

This document was provided to the California Department of Education (CDE) from **Ross Valley Charter**. This document is posted to the CDE Web site to meet the legal requirement of *Education Code* Section 33009.5.

For more information or questions about the content of this material or to obtain alternative versions, you may contact Thomas Pacheco at [tpacheco@cde.ca.gov](mailto:tpacheco@cde.ca.gov) or 916-322-1755.

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# Appendix A: Teacher Approval Sign-off

START-UP SCHOOL: Total number of full time teachers estimated to be employed at school during the first year of operation: 10 (9 classroom teachers plus possibly one special ed teacher)

We have reviewed and agree to the contents of the attached charter proposal dated July 15, 2015 and will work toward its implementation. Our signatures indicate that we are teachers meaningfully interested in teaching at the charter school. We formally petition the authorizing board to whom we are applying or appealing to approve the charter school described in this petition.

We recognize Chris Lyons and Jason Morrison as Lead Petitioners and hereby authorize the Lead Petitioners to negotiate any amendments to the attached charter petition necessary to secure approval by the Ross Valley School District, Marin County, or the California Board of Education.

Teacher's Name	Teacher's signature and date	Address and Phone #	Credential #, type, expiration
Tim Heth			
Rebecca Wicker			
Emily Korrell			
Erika Smith			
Chris Lyons			
Nina Watson	7/1/15		



# Appendix B: Parent Support Signatures

Since the middle of May 2015, the Ross Valley Charter Development Committee has collected signatures of parents who agreed to the following statement, presented both in English and in Spanish:

*The parent(s) listed below certify that they are meaningfully interested in enrolling their student(s) at the Ross Valley Charter School. As such, they believe that the charter merits consideration and hereby request the governing board of the Ross Valley School District to grant approval of the charter pursuant to Education Code 47600 et seq. They further authorize the Ross Valley Charter School founders to negotiate any amendments to the charter necessary to secure approval by the District Board. Signature page is attached to petition upon signature in addition to the legally required signatures of teachers who are meaningfully interested in teaching at the school.*

We had two mechanisms of collecting signatures. First, we had an on-line form that could be filled out on-line and capture signatures using screen touch technology. This form can be found at <https://fs22.formsite.com/RVCS/form2/index.html>. We captured this data and have printed it out on a form for this appendix. Second, we had parents sign pieces of paper, either a form with many signatures, with the statement on top of the form, or single forms.

There were well over 260 students reflected on these forms. We used logic to find duplicates by matching based on name, phone and other personal information provided, and in the case of MAP families we compared to our family rosters to ensure that we did not double count students when either both parents signed a form or when parents submitted forms more than once. Some parents who signed have children who are or will be too old to attend. We believe there are 89 current MAP students including students who will be first graders through fourth graders in 2015-16 who will be eligible to apply for RVC in the 2016-17 school year once authorized. Of those, 84 have signed already in the two months we have been collecting these forms.

By eliminating duplicates and children too young or too old, believe we have a total of 222 students, who will be K-5 in 2016-17, whose parents have signed. 17% of these come from the Fairfax San Anselmo Children's Center (FSACC), a local private non-profit Title 5 childcare program, diverse preschool, and aftercare center for low income children. Many families there do not speak English at home.

The following table indicates total number of students by grade, the students by grade and per cent of all total students for the Children's Center students.

Meaningfully Interested In Enrolling Parent Signatures			
		Children's Center	
Grade Level	All Students	FSACC Students	FSACC %
K	40	6	15%
1st	47	8	17%
2nd	38	6	16%
3rd	37	9	24%
4th	26	2	8%
5th	34	7	20%
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>17%</b>

We collected these signatures without any marketing or outreach other than word of mouth. We are confident that the interest in our school will be high and that this modest effort is strong evidence of our ability to enroll at these and slightly higher levels as is assumed in our budget.

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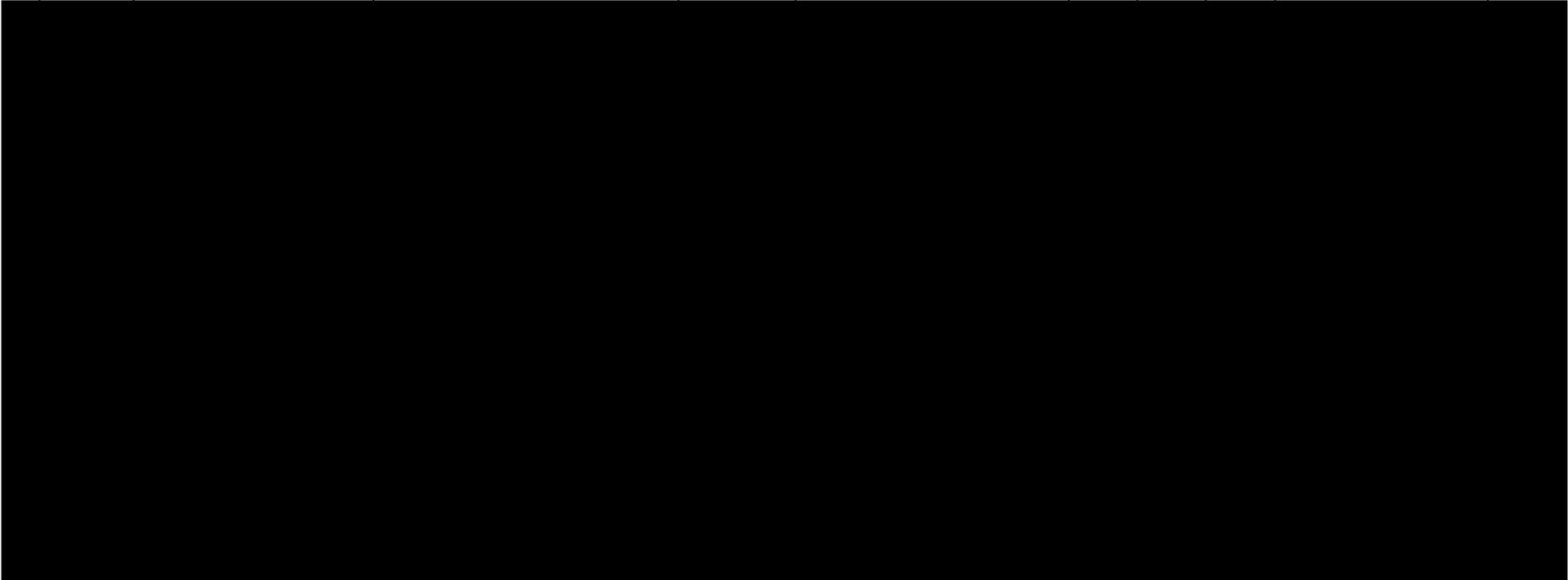
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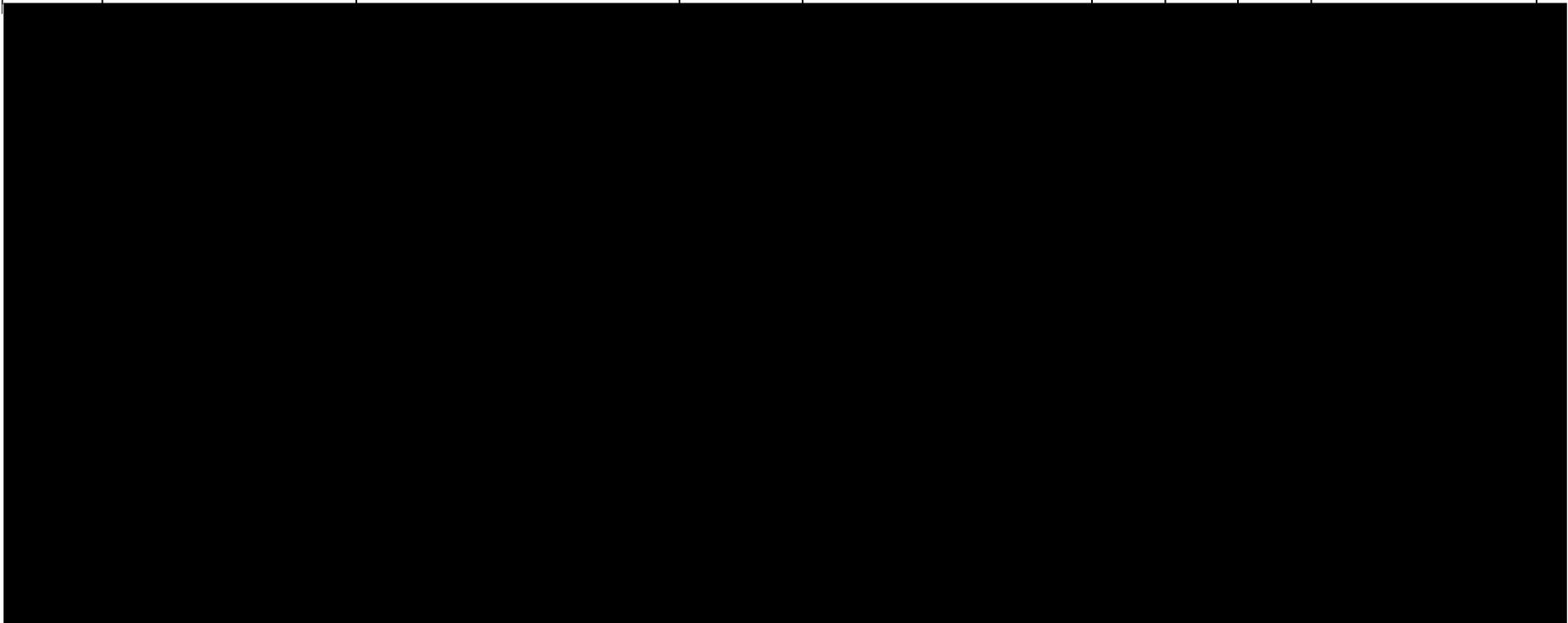
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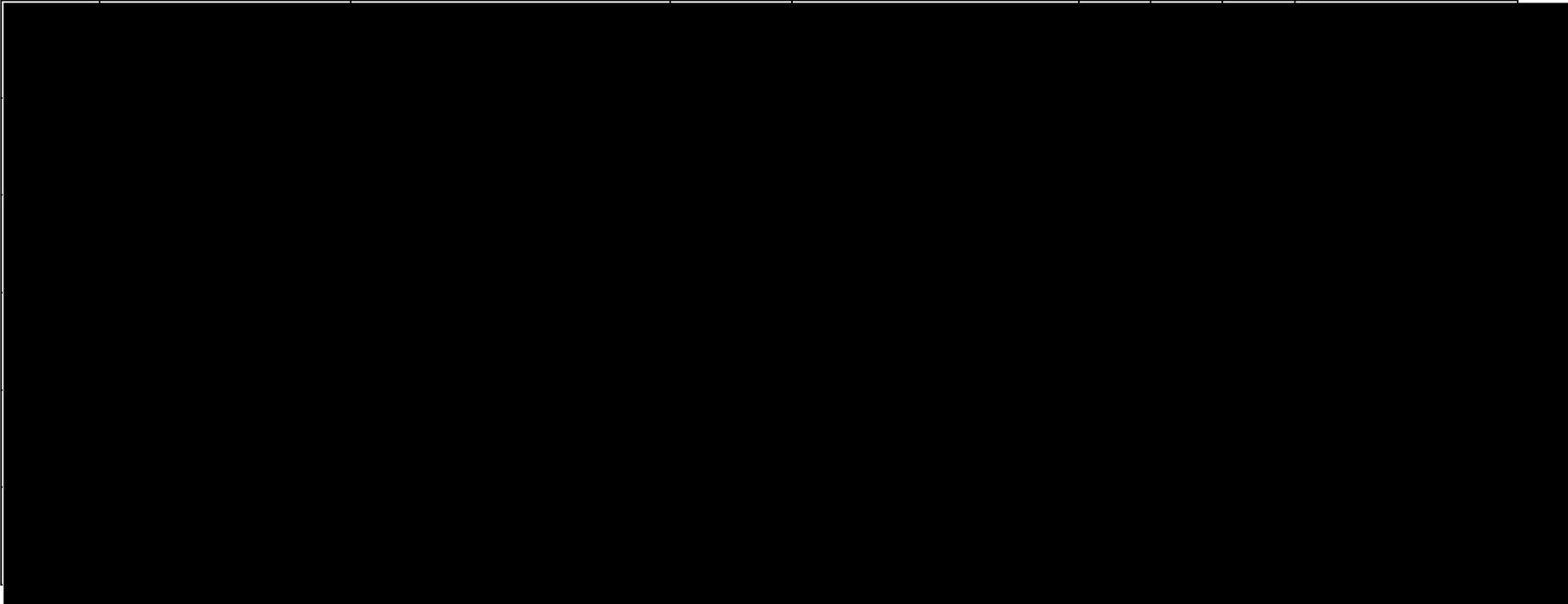
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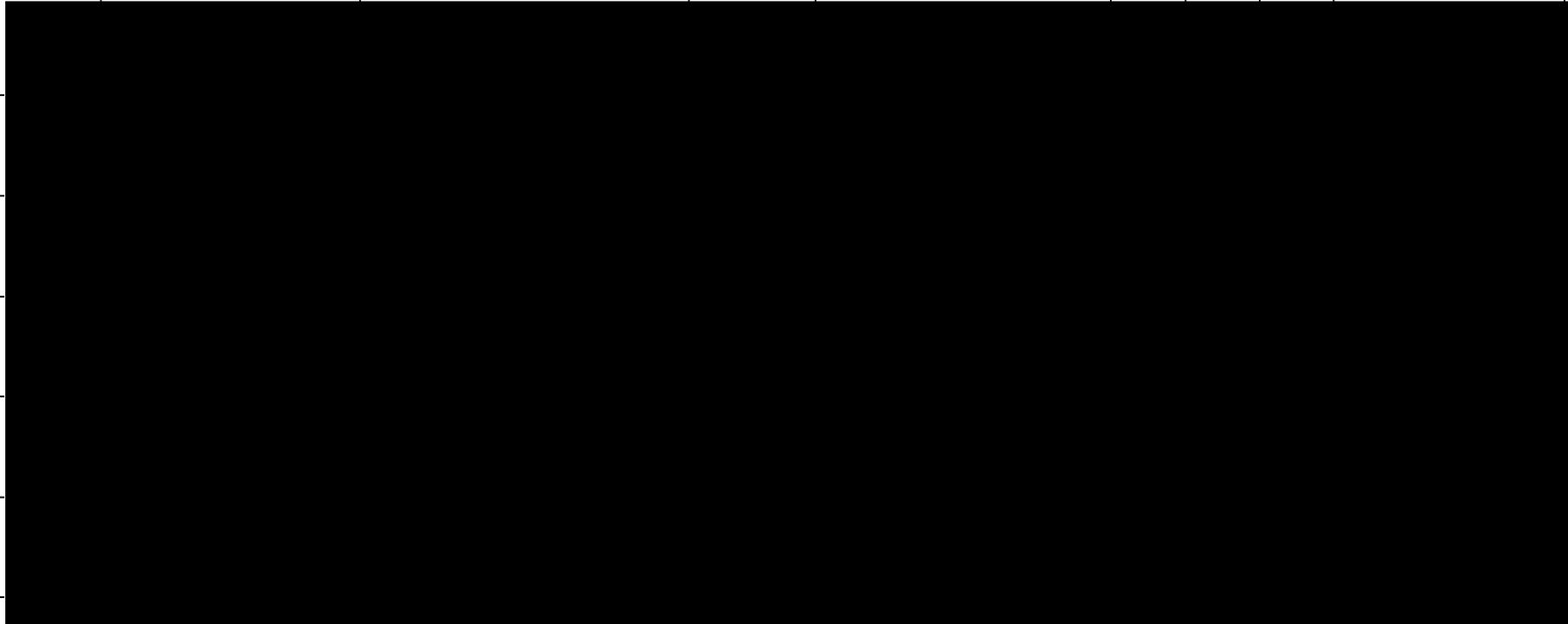
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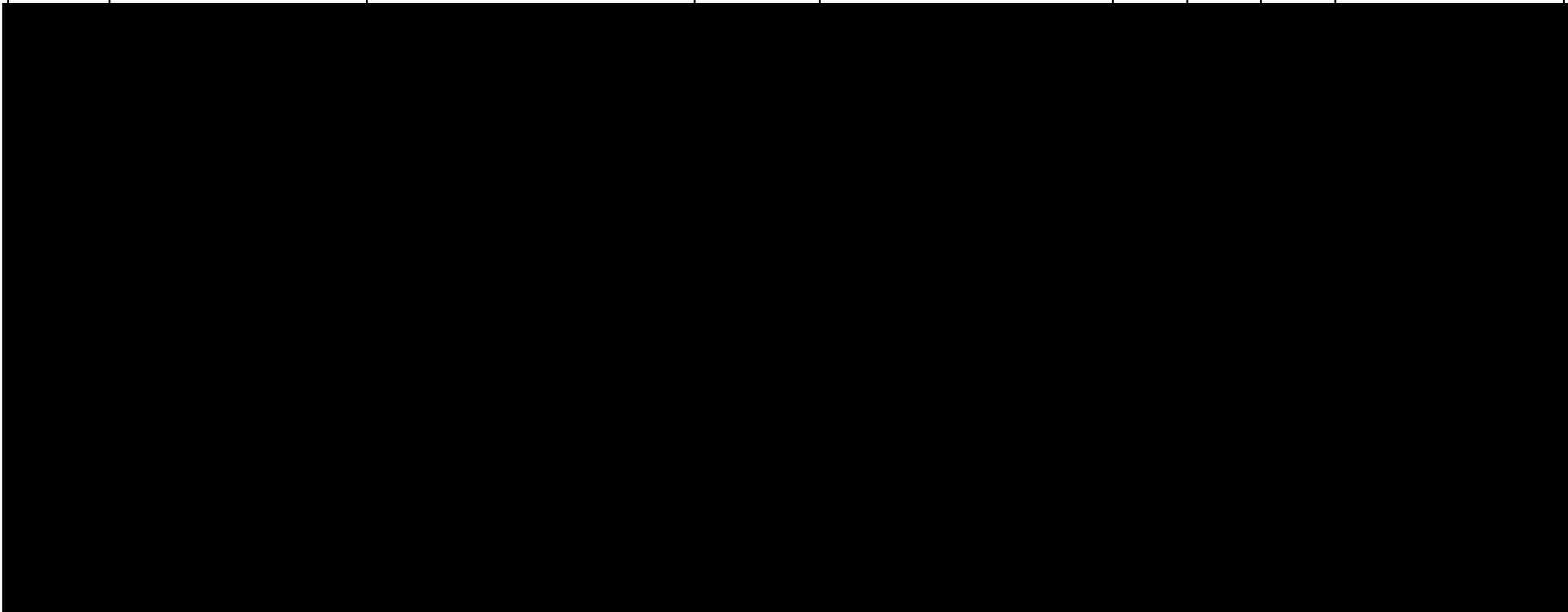
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Ross Valley Charter Appendices and Attachments

