will report a sense of safety and school connectedness. The RVC community will support students and teachers to achieve cultural competency: the will and ability to create, nurture, and sustain authentic relationships across differences.</p>	
<p>MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 80% or more of faculty and parents report that the school provides a safe environment for students on the School Climate and School Parent surveys. 2. 80% or more of faculty and parents report that the school engages students on the School Climate and School Parent surveys. 3. 80% or more of all 5th graders including subgroups report positive scores on School Connectedness Scale questions of the California Healthy Kids Survey. 4. 80% or more of all 5th graders including subgroups report positive scores on School Protective Factor questions of the California Healthy Kids Survey. 5. 100% of teachers receive cultural competency training. 6. 100% of teachers will share at least one lesson or activity per year that teaches and reinforces cultural competency during Wednesday meetings. 	
<p>ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL</p>	<p>METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT</p>	<p>PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE</p>

Incorporate a social-emotional curriculum, such as Tool Box.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.	Teachers, School Director
Hold regular classroom meetings to discuss issues.	Classroom schedules.	Teachers
Conduct regular community building events and activities.	Master schedule.	School Director
Invite parents to school events and celebrations.	Archive of school newsletter.	School Director, Leadership Council
Provide parents with an outlet to discuss concerns via the Leadership Council.	Leadership Council minutes.	Leadership Council
Conduct annual surveys of students, teachers, and parents.	California School Climate Survey, California School Parent Survey, California Healthy Kids Survey (Questions 1-38).	School Director
Train parent volunteers in appropriate ways to interact with students.	Parent training materials.	School Director, Teachers
Train playground supervisors in conflict management techniques.	Parent training materials.	School Director, Teachers
Train teachers in cultural competency. Work with all staff to improve cultural competency.	Professional development schedule. Records of all lessons/activities shared by teachers.	School Director,
Help students achieve cultural competency.	Yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans and student portfolios.	Teachers.

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 PRIORITY	RVC will provide all students including all subgroups access to a broad course of study.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 100% of students, including all subgroups, receive instruction in English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, and health. 2. 100% of students, including all subgroups, are provided PE classes 200 minutes every two weeks. 	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Provide all students with instruction in English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, health, and physical education (PE).	Master Schedule Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.	School Director
Provide teachers with professional development in elevating student achievement and engagement, cultural competency, and proficiency.	Professional development schedule.	School Director

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, including all subgroups, will become competent readers, writers, and speakers of the English Language.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	80% or more of all students, including all subgroups, demonstrate at least one year of growth on the English Language Arts portions of the CAASPP assessments.	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Use CCSS to guide ELA instruction.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans, as well as formative and interim (trimester) assessment data and student portfolios.	School Director
Provide support to EL students from classroom teachers and ELD teacher.	ELD schedule	ELD Teacher
Monitor student progress in English-Language reading, writing, and speaking.	TCRWP reading assessments, Lucy Calkins Units of Study writing checklists, CAASPP assessments.	Teachers
SUBPRIORITY B – MATHEMATICS		
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	All students, including all subgroups, will acquire mathematical skills.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	80% or more of all students, including all subgroups, demonstrate at least one year of growth on the Mathematics portions of the Smarter Balanced assessment.	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE

Use CCSS to guide mathematics instruction.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.	School Director
Monitor student progress in mathematics.	Math unit assessments, teacher observation and formative assessments, exit slips, interim (trimester) assessments, Smarter Balanced assessment results.	Teachers
Support students struggling in math.	Teacher schedules & student progress on formative, interim, and summative assessments.	Teachers, classroom volunteers
SUBPRIORITY C – SOCIAL SCIENCES		
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	All students will develop an awareness of 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.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	80% or more of students, including all subgroups, earn a rating of “understands content and concepts” on social studies progress reports.	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Use California’s History-Social Science Content Standards to guide instruction.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.	School Director
Monitor student progress in social studies.	Assessments and self-assessments of projects and written work, RVC progress reports.	Teachers
SUBPRIORITY D – SCIENCE		
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	All students, including all subgroups, will understand science concepts and scientific thinking.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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, including all subgroups, earn a rating of “understands content 	

		and concepts” in science on RVC progress reports.
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Use Next Generation Science Standards for California to guide instruction.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans	School Director
Teachers use hands-on, interactive activities to increase interest and competence in science.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.	School Director
Monitor student progress in science.	Teacher observation, assessments of science projects and classwork, CAASPP, RVC progress report, student portfolios.	Teachers
SUBPRIORITY E – VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS		
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	All students, including all subgroups, will have frequent opportunities to practice visual and performing arts both in their regular classrooms and in specialized art and music classes.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 100% of students, including all subgroups, do at least one art project per month as part of their daily classroom instruction. 2. 100% of students, including all subgroups, will have the opportunity to participate in at least one performance per school year, and at least 95% will participate. 	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Incorporate art projects into transdisciplinary instruction.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans. Student portfolios.	School Director, Teachers
Offer art, music and poetry instruction to all students.	Master schedule.	School Director
Produce at least one performance per class per school year.	Performance schedule.	Teachers

SUBPRIORITY F – PHYSICAL EDUCATION		
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	Students, including all subgroups, will receive physical education instruction each week.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	100% of students attending school, including all subgroups (with the exception of students excused for medical reasons) participates in an average of 200 minutes of PE every two weeks.	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Hire a PE teacher.	Personnel records.	School Director
Schedule PE classes amounting to an average of 200 minutes of PE every two weeks.	Master schedule	PE Teacher
SUBPRIORITY G – HEALTH (GRADES 1-6 ONLY)		
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	Students school-wide, including all subgroups, will learn appropriate skills to ensure physical and emotional health.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of students are provided health education as part of 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. 	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Incorporate a social-emotional curriculum.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.	School Director
Include a health component in PE classes.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.	School Director
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 RVC Goals

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

RVC-Specific Goal: GRADUATE PROFILE SKILLS		
GOAL	<p>Students will demonstrate high levels of the following skills emphasized in RVC's Graduate Profile:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent and confident • Collaborative problem solvers • Effective communicators • Creative and adaptive thinkers • People who persevere • Caring community members • Solid in foundational academic skills 	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	80% of students show mastery of each of the specified skills on year-end progress reports.	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Design open-ended projects for students to work on independently, with a partner, or in small groups.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans. Student portfolios.	School Director, Teachers
Lead discussions with students on process skills, and identify for students when skills are being demonstrated.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans. Student reflections.	Teachers
Monitor student progress in understanding and developing Graduate Profile skills.	Progress reports, teacher observations. Formative and Interim Assessments. Student portfolios.	Teachers
RVC-Specific Goal: SERVICE LEARNING		
GOAL	RVC will encourage students to be active participants in their communities and the larger world.	

MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	100% of students participate in service-learning projects.	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Incorporate at least one service-learning project into each class each year.	Review of yearly, unit, and daily lesson plans.	Teachers
RVC-Specific Goal: FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY		
GOAL	RVC will demonstrate fiduciary and financial responsibility.	
MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a positive operating income every year. 2. Maintain positive cash balance. 3. After 5 years maintain a 10% reserve. 	
ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL	METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE
Maintain a balanced budget and adequate monthly cash flow with an annual reserve starting in the second year of operation.	Bimonthly (every other month) financial reporting to the Board including budgeted vs. actual revenue and expense and cash flow	School Director
Produce financial reports and submit an annual balanced budget demonstrating fiscal transparency, sound financial standing, and prudent resource allocation.	Bimonthly financial reporting to the Board including budgeted vs. actual revenue and expense and cash flow	School Director
Consult with staff and parents on the budget.	Parent meeting minutes. Staff meeting minutes.	School Director
Achieve and maintain full enrollment.	Enrollment records.	School Director
RVC-Specific Goal: BOARD OF DIRECTORS		

<p>GOAL</p>	<p>The Board of Directors will provide effective and sound oversight of Ross Valley Charter. RVC governance and leadership will effectively support the essential work of the Charter School to promote teaching and learning.</p>	
<p>MEASURABLE OUTCOME(S)</p>	<p>The Charter School substantially meets its goals annually (or in accordance with other applicable timeframe specified in the goals).</p>	
<p>ACTION(S) TO ACHIEVE GOAL</p>	<p>METHOD(S) OF ASSESSMENT</p>	<p>PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE</p>
<p>The Board of Directors will analyze 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.</p>	<p>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 Trimester reports on Interim Assessments aligned with CCSS. Board approved action plans to mitigate any shortfalls in these goals.</p>	<p>School Director</p>

Progress Reports

RVC will use progress reports to monitor, summarize, and report student achievement. Progress reports will be a mechanism to report individual student progress toward our learning goals to parents at the end of each trimester. Data from the progress reports will also be summarized for reporting to the Board after each trimester.