PETITION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ROSS VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL  
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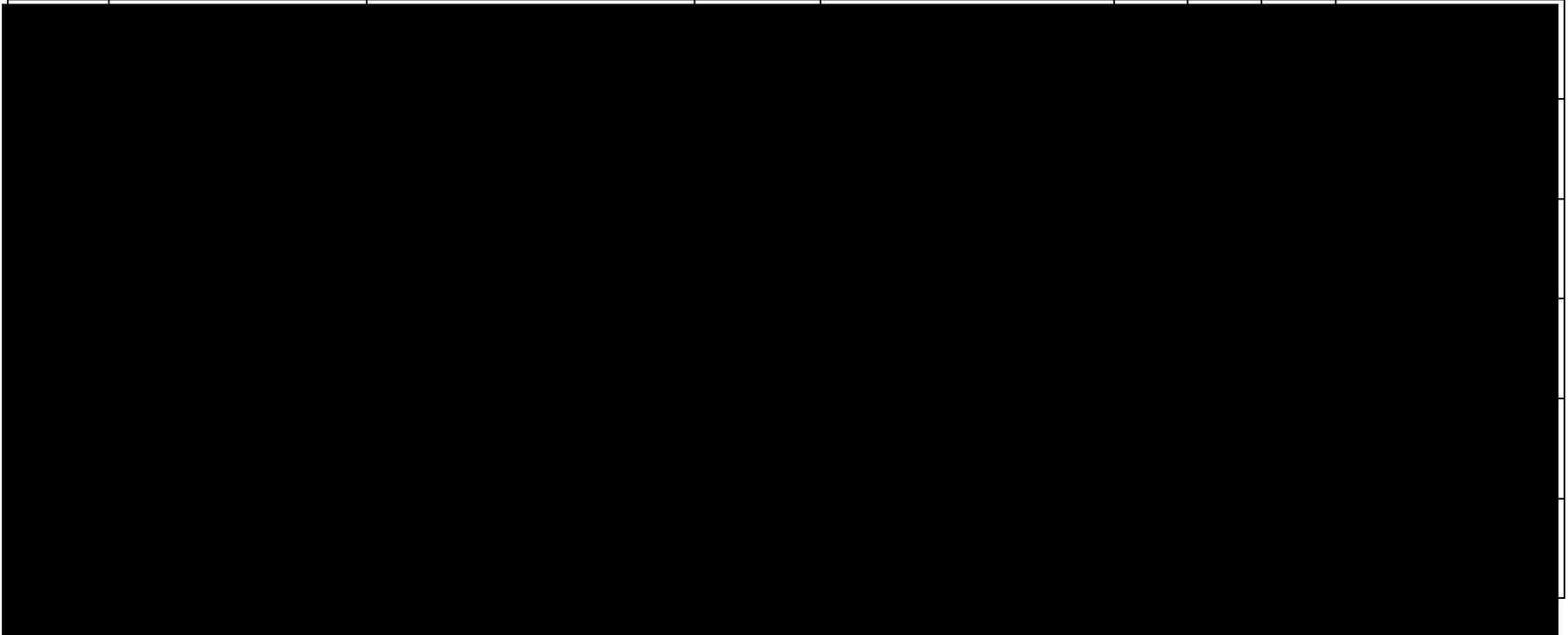
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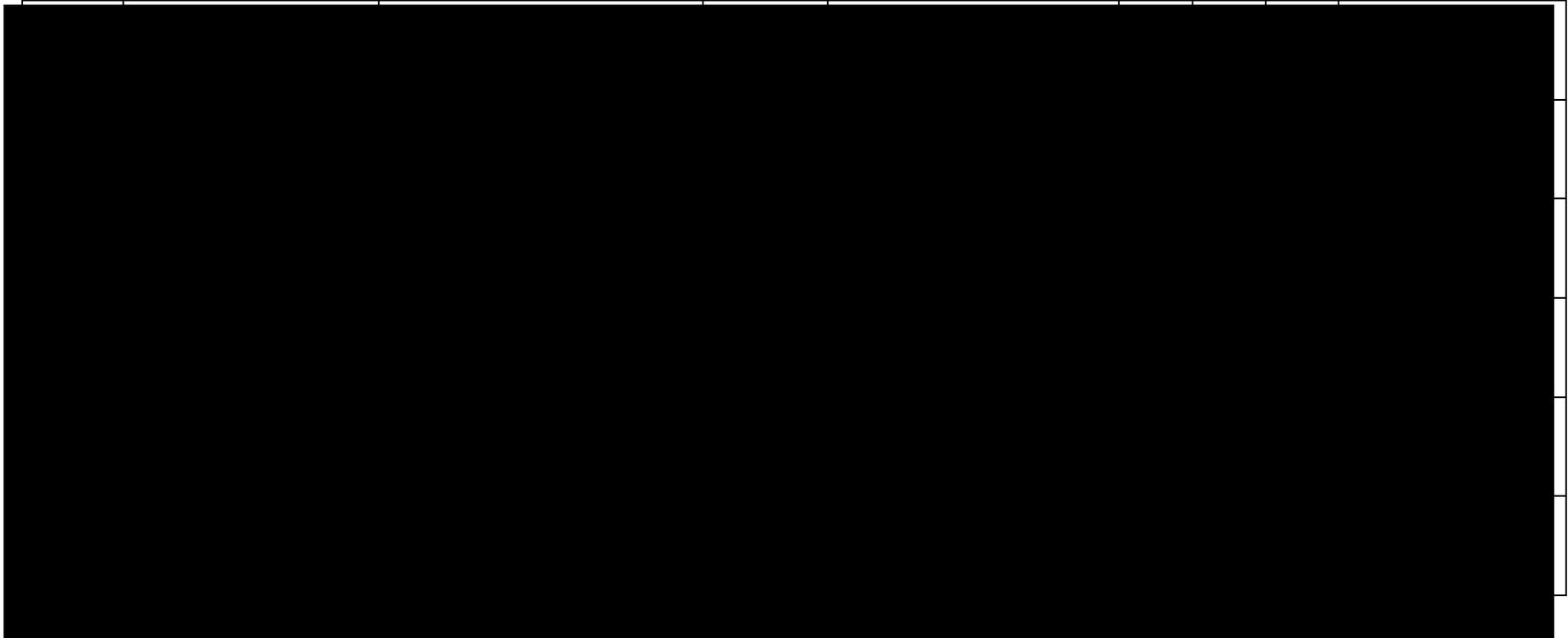
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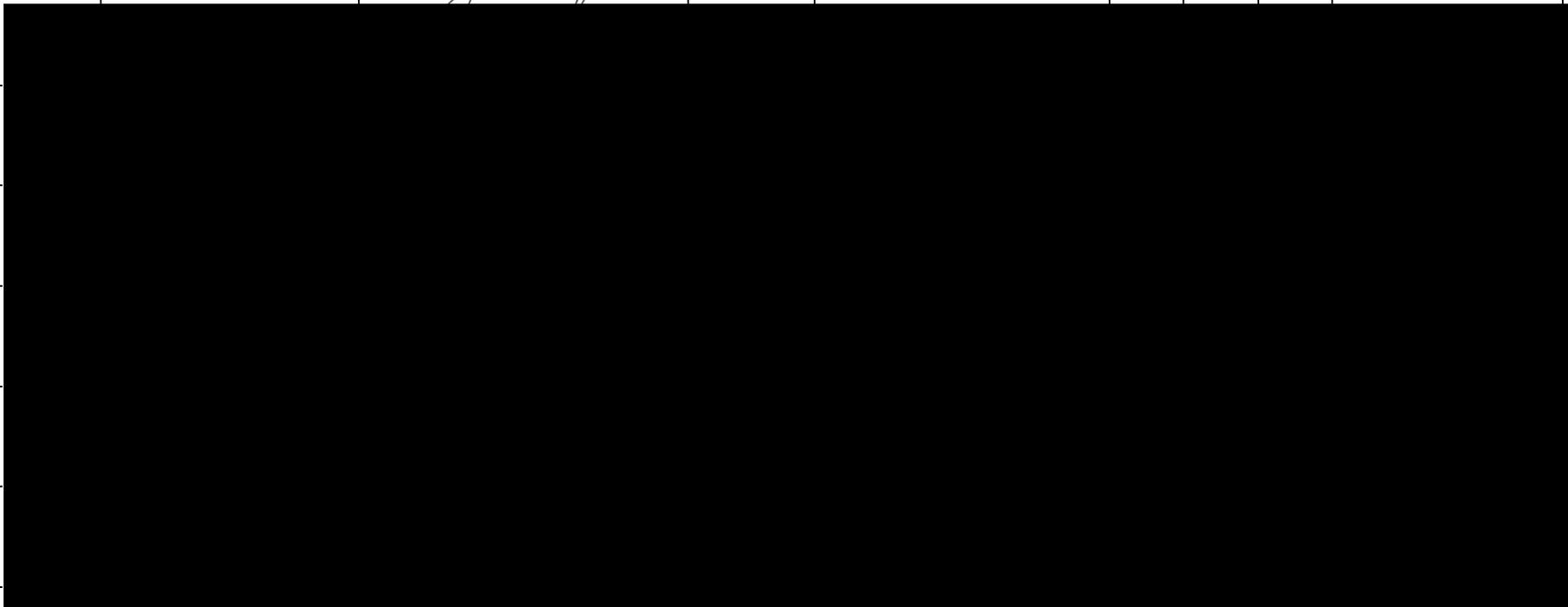
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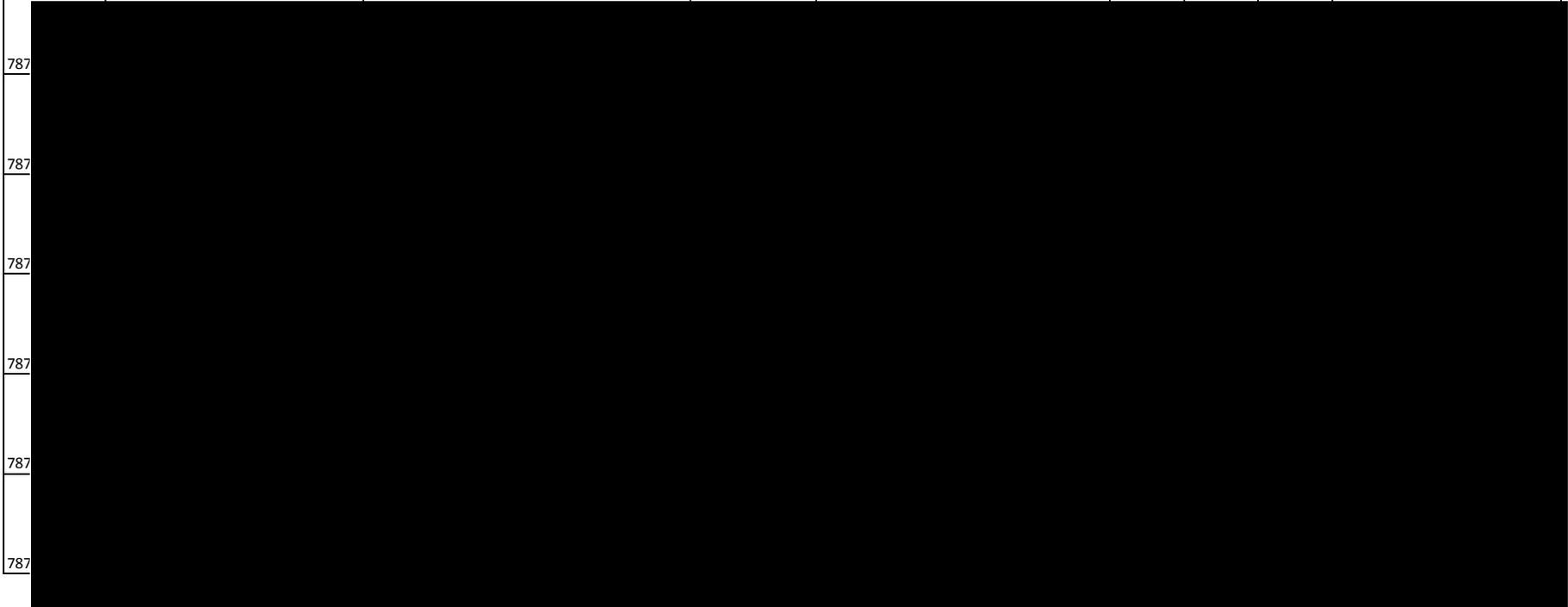
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Ross Valley Charter Appendices and Attachments

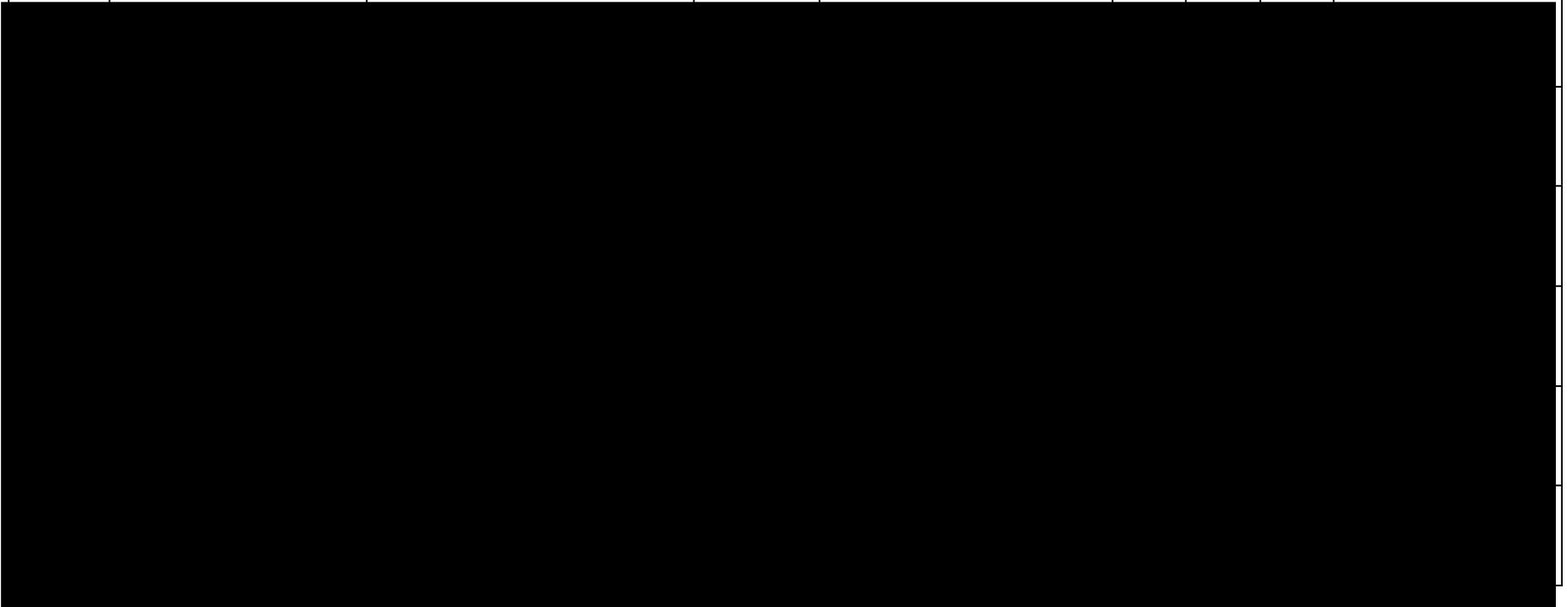
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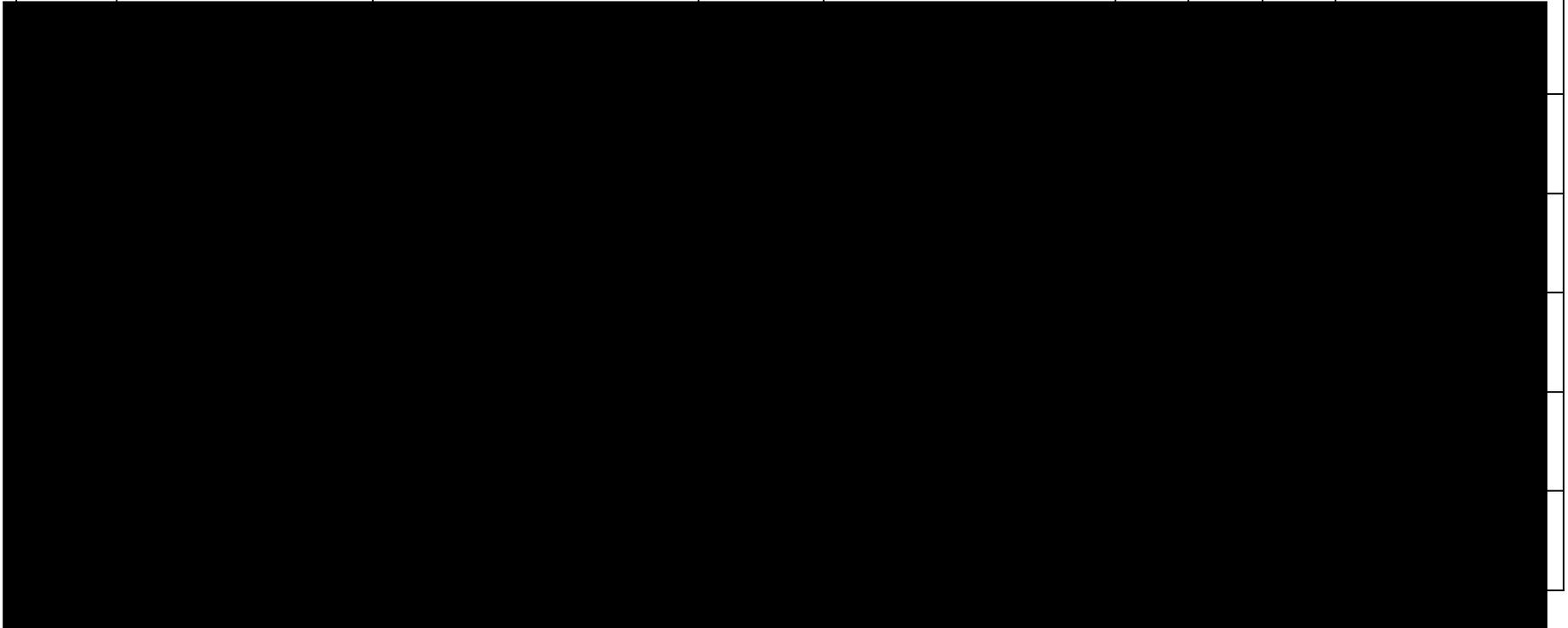
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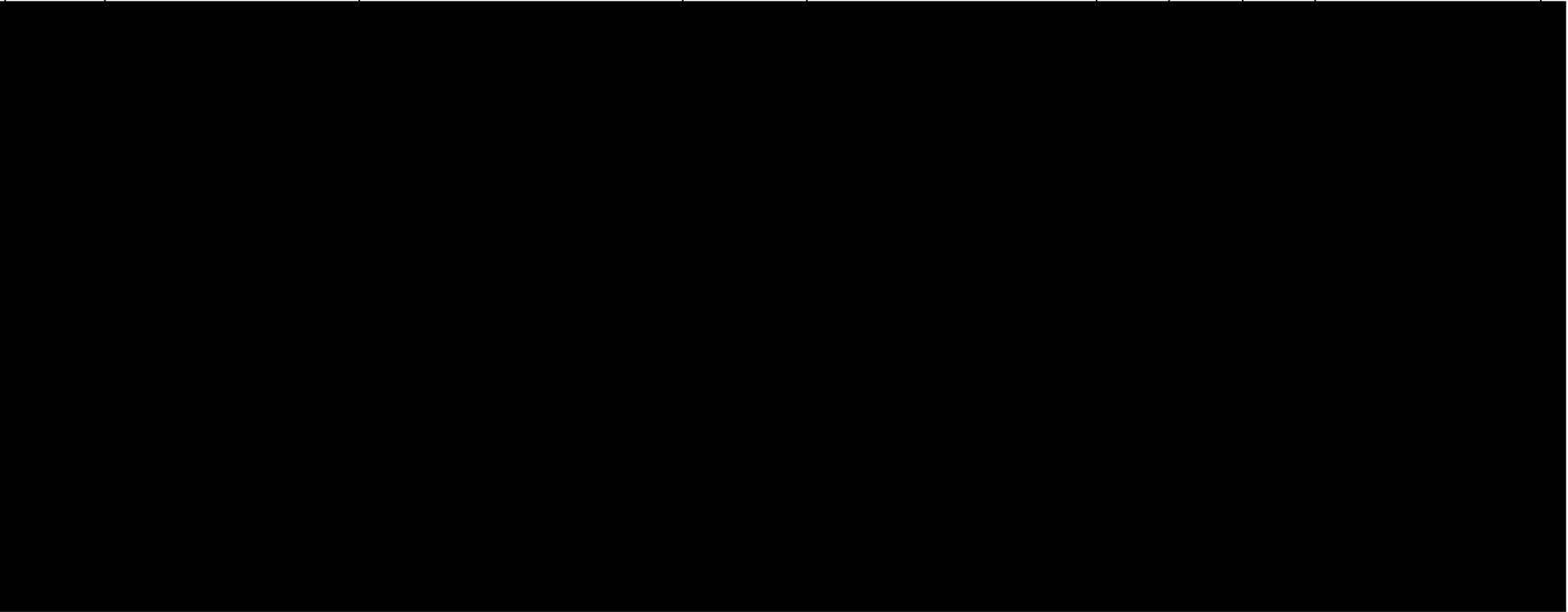
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Ross Valley Charter Appendices and Attachments