Our progress reports will indicate the progress students are making toward the skills in our Graduate Profile. Because the skills we expect our students to master are complex, they may comprise several subskills. The chart below indicates how each element of the Graduate Profile is represented on the progress report.

Graduate Profile	Progress Report
RVC students will be independent and confident	21 st Century Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works independently with confidence • Is self-motivated and takes initiative • Seeks out and uses resources • Is organized and responsible for personal belongings, classroom materials, and homework
RVC students will be collaborative problem solvers	21 st Century Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works collaboratively with others • Demonstrates creative thinking • Uses a variety of strategies to solve problems • Seeks out and uses resources • Shows adaptability Speaking and Listening Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages effectively in collaborative discussions
RVC students will be effective communicators	Writing Written Conventions Speaking and Listening Skills (each of these sections list specific Common Core State Standards)
RVC students will be creative and adaptive thinkers	21 st Century Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates creative thinking • Shows adaptability • Works independently with confidence
RVC students will be people who persevere	21 st Century Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perseveres
RVC students will be caring community members	Social/Emotional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates self-control • Follows school rules and class agreements • Works and plays cooperatively

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is helpful to others • Accepts responsibility for own behavior • Respects rights and opinions of others • Shows consideration and respect for peers • Shows consideration and respect for adults
<p>RVC students will be solid in foundational academic skills</p>	<p>Reading Writing Written Conventions Mathematics (each of the above sections list specific Common Core State Standards) Science Social Studies</p>

Our progress reports will specifically demonstrate student development in the following academic areas: reading, writing, written conventions, speaking and listening, mathematics, social studies, and science. The reading, writing, written conventions, and mathematics portions of the progress reports will list Common Core State Standards for each grade span (K/1st, 2nd/3rd, 4th/5th). Science and social studies portions will indicate whether students understand content and concepts in the Next Generation Science Standards and California History–Social Science Standards. [See sample of 4th/5th grade progress report in Appendix G.]

Our progress reports also contain a narrative section in which teachers will 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. Students will do an age-appropriate self-assessment and reflection for each reporting period as well.

We will regularly analyze the results of interim and summative standardized testing to ensure that our progress reports fully reflect student progress toward the Common Core State Standards. We will adapt our progress reports as needed to ensure they are CCSS aligned and marked appropriately by teachers.

Portfolios

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

Students will help to choose the work that they feel represents them, and upper grade students will write a reflective cover letter that describes their experiences and growth during the school year. Graduating fifth graders will take home their portfolios as a representation of their growth and development during their elementary years.

Portfolios will be reviewed by students, parents/guardians, and teachers at the end of each 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.

Multiple Assessment Measures

Ross Valley Charter's assessment plan includes multiple measures designed to monitor student progress over time. It includes baseline, formative, interim, and summative assessments. Teachers will use results of these assessments to complete trimester progress reports.

- **Baseline assessments** measure basic academic skills in English Language Arts and mathematics at the beginning of a school year or the beginning of a unit of study.
- **Formative assessments** will be frequent and will include formal and informal performance based assessments in the context of classroom activities and daily learning. 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.
- **Interim assessments** fall between formative and summative assessments and provide standardized data that can be aggregated and analyzed. Interim assessments may predict student performance on an end-of-year summative assessment, they may provide evaluation information about the impact of a curriculum or a program, and they offer instruction information that helps diagnose student strengths and weaknesses.
- **Summative assessments** will take place in English-Language Arts and Math at the end of the year in the form of Smarter Balanced tests. Additional summative assessments will include end-of-year leveled reading assessments, cumulative math assessments, and writing checklists, which can be compared to the baseline assessments from the beginning of the year. These will be year-end leveled reading assessments, cumulative math assessments, and writing checklists (detailed below). We will also use project rubrics for transdisciplinary unit final projects as summative assessments in science and social studies.

Teachers will analyze assessment results to identify student, class, and RVC trends, to find specific areas of instructional strength and weakness, identify students who need additional support, and 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. The Board will also review results of these assessments to ensure RVC is achieving its goals.

RVC's Assessments are as follows:

- **State-mandated Assessments (summative)**—Students will be expected to meet statewide standards for academic achievement. Specifically, students will take the Smarter Balanced assessments for English Language Arts and

Mathematics each spring beginning in grade two. Additionally, the California Standards Test for science will be administered annually in the spring to students in grade five (or a new science assessment if the state chooses one). The California Modified Assessment (CMA) and California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA) will be administered to students as necessary. These tests will help monitor progress on grade level content and skill development, and will be reflected in meeting state and federal measurements as they evolve and replace API and AYP. The California English Language Development Assessment (CELDT), or ELPAC when it is developed, will be administered to English Learners annually.

- **Leveled Reading Assessments (baseline, formative, summative)**—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 will 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 independent 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.
- **Writing Assessments (baseline, formative, summative)**—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. Teachers will also use these checklists to assess student writing.
- **Mathematics Assessments (baseline, formative, summative)**—Throughout the year, student progress in mathematics will be measured using formal and informal formative assessments. Some of these assessments will be teacher-developed based on Common Core State Standards, and others may be taken from a math program if we choose to purchase one. Students will be pre-assessed at the beginning of math units to identify students in need of extra challenge or support. On-going assessment will take the form of teacher observations, assignments, and performance-based assessments involving problem-solving. Frequent “exit slips”, short written responses at the end of a class used as quick, informal assessments, will help teachers know which students need extra practice with various concepts or skills. At the end of each unit, student understanding and mastery will be measured through performance tasks or formal assessments. Teachers will create these assessments or select them from curriculum resources.
- **Standardized Assessments in Language Arts & Mathematics (interim)**—In addition to leveled reading assessments and formative math assessments, students (beginning in grade two) will also take trimester Interim Assessments in language arts and math to assure they will be prepared for Smarter Balanced

Assessments. RVC is researching various assessment systems with CCSS-aligned performance tasks for English-Language Arts and Mathematics, including Measures of Academic Progress from Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments, The Center for Research and Evaluation at UCLA (CRESST), and West Ed. We will select one for ELA and one for Mathematics and these will be used as the Method of Assessment in all the goals below where “Interim Assessments” appear.

- **Science Assessments (formative, summative)**—We will assess student progress toward the Next Generation Science Standards using unit assessments from the science program we choose. Teachers will also use a variety of formal and informal assessments such as responses to academic prompts, informal checks for understanding, and assessment of presentations or projects. There will also be assessments at the end of transdisciplinary units such as project rubrics, written checklists, and/or performance tasks.
- **Social Studies Assessments (formative, summative)**—We will assess student progress toward California History–Social Science Standards using a variety of formal and informal assessments such as responses to academic prompts, informal checks for understanding, and assessment of presentations or projects. Teachers will also use assessments at the end of transdisciplinary units such as project rubrics, written checklists, and/or performance tasks.
- **Spelling Inventories (baseline, formative, summative)**—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.
- **Social Emotional Learning Assessments (formative, summative)**—Teachers will explore and develop tools to identify and support students’ social-emotional growth. Possible measurement tools include Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CALSS), Early Childhood Observation Measure (ECCOM), or teacher-created rubrics informed by CASEL’s five social-emotional core competencies.⁴⁹

Use and Reporting of Data

RVC 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 by Spring 2017 to ensure the information collected is used in accordance with RVC’s mission as well as provide for all mandated reporting requirements at the local, county, state, and federal levels.