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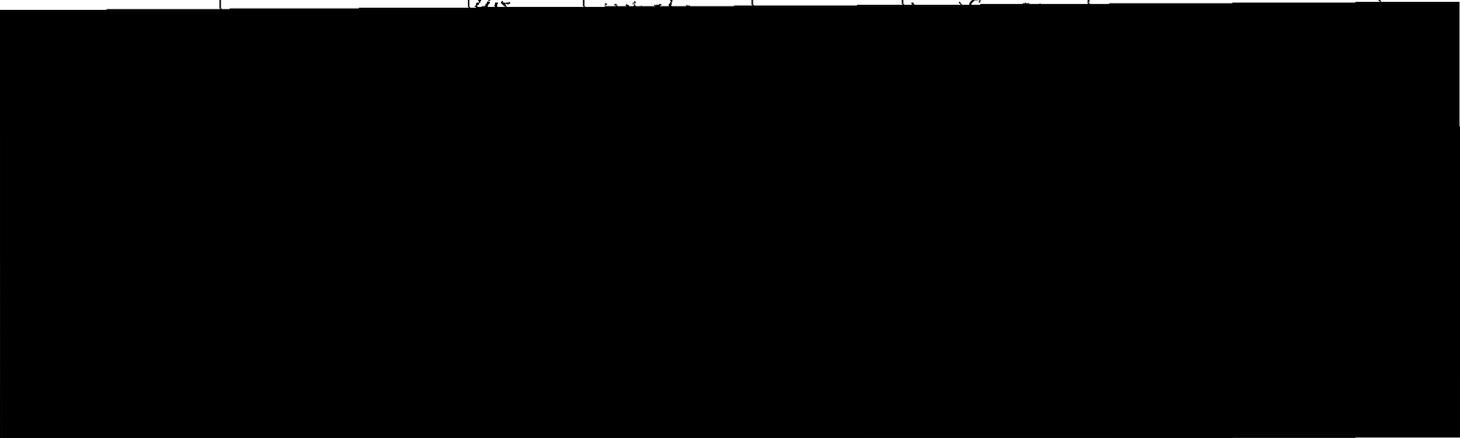
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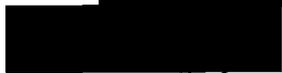
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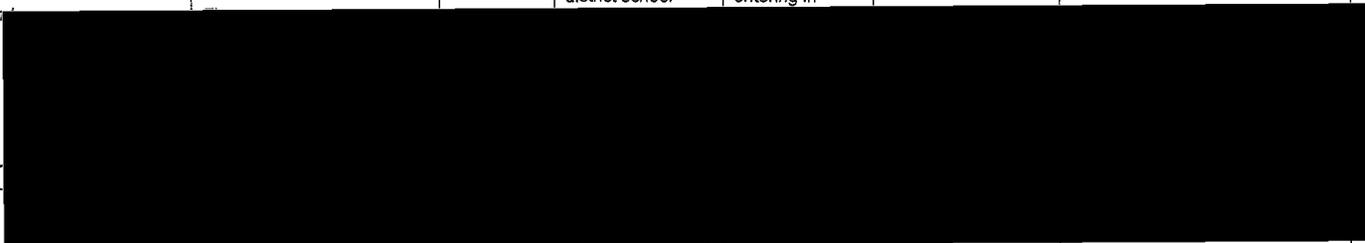
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Email | *Correo electrónico* \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street | *Domicilio* City | *Ciudad* State | *Estado* Zip | *Código Posta*