⁴⁹ <http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/core-competencies/> [2015]

RVC 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-level 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 December, March, and June using the Progress Reports and Interim Assessments described above. The School Director will work with the teachers to fashion a Quarterly Learning Assessment Report that can be provided to the Leadership Council, Charter Board, Authorizer, County Office of Education, CCSA, and State Office of Education using data from progress reports and Interim Assessments for three quarters. For the September report, data from SBAC results will be reviewed and will include an evaluation of how predictive the other three quarterly report data was and what adjustments need to be made to instruction or additional nationally normed tests introduced to complement SBAC. These quarterly reports will include, but not be limited to:

- Percentage of students below, at, or above grade level in reading and math as defined by the Common Core State Standards
- Subgroup analysis of all the State Defined Subgroups – ethnic subgroups, socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils, English learners, pupils with disabilities, and foster youth – if those subgroups are defined as statistically significant by statute, by the State Superintendent, or by the Charter School itself

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

At RVC, 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 implement an alternate approach if needed.

Reporting to Parents/Guardians

Frequent communication between parents and teachers is highly valued at RVC. We plan to have three parent/teacher conference periods each year (with students dismissed an hour early) and three progress reports each year. An approximate schedule is below. Teachers will also meet with parents at any time during the school year regarding student progress if there are changes or concerns.

Timing	Parent/Teacher Conferences	Progress Reports
August/September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately six days of in-take conferences with parents of students new to each class Focus: parents tell teachers about their children 	(none)
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately eight days of parent/teacher conferences for the parents of all students Focus: teachers share with parents what they have observed and assessed; review progress report 	<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"> Approximately six days of student-led portfolio review conferences with parents and teachers Focus: celebrate student growth, set goals for next year 	<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 the Authorizer and Other Stakeholders

Ross Valley Charter will supply quarterly reports, described in the section above on the Use and Reporting of Data, to the Leadership Council, the Charter School Board, the Authorizer, and the County and State Offices of Education.

Ross Valley Charter will also promptly meet all reasonable inquiries for data from its authorized agency and assure timely scheduled data reporting in compliance with the law. In accordance with Title III, RVC will adhere to all mandated reporting guidelines in relation to English Learners, including notification to parents regarding CELDT/ELPAC results and reclassification. In accordance with IDEIA, RVC 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.

RVC will report interim assessment data to its Governing Board following trimester assessments. That information will include, but not be limited to:

- Percentage of students at or above grade level in reading
- Percentage of students scoring at least 80% on math assessments aligned with Common Core State Standards
- Subgroup analysis, particularly for EL students

The RVC board will review SBAC results every year as well.

School Accountability Report Card (SARC)

Ross Valley Charter 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

RVC 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. RVC is filing for tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3).

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

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

Board of Directors

The RVC will be governed by a corporate Board of Directors (“Board”) whose members will be referred to as “Members,” in accordance with its adopted corporate bylaws, which shall be consistent with the terms of this charter.

The Board shall have five (5) to nine (9) Members. In accordance with Education Code Section 47604(b), the entity that grants the RVC charter to be operated as a nonprofit public benefit corporation shall be entitled to have a single representative serve on the Board of RVC. At least two Member positions are reserved for parents of students attending RVC at the time the Member's term on the Board commences. One Member position will be specifically identified as representing the RVC teachers’ perspectives. The other 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 RVC initial Board of Directors:

Community Representative	Roni Adams
Community Representative	Kate Crist
Community Representative	Conn Hickey

Community Representative	Kristi Kimball
Community Representative	Sharon Sagar
Parent Representative	Rana Barar
Parent Representative	Andrea Sumits
Teacher Representative	Chris Lyons

Barar, Hickey, Lyons, Sagar, and Sumits were appointed as the “initial directors of the Corporation” by the Sole Incorporator, Jason Morrison. The other three were appointed by the Board in July 2015.

The relevant experience of this Board can be found in Appendix F. Two members of the current Board have a combined 22+ years of Ross Valley School District governing board experience. One of the members is a practicing attorney in the field of regulatory law. Four board members are public educational professionals with many decades of combined public and charter school teaching, administration, and foundation support experience. Three board members have decades of experience in nonprofit administration. And one board member has 35 years of experience as a private sector and IT manager and executive with extensive financial experience. For future replacement, RVC will recruit members to insure that this breadth of experience in non-profit governance and administration, public education teaching and administration, and private sector finance and management be continued.

The terms of the initial Board shall be staggered – with 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 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 membership that includes expertise in varying fields (e.g., education, law, school finance) and which will be able to offer relevant and sound advice, direction, and discussion to RVC. Selection and appointment processes for Board members are detailed in the RVC Bylaws [Appendix E].

After the terms of the initial Board Member expires, the ongoing process of filling vacancies will be as follows:

- 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 of students attending RVC at the time the Member’s term would begin, who will be selected after considering nominations by the parents of students of the Charter School with each family having students in the Charter School allowed two votes.

- The other Board Members will be appointed by the entire Board of Directors as vacancies occur with a nomination process that includes input from the Leadership Council.

Teachers' Role in Governance and Conflicts of Interest Code

One of the Charter School's Three Core Beliefs is that "a thriving and joyful learning community has inclusive decision-making structures that foster teacher and parent engagement, collaboration, and shared ownership of the committed work of graduating students who are critical thinkers and creative problem solvers prepared for the 21st Century." Accordingly, RVC intends to allow a currently-employed teacher to be a Member of the Board, should there be a current teacher who desires this role. The teacher representative Board position could also be filled by an individual who is not employed by RVC.

The RVC Conflict of Interest Code, which is included in Appendix E, addresses the requirements of the Political Reform Act as legally required. It clearly states that any Board Member, Officer, or the School Director will be disqualified (and the specific manner for doing so) from making, participating in making, or trying to use his/her official position to influence any Charter School decision which he/she knows or has reason to know will have a reasonably foreseeable material financial effect, distinguishable from its effect on the public generally, on the official or a member of his or her immediate family.

The Legislature has passed a number of bills applying Government Code Section 1090 to charter schools, all of which have been vetoed (by Governors from both political parties).

RVC believes that empowering teachers in the governance of their schools is critical as a strategy for implementing the Common Core State Standards. In its report titled: "Teacher Leadership; The Pathway to Common Core Success," The Center for American Progress⁵⁰ makes the following recommendation to districts for a successful implementation of the standards:

Teachers involved in district- and school-level governance. In the profiled districts, teachers serve on school, district, and union governing bodies as a way to ensure that teachers' perspectives are included in decisions made about the standards and other district priorities.

In the 93 page California Common Core State Standards the words collaborate, collaborative, collaborating, and collaboration appear 40 times. In the five paragraph Introductory Message from the State Board President and State Superintendent of Public Instruction these words appear in each of the last three paragraphs.⁵¹

⁵⁰ <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education/report/2015/04/28/111762/teacher-leadership/>; April 28, 2015

⁵¹ <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/finalelaccsstandards.pdf>

We believe that the reason this collaborative behavior is so strongly emphasized in the Common Core State Standards is that the 21st Century digital workplace requires this skill for success. We believe that collaboration is a skill that is best acquired when children are given the opportunity to see it modeled, first hand, by teachers, parents, and other school personnel, a belief substantiated by the Center for American Progress study.

For these reasons we have proposed our governance structure in a way that allows a Charter School teacher to sit on the Board.

Our Conflict of Interest Code prohibits Governing Board Members from making, participating in making, or trying to use his/her official position to influence any Charter School decision which he/she knows or has reason to know will have a reasonably foreseeable material financial effect, distinguishable from its effect on the public generally, on the official or a member of his or her immediate family. This Conflict of Interest Code will require Governing Board members to disclose such a disqualifying interest at the meeting during which consideration of the decision takes place. This disclosure shall be made part of the Board's official record. The Board member shall refrain from participating in the decision in any way (i.e., the Board member with the disqualifying interest shall refrain from voting on the matter and shall leave the room during Board discussion and when the final vote is taken) and comply with any applicable provisions of the Charter School bylaws.

The RVC teacher Board member shall recuse him/herself from any Board discussions and/or decisions relating to any personnel actions (hiring, contract extension, evaluation, discipline, termination), including those affecting the Director. This individual also shall not participate in any Board discussions and/or decisions in the areas of: salary table; bonuses for employees; allocation of resources if there is a conflict among staff members in this area; any student matters for students the teacher is currently instructing; personnel handbook approval; and matters surrounding working conditions or terms of employment.

Board Meetings and Duties

Once the Charter is authorized, the Board of RVC will meet regularly, at least every two months, and in full compliance with the Brown Act. Two RVC Board Members and/or Officers of the corporation have a combined 22 year experience as Ross Valley School Board members and are fully conversant with the requirements of the Brown Act, namely that all matters within the jurisdiction of the Board must be heard, discussed, deliberated, and acted upon by a majority of the Board be held in open, public meetings, with limited exceptions allowed for closed session. All Board Members will attend Brown Act training, held by CCSA and /or Young, Minney and Corr, RVC's counsel.

The Board meetings will be held at the Charter School or in a place suitable for community attendance and participation. Meeting notices and agendas 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 RVC, including, but not limited to:

- Personnel actions (e.g., hiring, dismissal, annual performance evaluations) for RVC's School Director;
- Approve hiring of all employees of RVC after considering recommendations by the School Director and/or Leadership Council;
- Approve termination of employees of RVC after considering recommendations by the School Director;
- Approve and monitor the implementation of general policies of RVC. These include, but are not limited to, effective personnel policies for career growth and compensation of employees;
- Act as a fiscal agent. This includes the receipt of funds for the operation of RVC in accordance with RVC Board By-laws and the receipt of grants and donations consistent with the Mission of RVC;
- 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 RVC strategic plans, annual goals, and annual calendars;
- Approve RVC policies and procedures and handbooks
- Approve charter amendments and material revisions (which must also be approved by the authorizer);
- Appoint an administrative panel to act as a hearing body and/or 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 RVC operation;
- Select individuals to serve on the Board, taking into account recommendations from the Leadership Council; and
- Decide matters of policy after consultation with the Leadership Council.
- Review all contracts over \$5,000.

The RVC 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 includes attending conferences whereby relevant governance training is available. Additional trainings and workshops will be held at special and regularly scheduled Board meetings each year. Trainings may be given by RVC's legal counsel, the California Charter Schools

Association, Marin County Office of Education, California School Boards Association, or other experts. Topics include, but are not limited to, conflicts of interest, RVC 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 guidance of RVC will be jointly overseen by the School Director and the Leadership Council (“Council”). The Council is an essential organizational structure operating in furtherance of the Mission and Beliefs of RVC, founded on principles of collaboration between the stakeholders – parents, teachers, and administrators – in the education of the students.

As the only employee who directly reports to the Governing Board, the School Director has overall authority to ensure that the directives of the Board are carried out in the day-to-day operation of the Charter School.

The Leadership Council has no formal authority within the RVC governance structure and all its recommendations that effect budget, personnel, legal compliance, and other matters that relate to the responsibilities of the Board will be brought to the Board as recommendations. The Board retains ultimate legal authority and responsibility for the operation of RVC.

All three of our Core Beliefs are imbued with a spirit of voice, choice and collaboration.

1. Students learn best when constructing their own knowledge in a social context that offers rich and challenging content, collaboration with fellow students and parents, and teachers acting as facilitators of this process.
2. Student voice, choice, and engagement are critical to creating student agency and knowledge construction.
3. A thriving and joyful learning community has inclusive decision-making structures that foster teacher and parent engagement, collaboration, and shared ownership of the committed work of graduating students who are critical thinkers and creative problem solvers prepared for the 21st Century.

Each of these Core Beliefs echo the concept of modeling collaboration, choice, and voice in both learning and decision-making processes. In order to make these values real, the learning community has to have structures that give meaningful empowerment to stakeholders and require stakeholders to work through problems and differences in a straightforward, honest way.

The MAP program, on which the Charter is based, has a 19-year history of working to breathe life into Education Code Section 58500 which states:

The governing board of any school district may establish and maintain one or more alternative schools within the district.

For the purposes of this article, an alternative school is defined as a school or separate class group within a school which is operated in a manner designed to:

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

The educational approach outlined in considerable detail in Element One above describes how the classroom is organized to meet goals a, b, and c.

The Leadership Council structure is designed to manage this opportunity for teachers and parents to develop the learning process, its subject matter, and to continuously react to the changing world. It is patterned after the School Site Council structure described in Ed Code 52852. It has the same number of voting members as the School Site Council Structure and has the same parity between school employees and parents. The Charter Leadership Council will be patterned after a similar 15-year old MAP structure for stakeholder engagement which was called the Advisory Council.

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 RVC 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 RVC, with each parent of a RVC 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, which must not conflict with any provisions of this charter petition, 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 voting parent role will be the Facilitator of all Council meetings.

The even number of voting members between staff and parents has proven to be a critical structure in the MAP for reaching consensus on issues where there has been disagreement and we expect the same to be true for RVC.

The recognized existence and importance of this kind of parallel, but unofficial, decision making authority in school reform is reflected in the Education Code's provisions on Alternative Education and School Site Council cited above and in the work of Patrick Dolan and the Teacher Union Reform Movement.⁵²

Council meetings shall occur at least monthly, and the schedule of meetings shall be decided and published to RVC parents and anyone else who shall request such information. Any special meetings of the Council will be communicated to the Charter 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 RVC, include, but are not limited to:

- Work to realize the Beliefs and Mission of RVC 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 RVC 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 on recommendations to the Board, as appropriate, on how RVC can best meet the needs and interests of students and their families based on RVC Mission;
- Evaluate and monitor RVC's progress and performance in student learning and make frequent reports to the Board in these areas;
- Select new Council members in accordance with this Petition and Council Bylaws;

⁵² W. Patrick Dolan, *Restructuring Our Schools, A Primer on Systematic Change*, 1994, Systems and Organizations, Kansas City

- Along with the School Director, 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' authority;
- Review and approve, and, where appropriate, participate in preparing, 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 current activities and issues to the Board at Board meetings;
- Participate in personnel selection processes as outlined by the Board;
- Make recommendations to the Board regarding parent and teacher Board member selection based on election processes it oversees;
- With the School Director, develop the annual school calendar for approval by the Board;
- Serve as a transparent conduit of information between RVC and RVC's parent community-at-large; and
- Form and coordinate committees and other activities that enhance the intrinsic Beliefs of RVC and contribute to the fulfillment of its Mission. These committees work with various bodies within and outside RVC, providing support as appropriate.

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

The Leadership Council will appoint members to a Diversity and Outreach Committee, subject to Board approval. The charge of this Committee will be to advise and evaluate the Leadership Council and the Board on the goals and activities outlined in both Element 7, Racial and Ethnic Diversity, and the Cultural Competency section of Element One. It will do a self-evaluation on an at least a semi-annual basis, in order to determine whether target goals/objectives are being met. This committee will identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges and make recommendations for improvement, as necessary.

The role of the Board is to insure that compliance with state law and regulation is followed throughout the Charter School. It is where final decisions are made and ultimate responsibility rests. But it is also the role of the Board to make sure that stakeholders – particularly teachers and parents – are authentically engaged in making recommendations on Charter School matters that the Board has to decide on. This requires a careful balance between the Board fulfilling its legal responsibilities as a public agency while encouraging the spirit of open, honest conversation and collaboration about difficult issues so that solutions are found that meet all stakeholders' needs, as well as fulfilling legal requirements, through a collaborative process.

School Director

The School Director of RVC will be the administrative leader at RVC, who will model RVC's Beliefs and Mission, be the community leader of the Charter School, spearhead the development of culture, and have overall responsibility for student learning and