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**FAMILY INFORMATION | INFORMACIÓN DE LA FAMILIA**



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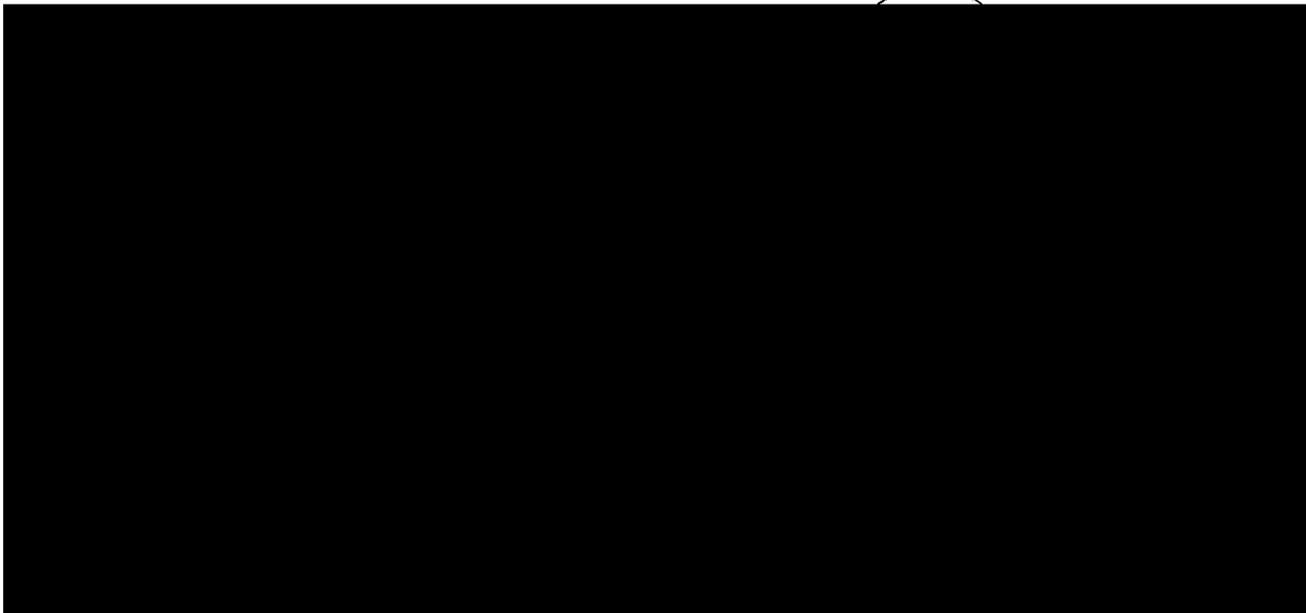
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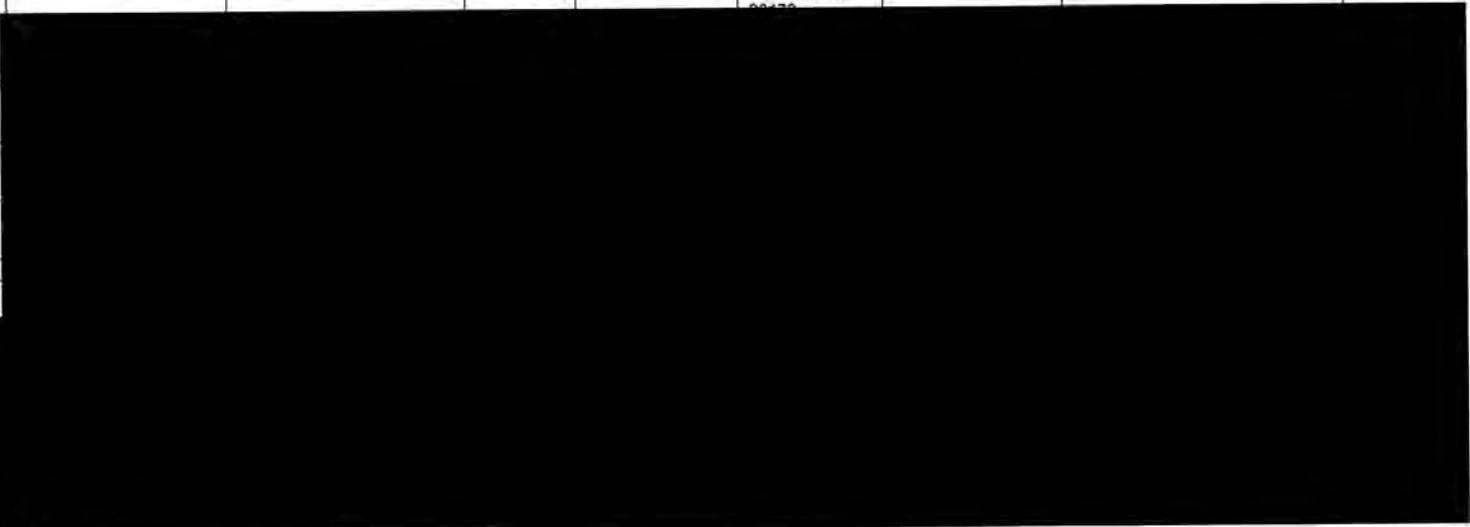
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The parent(s) listed below certify that they are meaningfully interested in enrolling their student(s) at the Ross Valley Charter School. As such, they believe that the charter merits consideration and hereby request the governing board of the Ross Valley School District to grant approval of the charter pursuant to Education Code 47600 et seq. They further authorize the Ross Valley Charter School founders to negotiate any amendments to the charter necessary to secure approval by the District Board. Signature page is attached to petition upon signature in addition to the legally required signatures of teachers who are meaningfully interested in teaching at the school.

Los padres y apoderados que figuran a continuación certifican que están realmente interesados en matricular a sus estudiantes en la escuela chárter Ross Valley. Como tales, creen que la escuela merece considerarse y, mediante esta petición, solicitan a la junta directiva del distrito escolar Ross Valley su aprobación de la escuela según el Código de Educación 47600 et seq. Asimismo, autorizan a los fundadores de la escuela chárter Ross Valley a negociar toda enmienda a la carta constitucional necesaria para obtener su aprobación de parte de la junta directiva del distrito. Se adjunta la página con las firmas que respaldan esta petición además de las firmas de los maestros que han demostrado interés fehaciente en enseñar en la escuela chárter Ross Valley.

	Name <i>Nombre</i>	Signature <i>Firma</i>	Phone <i>Teléfono</i>	Name of neighborhood district school <i>Nombre de la escuela dentro del distrito</i>	What grade will your student be entering in 2016/17 school year? <i>¿A qué clase le corresponde ir a su estudiante durante el año escolar 2016-2017?</i>	(Optional) Email <i>Correo electrónico</i>	(Optional) ADDRESS <i>Dirección</i>
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S. Kiptum

Ross Valley Charter Appendices and Attachments

**PETITION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ROSS VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL**  
*Petición para establecer la Escuela Charter Ross Valley*  
[www.rossvalleycharter.org](http://www.rossvalleycharter.org)

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*L. Miller*

Ross Valley Charter Appendices and Attachments

**PETITION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ROSS VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL**

*Petición para establecer la Escuela Charter Ross Valley*

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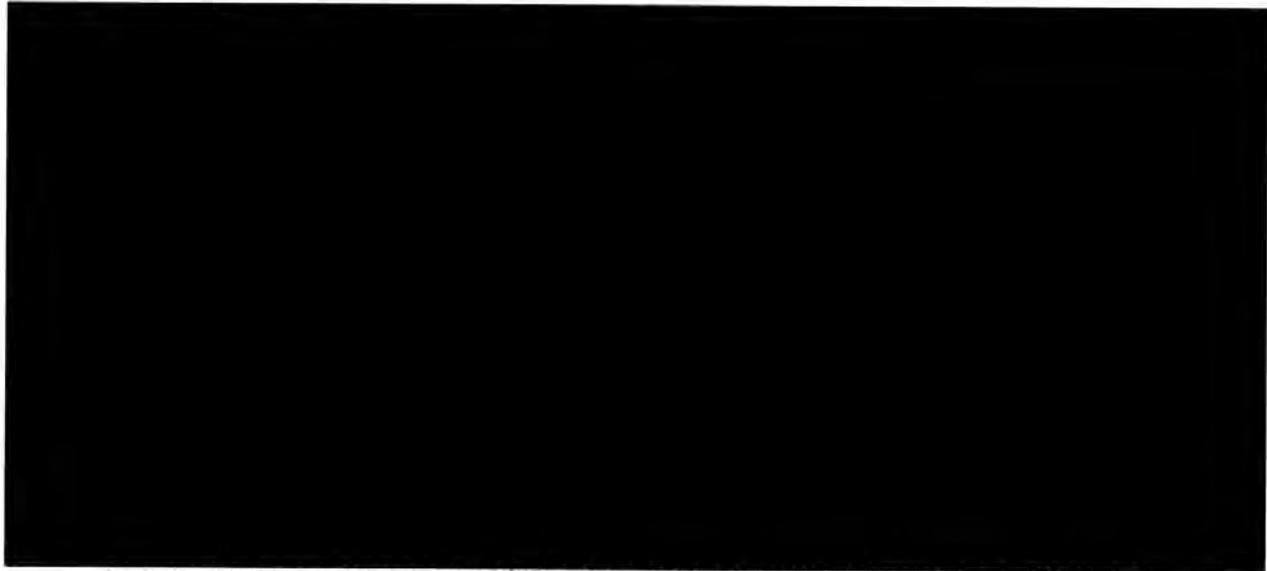
*Los padres y apoderados que figuran a continuación certifican que están realmente interesados en matricular a sus estudiantes en la escuela charter Ross Valley. Como tales, creen que la escuela merece considerarse y, mediante esta petición, solicitan a la junta directiva del distrito escolar Ross Valley su aprobación de la escuela según el Código de Educación 47600 et seq. Asimismo, autorizan a los fundadores de la escuela charter Ross Valley a negociar toda enmienda a la carta constitucional necesaria para obtener su aprobación de parte de la junta directiva del distrito. Se adjunta la página con las firmas que respaldan esta petición además de las firmas de los maestros que han demostrado interés fehaciente en enseñar en la escuela charter Ross Valley.*

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**Optional Contact Information which will not be shared in the petition | *Cómo le ubicamos (optativo)***

Ross Valley Charter School will only use this information to keep you informed of our progress. We will not share this or use it for any other purposes. | *La escuela charter Ross Valley solamente usará esta información para mantenerle informado sobre la marcha de la petición. No se proporcionará a terceros ni se usará con ningún otro propósito.*

Email | *Correo electrónico* \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street | *Domicilio* City | *Ciudad* State | *Estado* Zip | *Código Postal*

# Appendix C: Letters of Support

- Genevieve Sollecito, Executive Director, DayCaring Preschool
- John Reed, Fairfax Town Councilmember
- John D. Wright, San Anselmo Mayor, 16 year School District Trustee
- Margot Enbom, Director, Little Mountain Preschool
- Renee Goddard, Fairfax Town Councilmember
- Torri Chappell, Community Educator
- Rebecca Nowlen, Director, San Anselmo Cooperative Nursery School



June 24, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

I am the Executive Director at DayCaring Preschool, a non-profit preschool located in Fairfax California. We are a Marin County child centered, play based preschool serving children in the Ross Valley School district area and beyond for more than 40 years.

We support young children and their social emotional growth, curiosity and compassion for one another. We believe that all children deserve to grow and learn in a school environment that supports not only them but their families and communities as well.

I happily offer my support to the Ross Valley Charter School and its mission to create more quality tuition free, public education in our district. As a preschool Director I experience first hand the growing need for quality childcare for families not only in our own back yard but families moving from all over the country to our beautiful community and specifically into the wonderful Ross Valley School District.

With enrollment growing every year its time to create another happy, healthy, affordable school option for our district. Moving forward with the RVCS simply makes sense as it would provide a fifth public elementary school site to open up more choices and help to satisfy the needs of our growing community.

The teaching team involved with RVCS not only have years of experience, but a core understanding of the needs of children, how to foster their growth in a thriving way and the unique skill set of the Multi-Age Program model that has been so successful here in the Ross Valley District.

It is with pleasure that I offer my support to the parents, teachers and community members working hard to bring the Ross Valley Charter School to the Ross Valley School District and I urge you to accept their charter petition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Genevieve Sollecito".

Genevieve Sollecito  
Executive Director, DayCaring Preschool

June 27, 2015

John Reed  
36 Scenic Road  
Fairfax, CA  
94930

To Whom it may concern:

This letter is an endorsement of the efforts of the Fairfax Multi Age Program School in their efforts to become recognized as a Charter School.

Throughout its history, this school has been responsive to our community's desire to have an alternative school program that is mixed age, inquiry oriented, project based, and collaboratively organized.

Though it is unfortunate that MAP's status has been recently changed by the School Board, the response to seek a charter structure is a logical course of action. I believe that this new evolution of the MAP program will ultimately be a move for the better, as the impulse to respond to the long waiting list to attend, as well as a move to a better suited campus will likely be better served.

Thank you,  
John Reed  
Fairfax Town Councilmember

55 Avenue del Norte  
San Anselmo, CA 94960  
[johnwright1125@yahoo.com](mailto:johnwright1125@yahoo.com)  
415-254-3881

June 10, 2015

Re: Ross Valley Charter School Proposal

To Whom It May Concern:

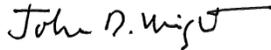
I am writing to voice my support, in principle, for the proposal to establish a charter school in the Ross Valley School District ("RVSD") that would provide a more independent structure, and opportunities for expansion, development, and increasing diversity, for the multi-age program of choice ("MAP") that has existed in the RVSD for nearly 20 years.

I served on the RVSD Board of Trustees from 1995-99. This was the board that approved MAP in its prior incarnation as the Innovative Learning Community ("ILC"). I supported then, and I support now, the concept of alternative programs in public schools when there is a significant segment of the local parent community that supports them and they are financially and administratively feasible.