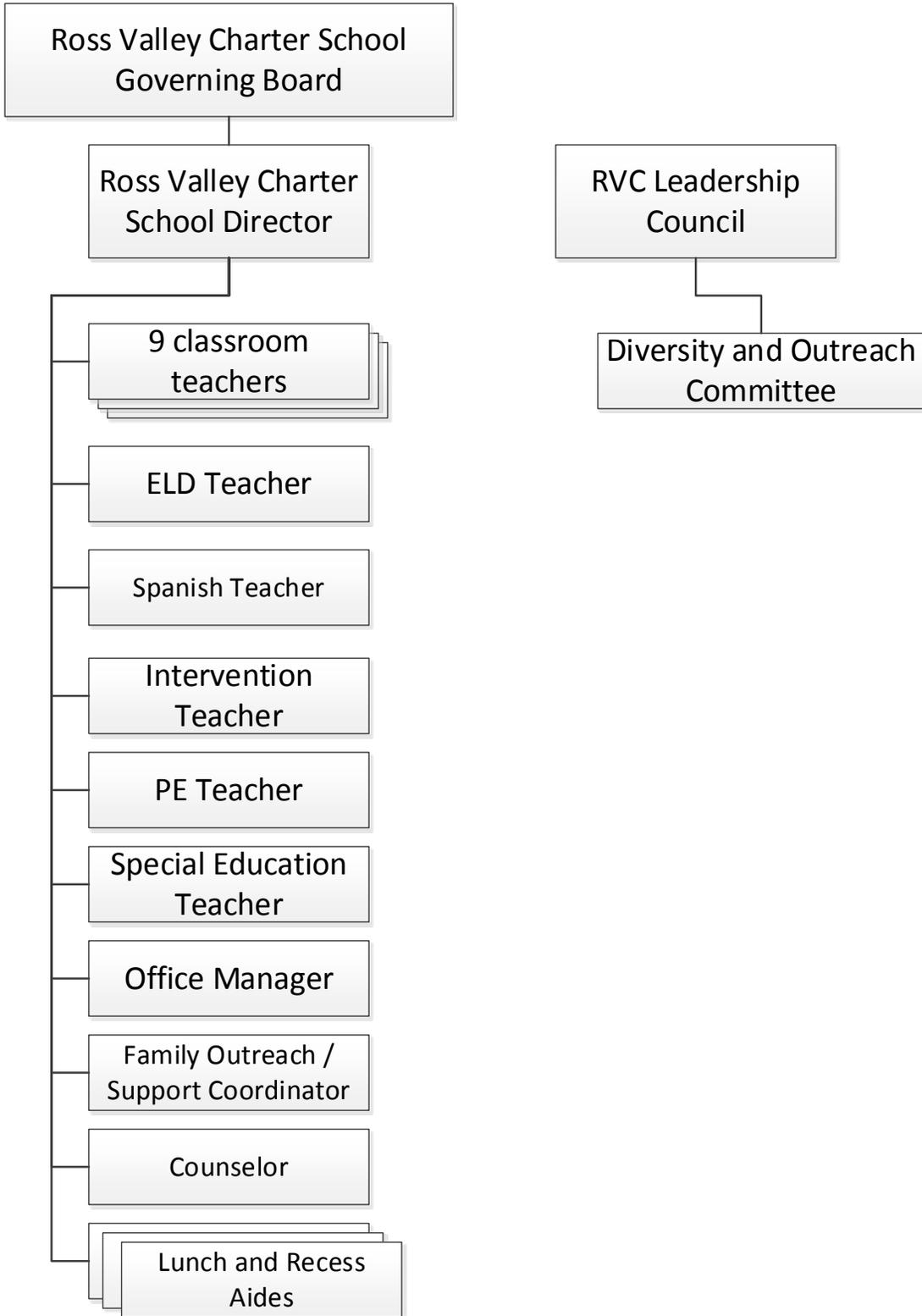
performance. The School Director will be hired by and report to the Board. The School Director will attend all Board meetings but will not be a Member. The School Director will be a member of the interviewing and selection committee for other school staff. The School Director will collaborate with the teachers as they develop the academic program, request professional development activities, improve curriculum and instruction, and provide support and resources aimed at increasing teacher effectiveness and leadership. The School Director also will ensure that the connection between RVC and families is strong, mutually respectful, and marked by continuous communication about student learning and behavior. The School Director shall create, facilitate, and support a positive and productive ongoing collaboration between parents and staff at RVC consistent with RVC's Beliefs and Mission. The School Director will be the primary liaison with the District, and with the County and State Offices of Education. 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 support the efforts of the Board to keep RVC focused on learning and achievement
- Support and evaluate teachers and other employees, and facilitate staff professional development
- Guide RVC in its collection, analysis, and programmatic response to student learning data
- Manage Charter School revenues and expenses to stay within approved budget;
- Monitor site safety
- Participate as a member of the Leadership Council and attend its meetings
- Develop RVC Board meeting agendas in conjunction with the Board Chairman in compliance with the Brown Act
- Facilitate LCAP process.

Organizational Chart

The entire staff, reporting to the School Director in the Organization Chart which follows, will work as a team in supporting the education of RVC students with a spirit of collective responsibility for the students education and well being.



Teachers

The teachers will have primary responsibility for the creation and development of the educational curriculum at the RVC. The School Director, Board, and Council of the RVC trust the professional expertise of the teachers on matters relating to curriculum and assessment of student performance. The founding teachers acknowledge the core value of collaboration with each other and with parent and administrator stakeholders in the educational Mission of the RVC. 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 RVC to all students and families;
- Make recommendations for teacher professional development opportunities to the School Director and Council for approval.
- Nominate the Teacher Representative Member of the Board

Parental Involvement

Parent involvement and the parents' role as co-learners are important components of RVC and provide the backbone for the sense of community in the Charter School. Parents are viewed as critical stakeholders and co-learners (along with teachers and administrators) in the education of the students, and parents are given a voice in RVC policy setting and decision-making.

Teachers will often develop close relationships with parents in a spirit of creating a partnership for student learning. This is facilitated and deepened because parents spend two years with each of their child's teachers.

Parents may serve on the Board, serve on the Leadership Council, participate in the classroom or for special classroom events or needs, assist in planning and organizing RVC community-building events or school-wide student events, volunteer to assist during RVC events, and volunteer to support any Council needs or to serve on any Council-formed committees to address specific issues facing RVC. Parents also serve

an important role in electing the parent representatives of the Council. In MAP parent surveys over the years, this aspect of truly feeling a part of a small learning community has been a highly valued aspect of the Program. The Charter School plans to continue this culture of welcoming, but not requiring, parent involvement in our community.

RVC welcomes and encourages parents to be involved in RVC activities in any manner mentioned above or listed below or another manner determined to be suitable to the parents' schedule and interests and RVC's needs. While in-classroom parent participation is typically a very satisfying and helpful experience, RVC recognizes that being involved during the school day is not feasible for many parents. There are many ways of contributing parent support to RVC outside of the regular school day hours, and all are equally important to the success of the Charter School. The Leadership Council will include a Parent Participation Coordinator, who will help identify valuable involvement opportunities for all RVC parents looking to contribute time in support of the success of the Charter School, including working parents or other parents for whom participating in the classroom is not desirable.

Other examples of parent involvement include:

- Assist with technology;
- Prepare materials at home;
- Provide language support, including translation assistance;
- Supervise and/or drive for field trips;
- 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)
- 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);
- Playground supervision;
- 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 Charter School resources, will ensure that students and their parents feel welcome/comfortable in the Charter School community, and will serve as a bridge to help communicate with the student's educational team (i.e. teachers, support personnel, and administration).

Being involved in Charter School activities is in no way required of parents. The Charter School provides a free education to any families who attend the Charter School with no requirement for volunteering in the Charter School community or donating funds.

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 employment positions. 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 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 laws applicable to charter schools.

At RVC there will be no discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, 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 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 RVC Core Beliefs 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 minimum qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree (required)
- Relevant experience with school and organizational leadership and educational innovation (preferred)
- Experience in supervision and evaluation of employees (preferred)
- Ability to communicate effectively with diverse groups, the Board and the community (required)
- Demonstrated ability to facilitate collaboration with individuals holding diverse views and reach consensus decisions (required)

- Interest in progressive education and commitment to the school's success (required)
- Experience with school operations including finances, fundraising, facilities, health and safety, and other operational management (preferred)
- Be familiar with special education services and the provision of these services (preferred)
- Other qualifications and/or qualities deemed important by the Board (preferred)

Qualifications of Teachers

Classroom teachers, 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.

RVC teachers shall meet or exceed all "highly qualified requirements" under the ESEA.

Accordingly, a teacher must have:

- a bachelor's degree
- an appropriate state multiple subject teaching credential (or credential relevant to the teaching position)
- demonstrated academic subject matter competence

RVC will hire faculty based on content mastery, academic excellence, academic ability, and performance reviews, and will consider bilingualism, and experience with progressive education, in multi-age settings, and/or with the MAP program. RVC believes that it will be best served if one or more of its 9 classroom teachers is bilingual in English and Spanish. 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 RVC must:

- Be committed to our Mission and Core Beliefs;
- 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 RVC;
- Implement the RVC Mission and Core Beliefs;
 - Be skilled at or be willing to be trained in the current and future teaching practices used at RVC;
 - 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. Job descriptions are in Appendix I.

First year staff will include the following positions:

ELD teacher

Spanish teacher

Intervention teacher

PE teacher

Special Education teacher

Office Manager

Family Outreach/Support Coordinator

Counselor

Lunch/recess aides

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 authorizer 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. Applicants for employment must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. RVC 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. Volunteers who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering 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 RVSD. RVC will provide annual training on child abuse and neglect reporting requirements to employees and persons working on their behalf who are mandated reporters, within the first six weeks of each school year or within six weeks of employment.

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. RVC staff will be notified by the RVC Director in advance of the expiration of current tuberculosis clearance certificates and will provide updated tuberculosis clearances every four years.

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 Charter 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).

Ross Valley Charter will strive to enroll a student body that fully reflects the full range of diversity found in the broader school aged community. To this end, RVC will make every effort to actively seek students from all areas within Ross Valley School District, with an emphasis on reaching English Learners and students who are eligible for Free and Reduced Price Meals. The underlying belief that all students are capable of thriving academically, socially, and emotionally will guide our approach and ensure that all students have equal access to learning.

RVC plans to enroll EL and low-income students in numbers greater than the District's averages. MAP has historically had a larger percentage of students of these subgroups than the District. However, without targeted outreach to those populations in recent years, the MAP student population has become much less diverse, as seen in the following chart.

	Ross Valley School District 2014-15	MAP (3-year averages from 2013-2014 Manor School Site Plan)	MAP 2014-15	Ross Valley Charter (target for 2016-2017)
English Learners	3.9%	7%	1%	6% (14 students)
Eligible to Receive Free or Reduced Price Meals	9.9%	12%	5%	12% (27 students)

RVC petitioners know that it is imperative to do active, ongoing outreach to attract students in these traditionally underserved groups. One of our major motivations to become a charter school is to have control over our outreach, so we will be able to work toward having a more diverse school community. In addition to the outreach and recruitment described below, the Charter School is proposing to provide a preference for English Learners and students eligible to receive Free or Reduced Price Lunch as outlined in Element 8 below. In a District that is expensive to live in, and given the legal requirement for admission preferences for District residents, RVC believes that these admission preferences are critical to building the kind of diverse community the Charter School believes is critical to its educational philosophy.

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

We have developed a comprehensive outreach plan to reach underserved communities in the Ross Valley School District. We have begun to develop a partnership with the Fairfax San Anselmo Children’s Center (FSACC), a local private non-profit Title 5 childcare program, diverse preschool, and aftercare center. Our plan is to develop a long-term partnership with the Children’s Center so we can better recruit and serve their students. We have had several meetings with the FSACC director and the founder, and feel confident that this budding partnership will allow us to attract and serve a more diverse community of students and parents. The strength of this early partnership is evidenced by the number of FSACC parents who signed forms expressing meaningful interest in applying to RVC in the fall of 2016. Of the 222 intent to enroll forms collected, 38 students, or 17%, attend the FSACC. (See Appendix B for details) Additional efforts will be made to reach target populations utilizing bilingual print and online media outlets.

Meaningfully Interested in Applying Forms			
Grade Level	All Students	FSACC Students	Percent of Total
K	40	6	15%
1 st	47	8	17%
2 nd	38	6	16%
3 rd	37	9	24%
4 th	26	2	8%
5 th	34	7	21%
TOTALS:	222	38	17%

The RVC outreach plan also includes, but is not limited to additional strategies listed below. RVC will strive to ensure that all recruitment, outreach, and/or promotional materials are translated into Spanish and/or contain language appropriate sidebars with contact information for Spanish Speakers. Outreach may include the following media:

Online media:

- RVC will continue to update and maintain a bilingual website and link with other websites, including Spanish Language websites, as appropriate.
- RVC will create a Facebook page in order to maintain a social media presence;

Print based media

- RVC will create bilingual flyers, with targeted placements, to encourage enrollment and offer information about upcoming events.
- RVC will create and distribute a bilingual brochure to educate families about RVC offerings.

Broadcast Media:

- Free radio placement, including Spanish Language radio may be used to advertise upcoming events
- RVC has produced a short video with Spanish subtitles for use at recruitment and outreach events.

RVC will identify and attend relevant local meetings and events in order to present and/or distribute materials. RVC will also recruit multilingual parents to serve as community contacts and liaisons/ parent mentors.

Staffing and Staff Development Efforts to Support Racial and Ethnic Balance

Recognizing that cultural proficiency is a continuum, RVC will strive to provide on-going diversity reflection and training for and teachers, staff and parents. (See Education Element section on Cultural Competency)

RVC is committed to hiring instructional staff who can meet the needs of all students, including English Learners. To that end, RVC will try to hire at least one teacher who is bilingual in English and Spanish.

RVC will recruit and hire a part-time credentialed ELD Teacher to provide small group English instruction at students' current English level, and facilitate and monitor EL students' continued growth.

RVC will recruit and hire a part-time bilingual Family Outreach/Support Coordinator to assist with recruitment, outreach and support for diverse family populations.

Partnerships and Collaboration:

Identify local leaders from target populations in order to:

- educate them about Ross Valley Charter;
- continue to educate ourselves about the needs of local underserved communities;
- solicit their support and assistance with recruitment and retention efforts

Collaborative relationships may include, but are not limited to, the following organizations and/or meetings:

- Fairfax-San Anselmo Children's Center
- District DLAC meetings
- San Anselmo Seminary
- First 5 California
- The Fairfax Food Pantry

- Head Start
- Fairfax Town Council Members
- San Anselmo Town Council Members
- Ross Valley School Board
- St. Rita pastor

Through innovative teaching strategies and built-in staff support, the RVC is confident in its ability to meet the academic needs of students and families from underserved communities.

A self-evaluation will be implemented by a Diversity and Outreach Committee, described in more detail in the Element Four: Governance, in the Leadership Council section, on at least a semi-annual basis, in order to determine whether target goals/objectives are being met. This committee will identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges and make recommendations for improvement, as necessary.

ELEMENT 8 – ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

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

Ross Valley Charter 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. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into the Charter School. 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 the parents of students who wish to attend the Charter School to complete a simple application form which includes the student's name, date of birth, entering grade level, and contact and address information for parents or guardians. An optional section of the form will indicate eligibility for one or more admissions preferences, as defined below.

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
2. Proof of Immunization
3. Home Language Survey
4. Proof of minimum age requirements, e.g. birth certificate
5. Proof of residency status, e.g. utility bill
6. Release of records

The only RVC admission requirement is that students wishing to attend RVC must follow the Charter School's admission procedures with respect to completing applications by the announced deadlines. The Charter School will also encourage the parents of potential students to attend one of our non-mandatory information sessions prior to submitting an application, to learn more about RVC's program. But these information sessions will not be mandatory and enrollment applications will be widely distributed to many communities and be available on-line.

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.

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. Existing students of the Charter School will be exempt from the lottery (not applicable in first year)
2. Resident of the District who are English Learners or students who are eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch ("FRPL")
3. Residents of the District who are children of named Founders in this petition or current full time employees of the Charter School
4. Residents of the District who are siblings of existing students or admitted students
5. All other residents of the District
6. Students who reside outside of the District who are EL or students who are eligible for FRPL
7. Students who reside outside of the District who are children of current employees
8. Students who reside outside of the District and are siblings of existing students or admitted students
9. All other students who are not residents of the District.

Public random drawing rules, deadlines, dates and times will be developed by the Board in an "Enrollment and Lottery Policy and Procedures" document, and communicated on the application form and on the Charter School's website. The current Enrollment, and Lottery Policy and Procedures adopted by the Board is included in Appendix H. 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. RVC 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. Except for year one as noted below, the Charter School will conduct the lottery by early March for enrollment in fall of that year.

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, the parents/guardians of all students who were not granted admission due to capacity shall be given the option to put their child’s 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 or subsequent school years. Admissions Application Forms, the manual record of all lottery participants and their assigned lottery numbers, and other lottery-related documents will be physically and securely filed on campus, and lottery results and waiting lists will be readily available in the Charter School’s main office for inspection upon request.

The following estimated application, public random drawing, and admission schedule and process is proposed, and may be amended by RVC as necessary.

The final schedule and due dates will be communicated to interested parents and students on Ross Valley Charter’s website. In year one, if the charter is approved after the beginning of the timeline specified herein, the schedule proposed below will be pushed forward and abbreviated to ensure all steps are followed within a shorter timeframe.