Following my RVSD board service, I served for 12 years on the Tamalpais Union High School District and now serve on the San Anselmo Town Council, where I am currently the Mayor. While on the high school board I became more familiar with the financial and administrative challenges of alternative programs. I recognize that such challenges would also exist with the Ross Valley Charter School proposal. My support for the charter school proposal in principle is subject at a practical level to the satisfactory resolution of those concerns, which I have not studied in detail and about which I express no opinion.

In short, I support the approval of this charter proposal subject to the above qualifications.

Sincerely,



John D. Wright



June 23, 2015

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter in support of the Ross Valley Charter School. I believe the program will provide a much needed option to the parents and families of elementary aged children in Marin County.

I am the Director of Little Mountain Preschool, a play-based, multi-aged nursery school that serves families in Marin county. We are new (just two years old) but have a staff of 5 with over 100 years experience. We support young children, ages 3 – 5, and their parents in their social emotional growth and development during these wonderful years of childhood. Our children, when they leave to go off to kindergarten, are well prepared for the challenges that they will face. We are very proud of what we have created. We see the Ross Valley Charter School as following very similar values and ideals as ours.

There is a need for quality educational options in Marin county. The MAP program at Manor has been very successful and a wonderful alternative for many families. Having their own site and school, they would be able to serve more families and provide an alternative to many families as well.

I offer my support to the Ross Valley Charter School which I believe will provide a supportive, nurturing community for those families interested in a multi-age program.

Sincerely,

Margot Enbom  
Director  
Little Mountain Preschool

June 11, 2015

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to you as an individual member of the Fairfax Town Council, and also a parent of two children who both went all the way through elementary school in the Multi-Age Program (MAP) at Manor School.

The good news about Fairfax is that we are a unique and desirable community with great schools, which draw many young families.

The challenge is that as more families desire to live here, our public school options and capacity stays the same. Boundaries for school attendance have been redrawn to accommodate children in one of 4 elementary schools. People are forced to send their children to school outside of their communities.

Fairfax has a well-earned reputation as free-thinking, risk taking, and willing to challenge the establishment. MAP is the only alternative program in the Ross Valley School District. It was created to be a "program of choice".

The Multi-Age program has grown in popularity year after year, and the demand far exceeds the capacity. The Manor School campus has also outgrown its footprint making it not only impossible to expand the MAP program to meet demand, but allow for the enrollment of Fairfax's children who do not choose the MAP program.

We can no longer say that MAP is a program of choice, as far too many families who choose to put their children in MAP cannot be accommodated.

The Ross Valley School District is losing children to private schools for lack of choices in the public school system. We would like to have other free progressive education programs available to local families. We need to allow Fairfax residents to remain in their Town while making sure that there is room for families from the other Ross Valley School District attendance areas to attend their program of choice.

The Ross Valley Charter School would address the need for more public school options and allow Fairfax families to attend their local public school.

I strongly encourage the approval of the charter petition to insure that the innovative academic and creative talent and passionate community involvement in the program continues to nourish the needs of the families of the Ross Valley School District.

Thank you for your kind attention,

**Renee Goddard**  
Fairfax Town Council

150 Morningside Drive  
San Anselmo, CA 94960

June 14, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing as a local educator in support of The Ross Valley Charter School. During my 30 year career in education, I have worked with teachers, parents and students in public and private schools across Marin County and the MAP program has consistently impressed me with their steady commitment to building relationships and creating a safe, respectful and rich learning environment that promotes risk taking and learning for all kinds of learners. The goals of Common Core are nothing new to MAP because this program has always valued critical thinking, problem solving and analytical thinking as key components of their students' success today and in the future.

I've been involved with MAP since its inception 18 years ago and I have great respect for their commitment and pedagogy. Even though my own children weren't able to participate in the program, I am so grateful that our community has had MAP as a program of choice. Current research has shown that there are three environmental factors that cultivate and promote resiliency in children and MAP embodies all three: Ongoing, caring relationships with adults, opportunities to contribute and high expectations related to who you are. How fortunate Ross Valley is to have such a program available to families and the fact that there has been a waiting list for many years demonstrates that there is a great demand for this program to stay and to grow in our community.

Thank you in advance for recognizing the value of MAP and granting this unique program a charter so the needs of children and families in our community will continue to be met.

Respectfully,

Torri Chappell  
Community Educator

San Anselmo Cooperative Nursery School  
24 Myrtle Ln. San Anselmo, CA 94960  
415-454-5308  
sananselmocoop.com



7/4/15

To Whom It May Concern:

I write this letter in strong support of the Ross Valley Charter School. I come to this position as an alumna of the Ross Valley School District, a mother to two children in the Ross Valley School District, and as the director of a preschool that feeds into the Ross Valley School District.

As the mother of a child in the K-5 program and another in the MAP program at Manor, I can speak personally to the excellence of all the staff at Manor. Both of my children have been served equally well by the programs that house them. I'm grateful to the staff at Manor School for their excellence and inspiration in their jobs.

However, I'm fortunate that I was able to have that choice – to situate each child in the program that suited her best. There are just not enough public school options in our area to accommodate the many families who feel that the traditional kindergarten-fifth grade curriculum, which focuses primarily on academic retention, is not a good fit for their children.

In the Ross Valley School District, there is great economic disparity. Many of the families who feel that the more traditional approaches do not serve their needs are able to enroll their children in private school. It is tragic and unfair that so many more families are forced to shoehorn their children into the traditional curricular models—models that can make some children begin their understanding of schooling with feelings of anxiety and inadequacy.

As a preschool teacher, I see children who are bright, inquisitive, warm, and curious become "concerns" the moment they enter kindergarten because they don't know their numbers or letters yet. These children need space where their own paces can be discovered and accommodated, and they can direct that pace while learning creative problem-solving and social interaction.

We need the Ross Valley Charter to exist so that every family can have the choice to enroll his or her child in the program that suits that child's needs. Children don't come out "one-size-fits-all." Neither should our public schools.

Thank you,

-Rebecca Nowlen

Director, San Anselmo Cooperative Nursery School

# Appendix D: Budget And Supporting Documents For Material Revision School Operation Starting Fall of 2017

## Narrative

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The attached budget and cash flow projections are based on estimates of the actual revenue and costs to implement the Ross Valley Charter School (referred to below as RVC or the Charter) as described in this Petition. RVC engaged EdTec to advise and consult in the development of accurately projected Revenues, Expenses and Cash Flow.

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

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

The narrative below lays out the assumptions on which this budget is based. The budget reflects a positive operating income in each of the five years resulting in 5 years in an ending balance that is 52% of that year's expenses. Due to a 4 year, 1.5%, \$60,000 unsecured loan, and a planning year surplus of \$106,564, RVC is budgeting a reserve of \$232,000 or 13% at the end of its first school year.

### **A. Demographics**

Under California law, the Charter School is petitioning to operate as a new school. But in practical effect it is a patterning itself on the existing Ross Valley School District (RVSD) MAP program at Manor School which currently has six teachers in 6 multiage classrooms (two K-1's, two 2-3's, two 4-5's) averaging 22 students per class with a total enrollment of 131. All six teachers are petitioners as teachers and plan to go to work for the Charter when it begins.

One of the reasons to charter is to grow the program by three more classrooms (or one additional “strand” of K-5 to the existing two) to better meet the demand of the many families who annually apply but for whom there is not enough room. The waiting list for the program has traditionally been over 100. See table on page 23-24 of petition for the annual additions to the waiting list over the last five years. The planned class size for all K-3 classes will be 24, in keeping the California class size reduction goals. The class size for 4-5 have been budgeted at 26, allowing for the acceptance of additional students in the fourth and fifth grades as MAP has traditionally done.

In our first year, 2017-2018, we have assumed that we will open three new classes, a K-1, 2-3, and likely a 3-4. We believe it will be easier to find 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders who want to change programs or schools than it will be to find 5<sup>th</sup> graders, since 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders will be able to have two full years of the Charter experience. Because of this start up configuration, enrollment in the first three years is assumed to be 220, 230 and 228 and thereafter 222. In the second and third year the three 4-5 classes will have an enrollment of 28 to accommodate the extra 12 3<sup>rd</sup> graders going through 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.

The budgeted revenue assumes full enrollment which is a reasonable assumption because of the traditionally oversubscribed nature of applications and the historical existence of a 100 student waiting list. As of the date of the submission of the Material Revision we have 280 students whose parents have applied to RVC. We are confident that with a good outreach program we will meet full enrollment in our first year. 90% of this will likely come from in-district but if needed we can market in San Rafael and elsewhere in Marin. For example, there were 80 applications for K and T/K for the fall of 2016.

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

RVC is targeting the following demographics:

- 7.5% English Language Learner
- 12% Free & Reduced Lunch qualifying (70% of which is expected to qualify for Free Lunch)

To reach these percentages, which are higher than district averages, we plan to do actively seek economic and ethnic diversity in our students through our outreach efforts which are explained in the petition.

## **Revenues**

Local Control Funding has been calculated using the FCMAT calculator released after the Governor’s January 2016 Budget. The calculator file is available on request. Major assumptions include:

- Enrollment and ADA assumptions as outlined above.

- 12% unduplicated in all years was assumed for Supplemental Grant.
- Due to the above unduplicated assumption, RVC would not qualify for Concentration Grant funding. Even if it were above 55% the charter would not qualify because the District percentages are well below.
- In order to calculate the floor rate, data was used from Tamalpais Union High School District since that is the district with the highest floor calculation in which RVC will be located.
- COLA percentages for 2017-18 through 2019-20 are based on the Governor's January Budget as well as the School Services Of California's January 15<sup>th</sup> Fiscal Report, COLA Percentages for 2020-21 and 2021-22 have been conservatively estimated at 1% per year.

Because RVC's target rate is below the floor, RVC will remain at the target rate throughout the budget projection. We have included the projected implementation percentages for LCFF although they wouldn't have any impact on funding, as RVCS would continue to be funded at the target, which will increase by COLA each year.

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

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
<b>COLA</b>	2.13%	2.65%	2.72%	1.00%	1.00%
<b>Target Rate</b>	8,042	8,261	8,499	8,584	8,670
<b>Implementation</b>	45.34%	6.15%	34.21%	50%	100%

The above revenues are funded by regular State Aid or "Local Control," In-Lieu of Property Tax, and the Education Protection Account (EPA). The Education Protection Account (EPA) is assumed to be 17.9% of the above Local Control revenues, except in the first year when it is \$200/ADA for all new schools. The allocation of Property Tax is based on the Ross Valley Elementary School District 2014-15 P-2 rate of \$4,102 per ADA. The remaining amount is funded by regular State Aid or "Local Control."

RVC has budgeted for Child Nutrition using 2014-15 reimbursement rates. To be conservative, RVC only expects to be reimbursed for 95% of Food Service costs.

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

For Special Education purposes, the budget assumes that RVC will operate as its own LEA for Special Education Purposes. The funding is based on current assumptions that are used for those charters that are members of either the Sonoma or El Dorado Charter SELPA. Special Education expenses are allocated to one Special Ed teacher and the rest to Special Education Contracted Services. We assume that Special Ed expenses will exceed revenues by 15% except in the first year when the expense percentage will be higher because there are no Federal revenues.

RVC will create a Special Ed allocated Reserve Account and will put \$30,000 per year into this Reserve until it reaches \$150,000. This reserve will be set aside for any non-public school placements or other extraordinary Special Ed expenses that might occur.

The budget assumes that the Charter will raise an average of \$125 per student per year through community fundraising efforts. This assumption is based on two experiences. First, in the Ross Valley School District, under a voluntary district-wide elementary school agreement, called the Round Table Agreement, elementary schools are allowed to raise \$125 per student annually in their combined fundraisers and any amount over that is donated to the District's Educational Foundation (called YES) and historically Manor and the other elementary schools in the district have raised between \$25 and \$50 per student over that amount. Second, the Charter development team has raised \$66,000 in donations in the last 24 months to support its development efforts. In addition, many current RVC parents and teachers have been very involved with YES fundraisers and Manor's Winter Faire. These parents and teachers have a lot of fundraising experience and feel confident they can raise at least the projected amounts.