November – January	Application forms available
2 nd week of February	Application forms due
Late February	Public Lottery
As soon as possible after lottery completion	Families notified
Approximately 3 weeks later after parent notification	Completed enrollment packets due to Ross Valley Charter

Recruitment

RVC has already held an open enrollment period for the 2016-17 school year in which 277 students applied, including 227 from within RVSD and 50 from outside of RVSD. Parents were advised to enroll in their existing or neighborhood school since RVC had not yet secured a facility. As of April 5, 2016, 187 students had accepted an offer of admission.

The Charter School plans to maintain the resulting admissions and wait list for the Fall of 2017 opening, subject to approval from the SBE, and has communicated this to those admitted and on the wait list. The Charter School believes that it is not fair to these parents and students to create any more uncertainty in their lives than is absolutely required. Making these parents, many of whom signed intent to enroll forms for the first Ross Valley Charter School petition submitted in September 2014 (which was not appealed), go through a completely new Open Enrollment Period and lottery process seems very unfair to them.

In the first year we will recruit from existing MAP families and from the MAP waiting list. Parents of 84 current MAP students (94% of MAP students who were in grades K-3 in

2014-15 and will still be in elementary school in 2016) have signed intent to enroll forms for 2016. We will also work closely with the Fairfax San Anselmo Children's Center (FSACC) to recruit from their Free and Reduced Price Lunch and English Language Learner families of all ages. Parents of 38 FSACC students have signed intent to enroll forms for 2016. Other strategies to recruit from this population of student are outlined in Element 7 above.

We will also recruit from all preschool programs within the district. Directors of three local preschools have written letters of support for RVC (see Appendix C) and most preschools have expressed a willingness to provide information to their families about RVC.

Included in Appendix B is a total list of parents who have signed a form indicating their interest in enrolling their student at RVC in 2016. There are 222 students on the list, following minimal outreach in the late spring and early summer of this year: contacting current MAP families, setting up a booth at the Fairfax Festival, dropping off informational flyers at local preschools, and visiting the FSACC two afternoons at pick-up time.

If we do not have enough applicants to fill the school by the first year's relatively early application deadline, we will expand our recruitment and marketing and outreach activities by attending community events, hanging posters, distributing fliers, holding informational meetings, and using social media to recruit new students. If needed, we will expand these efforts to neighboring districts as well. We are confident that with more extensive outreach, we will be able to fill 9 classes.

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)(l).

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)(l) 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 RVC 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 and designees 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 authorizer describing how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved to the satisfaction of the authorizer 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.

If a 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 the 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.

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.

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) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- l) 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.
- m) 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.
- n) 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.
- o) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- p) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or pre-initiation 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.
- q) 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.

- r) 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.
- s) 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.
- t) 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.
- u) 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.
- v) 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).
- w) 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) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.

- l) 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.
- m) 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.
- n) 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.
- o) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- p) 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.
- q) 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.
- r) 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.

- s) 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.
- t) 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.
- u) 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.
 - v) 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).
 - w) 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 student will be provided due process rights of notice and hearing if the Board expels a student based upon a determination that he or she has brought a firearm or destructive device to RVC.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 (within 3 days of the hearing) 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.

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.

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.

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.

Expelled Pupils/Alternative Education

Parents of 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.

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.

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.

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

1. Notification of Authorizer

The Charter School shall immediately notify the authorizer and coordinate the procedures in this policy with the authorizer of the discipline of any student with a disability or student who the Charter School or Authorizer 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 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, 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 in accordance with state and federal law, including 20 USC 1415(k) 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 RVC 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. RVC will strive to have certificated teachers' compensation and health benefits specifically align to the Ross Valley Teachers Association collective bargaining agreement with the Ross Valley School District, as it may change over time. The health benefits of other full-time employees will be the same as the teachers.

Retirement

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

All certificated employees of RVC will participate in the State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS). Employees will contribute the required employee percentage and RVC will contribute the employer's portion. All withholdings from employees and from RVC 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.

RVC retains the option for its Board of Directors to elect for RVC to participate in additional retirement system(s) 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 or outside 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 current MAP teachers who are the petitioners. 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. Newly hired teachers will not be guaranteed these rights to years of service credit and sick leave credit. 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 authorizer to a dispute resolution procedure to which the authorizer 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 authorizer.

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

In the event of a dispute between the Charter School and the authorizer, the Charter School and the authorizer agree to first frame the issue in a letter (dispute statement) and to refer the issue to the authorizer Superintendent and School Director of the Charter School. In the event that the authorizer 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 authorizer 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 authorizer's ability to proceed with revocation in accordance with Education Code Section 47607 and its implementing regulations.

The Superintendent, or designee, 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, or designee, 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, and the full Charter School Board agrees that mediation is an appropriate next step, 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 may be split equally between the authorizer 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 authorizer and the Charter School. Both parties will agree not to make public comments during the process.

RVC recognizes that, because it is not an LEA, the SBE may choose to resolve a dispute directly instead of pursuing the dispute resolution process specified in the charter, provided that if the SBE intends to resolve a dispute directly instead of pursuing the dispute resolution process specified in the charter, it must first hold a public hearing to consider arguments for and against the direct resolution of the dispute instead of pursuing the dispute resolution process specified in the charter.

RVC recognizes that if the substance of a dispute is a matter that could result in the taking of appropriate action, including, but not limited to, revocation of the charter in accordance with EC Section 47604.5, the matter will be addressed at the SBE's discretion in accordance with that provision of law and any regulations pertaining thereto.

RVC recognizes that the SBE cannot be pre-bound to a contractual obligation to split the costs of mediation or agree to mediation to resolve disputes.

The Charter School Board will develop, publish, and institute policies on internal dispute resolution. These will be published along with other Charter Policies as well as included in parent, student, and employee handbooks.

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 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 State Board 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 CDE to store original records of Charter School students. All student records of the Charter School shall be transferred to the CDE upon Charter School closure. If the CDE cannot store the records, the Charter School shall work with the CDE 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, or within six months of the closure date, whichever is earlier. 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.

Marin County Board of Education Policy prefers closure procedures whereby the residual assets of the charter will accrue to the benefit of the MCOE. If the County authorizes the Charter, the Charter will distribute remaining assets after closure to a to a 501(c)(3) non-profit fund, foundation or corporation of the County's choosing, as allowed in the Charter's Articles of Incorporation (see Appendix E).

As specified by the budget in Appendix D, 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 D, please find the following documents:

- A projected first year budget including startup costs and cash-flow
- Budget narrative explaining budget and identifying 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 chartering authority 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 authorizer and the Charter School's insurer. The authorizer 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.

The Charter School anticipates securing following insurance policies:

1. Commercial General Liability, including Fire Legal Liability, coverage of \$5,000,000 per Occurrence and in the Aggregate.
2. Workers' Compensation Insurance in accordance with provisions of the California Labor Code adequate to protect Charter School from claims that may arise from its operations pursuant to the Workers' Compensation Act (Statutory Coverage). The Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage must also include Employers Liability coverage with limits of \$1,000,000/\$1,000,000/\$1,000,000.
3. Commercial Auto Liability, including Owned, Leased, Hired, and Non-owned, coverage with limits of \$1,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence.
4. Crime Insurance or Fidelity Bond coverage shall be maintained by Charter School to cover all Charter School employees who handle, process or otherwise have responsibility for Charter School funds, supplies, equipment or other assets. Minimum amount of coverage shall be \$50,000 per occurrence, with no self-insured retention.
5. Professional Educators Errors and Omissions liability coverage with minimum limits of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 general aggregate.
6. Sexual Molestation and Abuse coverage with minimum limits of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 general aggregate. Coverage may be held as a separate policy or included by endorsement in the Commercial General Liability or the Errors and Omissions Policy.
7. Employment Practices Legal Liability coverage with limits of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 general aggregate.
8. Excess/umbrella insurance with limits of not less than \$10,000,000 is required of all high schools and any other school that participates in competitive interscholastic or intramural sports programs.

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 for certain services (e.g., payroll).

District or Other Authorizer Oversight

Pursuant to California law, the authorizer 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 supervisory 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.