The Charter School also has budgeted for state lottery revenue. These funds do not begin to arrive until year 2 (year 1 funds are accrued). This has been budgeted at \$181/ADA in 2017-18, which is based on the 2015-16 School Fiscal Services rates.

The Charter has applied for and received a PCSGP CDE grant. RVC has been awarded a \$375,000 grant. The attached budget anticipates spending the entire amount before July 31, 2017. The budget shows revenue of \$275,000 in the year 2015-16 but since none of the expenses are budgeted to start until July 1, 2016, only part of this \$275,000 accrued revenue will be received since most of that revenue will be for reimbursing approved expenses. The PCSGP budget was approved in January 2016.

## **B. Expenses**

Many expenses are projected to increase at 1-2% per year. Others are estimated at a per pupil, per square foot rate, per teacher, or a per cent of payroll and the rates are noted in the comments section of the budget.

### **Staffing and Benefits**

We have assumed that all 6 current MAP teachers will be employed by the Charter at the Step and Column rate they would have had if they had stayed in the Ross Valley School District. The budget assumes the Charter will use the Ross Valley School District (RVSD) step and column salary schedule as its own full time teacher salary schedule on an ongoing basis as the RVSD RVTA negotiated schedule moves over time. The seventh, eighth, and ninth classroom teachers are all assumed to be new teachers who will start at the bottom of the salary schedule. The Special Ed teacher is assumed to start at Step 5 Column 2 on the RVSD salary schedule.

It is assumed that all certificated employees will participate in STRS. Non-certificated staff will be part of social security and not be part of PERS. Increases in STRS contributions contained in current law are assumed. Salary increases are assumed at to RVSD salaries which have already been negotiated through 2016-17 and then 1 % each year thereafter.

The Ross Valley Charter School will offer a cafeteria health plan to all full time employees and contribute the same as RVSD does for participating employees under its RVTA contract. Assumed rate in the budget is \$10,305 for 2017-18 for each employee participating and increasing by 2% per year thereafter. Three of the current MAP teachers do not use health benefits and do not plan to with the Charter School. It is budgeted for all other full-time teachers and administration. If these employees were not to join the charter, RVC would hire teachers with somewhat less experience than the average 16 years that current MAP teachers have.

The budget assumes substitutes needed for 5% of the student attendance days at a rate of \$140 per day.

The only other full time staff will be a School Director and an Office Manager. Business services will be done by the classified full time staff using EdTec Charter Accounting software, the license and support for which is included in the budget. The Board CFO has extensive business accounting and school accounting experience and will oversee accounting practices in conjunction with the School Director.

The budget includes salaries for three part time certificated employees: a 10 hour a week intervention teacher, an 8 hour a week English Language Development specialist, and an 8 hour a week Spanish language teacher. It also includes several non-certificated part time employees: a PE instructor 18 hours/week so that each classroom will have two PE periods per week; a counselor for 2 hours/week; two five-hour-a-day lunch supervision and office receptionist personnel; and finally a 10 hour/week Spanish speaking Parent Outreach person to work with socio-economically disadvantaged parents to facilitate their access to and comfort in the charter educational community so that they feel part of the educational community. The budget assumes all these part time people will be employees, but it is possible the services will be contracted for at equivalent cost.

### **Books and Supplies**

The MAP curriculum has always been very different from the RVSD curriculum. It has always been taught to the California standards but the teachers have developed their own reading and other curricular and reference materials. The budget reflects \$77 per student for ongoing purchasing of curriculum and reference materials, books, and other instructional equipment, materials and supplies.

Educational and administrative computing will all be done using the cloud for storage. Support to Chromebooks, laptops and office computers will be supported remotely

using standardized disk images. This cloud use and technical support is budgeted at \$8,000 per year.

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

### **Services and Operating Expenses**

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

RVC is planning to rent facilities privately. We have budgeted for up to twelve 900 sq. ft. rooms plus 30% of other space at a rate of \$1.13 a square foot per month for a total of \$190,888 per year. We are doing a Proposition 39 request as part of this Material Revision so we expect our actual facilities expenses in 2017-18 to be closer to \$0.20 a square foot per month or \$33,695 per year. But we are keeping our larger budgeted amount so we have the flexibility to pursue other facility options should they be available.

The Charter School is separately budgeting for utilities, janitorial, and repairs and maintenance. Utilities are based on the industry standard of \$.25 per square foot per month for 10 months of use. Janitorial and repairs and maintenance are based on the costs of these services at similarly-sized schools in EdTec's client base in the Bay Area.

The Charter School has included the required 1% oversight payment to its charter authorizer.

Professional development is an important part of the Charter School. Much of the professional development during the year will be run internally at minimal cost in twice weekly 2 hour teacher meetings, but the school is budgeting \$800 per teacher to pay for specialized support starting in year one.

The Charter school is budgeting \$15 per student to contract for required health screenings and health training for staff.

### **Start Up Expenses**

The budget assumes \$40,000 for salaries and benefits (or contract expenses) for the equivalent of a School Director and Office Manager and \$30,000 for stipends for teacher training and curriculum development during the 2016-17 fiscal year. Under Books and Supplies it includes: \$42,500 for startup instructional materials and art and music equipment; \$36,725 for classroom furnishings include furniture, printers, video display projection equipment, file cabinets, wall boards and shelves; \$42,060 for teacher laptops and 125 chrome/books laptops for a more than 1:2 computer to student ratio, \$10,000 for administrative furniture and equipment and before school year supplies, and \$28,215 for network infrastructure. Under Servicing and Other Operating Expenses it

includes: \$34,080 for facility rental prior to July 1, 2017; \$25,575 for setup and training of Accounting and Business Services software, policies and procedures; \$40,000 over two years for Special Ed startup expenses, \$4,500 for new teacher professional development; \$6,500 for SIS system license and setup and training; \$10,000 for startup consulting services for Governance Training and the development of HR, Risk Management, IT and other policies and procedures as well parent, student, and employee handbooks; \$18,000 for startup technology consulting services; \$1,295 for student recruiting;

### **C. Capital Outlay**

Budgeted Capital Outlay expenses are \$28,215 for Internet Network Infrastructure in the startup period.

### **D. Cash Flow**

The cash flow projection assumes the Education Protection Account is disbursed quarterly. Property Tax payments are paid each month by the district. State Aid or "Local Control" is paid according to the 5-5-9 schedule with no deferrals.

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

RVC will apply for the California School Finance Authority Charter School Revolving Loan Fund. The Charter School has forecasted receipt of \$250,000 in principal in July 2017, and assumes a four-year payback period. Repayments of this principal consist of \$62.5k per year, in six equal portions in September through February. The Charter School has also budgeted interest expense for this loan. The interest expense was calculated based on current expectations for Revolving Loan Fund terms (approximately 1.38% interest).

In the unlikely case that the Charter School does not receive the Revolving Loan, the Charter School could sell receivables to finance operations. The Charter School does not anticipate needing to borrow funds from the County Superintendent of Schools or the County Board of Education per Ed Code section 47603.

### **E. Contingencies and Reserves**

Given its size, the Charter School plans to maintain at least 10% undesignated budget reserve for economic uncertainties starting with in year one. The Charter has two former RVSD trustees on its Board and believes in the importance of maintaining strong budgetary reserves. One of these board members, Conn Hickey, has extensive private sector financial management experience. He managed an \$8 million IT budget and staff at Westamerica Bank for over 25 years. He has also been to numerous CBO trainings put on by CASBO and ASCS. RVC's response to negative financial events will be to cut expenses and/or increase revenues, just as school districts have to do.

# **Appendix E: Governance Documents**

- **Articles of Incorporation**
- **Bylaws**
- **Conflict of Interest Code**

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ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION  
OF  
ROSS VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

*gml*  
**FILED**  
Secretary of State  
State of California

JUL 10 2014  
*icc* *bls*

I.

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

II.

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

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

III.

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

Jason Morrison  
25 Deer Park Lane  
Fairfax, CA 94930

IV.

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

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

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

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

V.

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

VI.

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

VII.

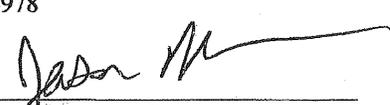
The initial street address of the Corporation is:

25 Deer Park Lane  
Fairfax, CA 94930

The initial mailing address of the Corporation is:

P.O. Box 971  
Fairfax, CA 94978

Dated: July 9, 2014

  
Jason Morrison, Incorporator



I hereby certify that the foregoing transcript of 1 page(s) is a full, true and correct copy of the original record in the custody of the California Secretary of State's office.

JUL 17 2014

Date:

*bhs*

*Debra Bowen*

DEBRA BOWEN, Secretary of State

**ROSS VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL**

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST CODE**

**I. ADOPTION**

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

**II. DEFINITION OF TERMS**

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

**III. DESIGNATED EMPLOYEES**

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

**IV. STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS: FILING**

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

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

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

## **V. DISQUALIFICATION**

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

## **VI. MANNER OF DISQUALIFICATION**

### **A. Non-Governing Board Member Designated Employees**

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

### **B. Governing Board Member Designated Employees**

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

**EXHIBIT A**

Designated Positions

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

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

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

## **EXHIBIT B**

### Disclosure Categories

#### **Category 1**

Designated positions assigned to this category must report:

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

#### **Category 2**

Designated positions assigned to this category must report:

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

#### **Category 3**

Designated positions assigned to this category must report:

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

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

**ARTICLE I**  
**NAME**

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

**ARTICLE II**  
**PRINCIPAL OFFICE OF THE CORPORATION**

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

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

**ARTICLE III**  
**GENERAL AND SPECIFIC PURPOSES; LIMITATIONS**

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

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

**ARTICLE IV**  
**CONSTRUCTION AND DEFINITIONS**

Section 1. CONSTRUCTION AND DEFINITIONS. Unless the context indicates otherwise, the general provisions, rules of construction, and definitions in the California Nonprofit

Corporation Law shall govern the construction of these bylaws. Without limiting the generality of the preceding sentence, the masculine gender includes the feminine and neuter, the singular includes the plural, and the plural includes the singular, and the term "person" includes both a legal entity and a natural person.

**ARTICLE V  
DEDICATION OF ASSETS**

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

**ARTICLE VI  
CORPORATIONS WITHOUT MEMBERS**

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

**ARTICLE VII  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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

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

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

- c. Borrow money and incur indebtedness on the Corporation's behalf and cause to be executed and delivered for the Corporation's purposes, in the corporate name, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, deeds of trust, mortgages, pledges, hypothecations, and other evidences of debt and securities.
- d. Adopt and use a corporate seal.

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

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

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

The teacher representative 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.

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

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

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

interest.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Section 12. THE FILLING OF VACANT SEATS ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS. Vacancies on the Board of Directors may be filled by approval of the Board of Directors or, if the number of Board Members then in office is less than a quorum, by (a) the affirmative vote of a majority of the Board Members then in office at a regular or special meeting of the Board, or (b) a

sole remaining Board Member. If the charter authorizer appoints a representative to serve on the Board of Directors, a vacancy in the seat of the authorizer's representative shall be filled by the authorizer. The teacher and parent representative Board seats shall be filled pursuant to the procedure specified in Section 3, except that if there is a vacancy in the initial parent seats prior to the enrollment of students and the nomination of candidates to fill the parent seat(s), then the vacancy in the parent seats shall be filled by the Board, with parents who have certified in Appendix B of the July 2015 Charter Petition that they are "meaningfully interested in enrolling their student(s) at the Ross Valley Charter School."