Contracted Services

RVC is contemplating contracting for the services listed below. The Governing Board will be considering the possible providers listed. All these services are included in the 5-year budget in Appendix D. The RVC Governing Board has adopted a Conflict of Interest policy which is included in Appendix E of this petition. This policy will be followed in evaluating and selecting all contract services and developing all contracts. After the charter is authorized, all these services will be worked on by the School Director or a consultant hired to coordinate this work for the Board prior to the School Director being employed.

Object Code	Service	Options to be considered in providing service
1103	Substitute Teachers	We will contract with someone to do sub calling and establish a process for activating.
1150	Certificated English Language Development Teacher 0.28 FTE	Our options are to hire our own part-time staff member as an employee, contract with someone to provide this as a professional service, or

		contract with a school district to provide this as a service.
1200	Certificated Intervention Teacher 0.28 FTE	Our options are to hire our own part-time staff member as an employee, contract with someone to provide this as a professional service, or contract with a school district to provide this as a service.
2100	PE Instructor 0.32 FTE	Our options are to hire our own part-time staff member as an employee, contract with someone to provide this as a professional service, or contract with a school district to provide this as a service.
2100	Spanish Teacher 0.18 FTE	Our options are to hire our own part-time staff member as an employee, contract with someone to provide this as a professional service, or contract with a school district to provide this as a service.
2200	Counseling 2 hours per week	We will likely contract this service from a district, the County or a public or private licensed provider who might supply us with an intern
3400	Health Insurance for Employees	We will select a vendor to provide this insurance. CCSA has a subsidiary called CharterSafe that will be on the short list of vendors.
5450	Liability Insurance	We will select a vendor to provide this insurance. CCSA has a subsidiary called CharterSafe that will be on the short list of vendors.
5515	Janitorial and Gardening Services	Our options are to hire our own part-time staff member as an employee, or to contract with a professional cleaning service.
5535	Utilities: Gas, Electric, Water, Sewer, Garbage	We are planning to set up our own accounts with these utility providers.
5605	Copier Lease	We will select a vendor to provide this service.
5615	Building Repair and Maintenance	We will select a provider to do this work as a professional service.
5803	Auditing Services	The Board will select an audit firm to provide this service. In the petition budget submitted, the amounts (starting at \$8,200 and ending at \$8,702 per year) were left blank on the object code line but were included in the totals for Services and Other Operating Expenses for years 2 through 5.
5808	Banking Services	If we are authorized by the district, we believe we will have a bank account at a local bank. If we are authorized by the county, these services will be provided by MCOE.

5812	Business Services including accounting, payroll, A/R, financial reporting to Board, district, county, and state	We will do our own accounting services and use licensed EdTec software offered as a service over the internet. We will use a payroll company, like ADP, for payroll.
5836	Fingerprinting Services	Service Provider
5845	Legal Services	Young, Minney and Corr, LLP. We have worked with YM&C to review our Petition and our Start Up grant. We also will receive free legal services through our membership in CCSA.
5863	Professional Development Services	This will be provided by several different vendors who will be selected based on our needs and their capabilities.
5872	Special Education Services	We are planning to hire a certificated special ed teacher as a Charter School employee so that the teacher can be part of our full-time team of 10 certificated teachers with a focus on both training our regular ed teachers to understand the special needs of their special ed students as well as to provide both push in and pull out support to the special ed students. We will contract for specialized special ed services, like speech therapy, either with public or private agencies.
5880	Student Health Services	We will likely contract these services from a health services vendor or a school district.
5881	Data Services	We have a bid from Aries to provide these services for \$1,500 per year, which we will do if we receive the PCSGP grant to cover the initial purchase and training. If not, we will build our own spreadsheets.
5887	Technology Services	We will select a technology service provider. We will not have a technology staff. Our device and infrastructure setup will be constructed so that 95% of support can be done remotely.
5910	Internet and Telephone Services	We will select our service provider(s) and apply for E-Rate.

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).

The Charter School plans to rent facilities within the District's boundaries. We have engaged a local commercial real estate firm and have identified potential private rental facilities that would meet our needs. We have budgeted an amount based on rental costs of similar types of property in the area, including properties rented by the District to non-public school entities. The Ross Valley School District has a closed school at Red Hill in San Anselmo that has 10 unrented classrooms. It is renting another closed school with similar capacity for \$92,000. A Catholic school in Fairfax with 12 classrooms and a multipurpose room has just closed and is being offered for rent at \$185,000 annually. The Charter School is still budgeting rent at \$185,000 annually and will continue to explore both private facilities and public school facilities to accommodate its educational program.

The facility plan for opening in the fall of 2017 will also include RVC submitting a Proposition 39 ("Prop. 39") request for reasonably equivalent facility space for what will likely be approximately 195 in-District admitted students.

By submitting this Prop. 39 request in October 2016 and making clear to the District that RVC still prefers to locate at Red Hill, RVC believes it will be able to open in the fall of 2017 either in regular District classrooms or under an "in lieu" agreement at Red Hill.

The District currently projects that in the fall of 2016 it will have 7 empty classrooms at Manor School and an adjacent elementary school, assuming that RVC does not open in the fall of 2016. When RVC opens with approximately 195 in-District students in the fall of 2017, 140 of these students currently attend District elementary schools as kindergarten to 4th graders. In addition, there are 36 more incoming in-District kindergarteners who will attend RVC. This will likely create approximately 170 additional spaces in District elementary schools. With the average projected load factor of 22.1 students per class in K-5 across the District, 170 fewer District K-5 students should free up as many as seven additional elementary school classrooms. In short, the District has capacity to meet RVC Prop. 39 requirements for RVC's likely 195 in-District students under the terms of the recent California Supreme Court case, *CCSA v. LAUSD*.

It is the hope of RVC that Red Hill is still available to rent under a Prop 39 "in lieu" agreement and that the District will negotiate an "in lieu" agreement in time for RVC to start at Red Hill in the fall of 2017. If this does not or cannot happen, RVC will open in the reasonably equivalent space provided by the District under Prop. 39.

It should be noted that RVC is leaving the \$185,000 rent figure in its budget, to be available for these Prop. 39 negotiations or to be used for renting an alternative commercial site in the District should one become available.

For our 222 students we are estimating our total space needs at 14,000 square feet of building space with the following capacities:

- **Classrooms** – We would like to have 9 classrooms for general instruction, and, additionally, a classroom for art and a classroom for music.
- **Offices/reception** – Offices available for school administrative staff and a reception area to greet guests, ensure school safety, and monitor physical access.
- **Education specialist office** – An office or room for 1:1 assessment, counseling, and instruction of ELL and special needs students.
- **Specialty rooms** – We would like a room for faculty meetings, space for library books, and a small multi-purpose room.
- **Outdoor play space** – On-site playground and access to off-site outdoor area for physical activity and play.
- **Indoor/Outdoor** – We would like a facility that integrates indoor and outdoor space – to extend the learning environment, support project-based learning, and drive learning and creativity.
- **Technology infrastructure** – We will have a technical infrastructure that supports reliable internet connectivity with sufficient bandwidth able to support all authorized users without restriction. Since we will rely on software and file space located in the internet cloud we will not need a dedicated server space.

Free and Reduced Lunch

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

Potential Civil Liability Effects and Impact on Authorizer

Governing Law: Potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the school and upon the authorizer. 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 Authorizer in meeting any and all oversight obligations under

the law, including monthly meetings, reporting, or other Authorizer-requested protocol to ensure the Authorizer shall not be liable for the operation of the Charter School.

Further, the Charter School and the Authorizer shall enter into a memorandum of understanding, wherein the Charter School shall indemnify the Authorizer 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 Authorizer and the Charter School's insurance company for schools of similar size, location, and student population. The Authorizer shall be named an additional insured on the general liability insurance of the Charter School.

The Charter School Board will develop, publish, and institute appropriate risk management practices as discussed herein, including screening of employees, establishing codes of conduct for students, and dispute resolution. These will be published as Charter Policies as well as included in parent, student, and employee handbooks.

CONCLUSION

By approving this charter, the authorizer 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 is positioned to be a successful school, with experienced and motivated teachers, parents eager to enroll their children, community support, a viable budget, and a proven philosophy and educational program.

The Petitioners are ready to function independently, yet also to work cooperatively with the authorizer 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 authorizer to answer any questions regarding this petition and to enable the authorizer to approve the requested charter proposal with a five-year term from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2021.