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

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

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

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

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

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

- a. Any such notice shall be addressed or delivered to each Board Member at the Board Member's address as it is shown on the records of the Corporation, or as may have been given to the Corporation by the Board Member for purposes of notice, or, if an

address is not shown on the Corporation's records or is not readily ascertainable, at the place at which the meetings of the Board of Directors are regularly held.

- b. Notice by mail shall be deemed received at the time a properly addressed written notice is deposited in the United States mail, postage prepaid. Any other written notice shall be deemed received at the time it is personally delivered to the recipient or is delivered to a common carrier for transmission, or is actually transmitted by the person giving the notice by electronic means to the recipient. Oral notice shall be deemed received at the time it is communicated, in person or by telephone or wireless, to the recipient or to a person at the office of the recipient whom the person giving the notice has reason to believe will promptly communicate it to the receiver.
- c. The notice of special meeting shall state the time of the meeting, and the place if the place is other than the principal office of the Corporation, and the general nature of the business proposed to be transacted at the meeting. No business, other than the business the general nature of which was set forth in the notice of the meeting, may be transacted at a special meeting.

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

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

- a. At a minimum, a quorum of the members of the Board of Directors shall participate in the teleconference meeting from locations within the boundaries of the school district in which the Charter School operates;
- b. All votes taken during a teleconference meeting shall be by roll call;
- c. If the Board of Directors elects to use teleconferencing, it shall post agendas at all teleconference locations with each teleconference location being identified in the notice and agenda of the meeting;

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

- d. All locations where a member of the Board of Directors participates in a meeting via teleconference must be fully accessible to members of the public and shall be listed on the agenda;<sup>2</sup>
- e. Members of the public must be able to hear what is said during the meeting and shall be provided with an opportunity to address the Board of Directors directly at each teleconference location; and
- f. The agenda shall indicate that members of the public attending a meeting conducted via teleconference need not give their name when entering the conference call.<sup>3</sup>

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

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

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

- a. Take any final action on any matter that, under the California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law, also requires approval of the members or approval of a majority of all members;
- b. Fill vacancies on the Board of Directors or any committee of the Board;
- c. Fix compensation of the Board Members for serving on the Board of Directors or on any committee;

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

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

- d. Amend or repeal bylaws or adopt new bylaws;
- e. Amend or repeal any resolution of the Board of Directors that by its express terms is not so amendable or subject to repeal;
- f. Create any other committees of the Board of Directors or appoint the members of committees of the Board;
- g. Expend corporate funds to support a nominee for Board Member if more people have been nominated for Board Member than can be elected; or
- h. Approve any contract or transaction to which the Corporation is a party and in which one or more of its Board Members has a material financial interest.

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

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

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

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

## ARTICLE VIII OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION

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

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

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

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

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

Section 6. VACANCIES IN OFFICE. A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause shall be filled in the manner prescribed in these bylaws for normal appointment to that office, provided, however, that vacancies need not be filled on an annual basis.

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

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

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

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

The Secretary shall give, or cause to be given, notice of all meetings of the Board and of

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

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

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

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

#### **ARTICLE IX CONTRACTS WITH DIRECTORS**

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

#### **ARTICLE X CONTRACTS WITH NON-BOARD MEMBER DESIGNATED EMPLOYEES**

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

**ARTICLE XI  
LOANS TO BOARD MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

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

**ARTICLE XII  
INDEMNIFICATION**

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

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

**ARTICLE XIII  
INSURANCE**

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

**ARTICLE XIV  
MAINTENANCE OF CORPORATE RECORDS**

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

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

## **ARTICLE XV INSPECTION RIGHTS**

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

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

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

## **ARTICLE XVI REQUIRED REPORTS**

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

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

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

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

#### **ARTICLE XVII BYLAW AMENDMENTS**

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

#### **ARTICLE XVIII FISCAL YEAR**

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

#### **CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY**

I certify that I am the duly elected and acting Secretary of the Ross Valley Charter School, a California nonprofit public benefit corporation; that these bylaws, consisting of 14 pages, are the bylaws of the Corporation as adopted by the Board of Directors on September 21, 2014 and amended on June 17, 2015, August 30, 2015, and April 4, 2016; and that these bylaws have not been

amended or modified since that date.

Executed on April 5<sup>th</sup> 2016 at Fairfax, California.



A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Katherine Lake", is written over a horizontal line.

KATHERINE LAKE, Secretary

# Appendix F: Petitioner Team

- Governing Board Members
- Other Founding Officer(s)
- Additional Founding Team Members
- Consultants and Advisors

# Governing Board Members

## **Roni Adams, Ph.D.**

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

## **Rana Barar, MPH**

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

## **Kate Crist, MAT**

For the past three years, Kate has worked as an Implementation Specialist for the Washoe County School District in Reno, Nevada, where she has worked in elementary and secondary schools to help teachers align instruction, resources, and programs to the Common Core and College and Career Readiness Standards. Much of this work has focused on supporting reform efforts, providing professional learning, conducting classroom observations and feedback, and ensuring educators have appropriate resource support. Washoe County was an early adopter of Common Core and its implementation efforts in its Core Task Project have been widely reported on. During this time Kate has also worked for a variety of education consultant and support groups to provide professional learning and instructional coaching to various schools and educators around the nation. Kate is currently a Student Achievement Partner Core Advocate for the state of Nevada as well as a member of the EQUiP Peer Review Panel. During the previous ten years, Kate worked as a classroom teacher, program coordinator, and an instructional coach in California public schools. Kate received a Masters of Arts in Teaching from University of San Francisco and a Bachelor of Arts from University of California Santa Cruz.

### **Conn Hickey, MA, Board Treasurer**

Conn Hickey has been deeply involved in the Ross Valley School District since 2000. He served as the School Board Liaison for the first MAP Advisory Board in 2001 and has attended most school board meetings since. He was a YES Foundation Board and Executive Committee Member from 2002 until 2007. He was a district Trustee for almost seven years between 2003 and 2011, during which time he became the board expert on school finance, renewed a parcel tax, and helped shape and pass the Measure A bond measure in 2010. He is currently a member the District's Measure A Citizen Oversight Committee. He graduated from the California School Board Association's Masters in Governance Academy in 2008 and the Association of California Administrators School Business (2013) and Superintendents (2014) Academies. He recently retired from a 27-year executive management career in Information Technology with Westamerica Bank, where he managed an annual profit center budget of \$8,000,000, supervised 50 employees, and negotiated and managed all IT contracts and led IT projects for the bank. Conn has written on Common Core implementation in guest editorials for the Marin IJ over the past year.

### **Kristi Kimball, M.P.A.**

Kristi Kimball is the Executive Director of the Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation. The Foundation focuses on improving the quality of K-12 education for all children in California and nationwide through investments in high-performing charter schools, human capital development for teachers and school leaders, education technology and policy work. Prior to joining the foundation, she worked as a consultant and strategic advisor to a number of education foundations and non-profits. Kristi also worked for 8 years as Program Officer at the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, where she managed more than \$85 million in grants. Her portfolio included investments in networks of model schools and school districts, research and evaluation, communications and state policy work. Kristi served in the U.S. Department of Education during the Clinton Administration, in the Education Policy Research Center at the Urban Institute, and in the Education Office of the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. Ms. Kimball holds a B.A. from Dartmouth College and an Masters in Public Administration from the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University.

### **Chris Lyons**

Chris Lyons teaches 4th/5th grade in Ross Valley School District's Multi-Age Program. She has taught in MAP for nine years, and previously taught in the Dixie School District, for a total of 19 years of elementary teaching experience. Chris has taught all the elementary grades, kindergarten through fifth. She has served on School Site Councils, District Advisory Teams, and numerous district committees. She has also been a mentor teacher, taught a class for Marin County's Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment ("BTSA") program, and received a Golden Bell award. She has been trained at the Teacher's College Reading and Writing Project at Columbia University in New York, and has also attended professional development workshops in Project Based Learning and Childhood Creativity. Chris served as president of the San Anselmo Cooperative Nursery School when her children were students there. Both her sons are MAP program graduates.

### **Sharon Sagar Board President**

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

### **Andrea Sumits, JD**

Andrea has been an attorney for 20 years practicing primarily in the field of environmental and land use law. She advises her clients on sustainability, due diligence, and transactional projects, as well as regulatory compliance and corporate governance. Andrea has been actively engaged as a parent in Ross Valley School District since 2009. She helped lead successful campaigns for a 2012 Parcel Tax measure and a 2010 \$41 million bond measure, both of which provide needed financial means for all Ross Valley School District schools, and managed the successful 2011 campaign for a RVSD trustee candidate. Andrea has served on the MAP Advisory Board since 2010, including as the MAP-RVSD Board Liaison from 2011 through 2014. She has also served as the RVSD Board Liaison for the Manor PTA since 2011. She was a founding member of the MAP Vision Committee, which ultimately led to the vision to start a charter school. Andrea served as the parent/teacher representative on the Manor School Site Council during the 2013-14 school year. Andrea participated on the K.I.N.D. steering committee which helped bring a social-emotional curriculum to the RVSD in 2012, and has since served on the steering group for the PeaceCoaches program at Manor. She has served as room parent for several years for her children's classrooms, is a regular volunteer in the classroom, and has helped coordinate numerous school-wide and MAP events. For the 2014-15 school year, Andrea will be serving as the Facilitator on the MAP Advisory Board. She has a passion for progressive educational values, community engagement, and parent participation in education.

## Other Founding Officer(s)

### **Kathy Lake, Secretary**

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

## Additional Founding Team Members

### **Liz Canning**

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

### **Jason Morrison**

Jason Morrison holds a Master's Degree from Boston University's Center for Energy and Environmental Studies and a B.A. in Philosophy. Since 1993, he has been with the Pacific Institute, a non-profit, non-partisan sustainability policy research center, directing the Institute's Corporate Sustainability Program, where he is currently studying the policy implications of private sector sustainability initiatives. Under a 2008 Memorandum of Understanding between the Pacific Institute and the United Nations Global Compact, Jason serves as the Technical Director for the CEO Water Mandate, supporting the initiative with applied research, event organization, and other services. Jason is a co-founder and current Board Member of the Alliance for Water Stewardship, a global initiative working to develop a freshwater certification program to advance responsible water practices by water providers and large-scale users. As a Co-Chair of the Ross Valley Charter School's Fundraising Committee, he brings his two decades plus experience in the non-profit sector to his RVCS large donor solicitation and grant writing responsibilities.

### **Arielle Sumits**

Arielle Sumits has been a senior analyst with Cisco for 14 years and is currently the chief architect of Cisco's Internet forecasting effort, the results of which have garnered extensive

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

### **Christopher Tonry**

Designer, artist, father, volunteer.

### **Rebecca Wicker**

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

### **Jennifer Wolf**

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

## **Collaborators & Contributors**

### **Guadalupe Alvarez**

Guadalupe Alvarez was born in Mexico and has lived in the United States since he was three

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

### **Christina Amini**

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

### **Katherine Csizmadia**

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

### **Amy Ferhart, M.Ed.**

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

### **Jenelle Ferhart**

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

### **Carolyn Gencarella**

Carolyn Gencarella has been an educator in San Francisco Bay Area public schools since the mid-1990s. She holds a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential as well as a Single Subject Credential in Foundational Level Science. Carolyn's work specializes in bringing science knowledge and practice to culturally and linguistically diverse learners. She currently works within San Francisco Unified School District as a Science Specialist at the elementary level. For the past 3 years Carolyn has been a member of the BaySci Master Champions Science Network at the Exploratorium's Institute for Inquiry. This group regularly explores effective pedagogy to support the successful implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards through inquiry-based science. Carolyn has 2 older children who are graduates of the MAP program.

### **Tim Heth**

Tim Heth began his teaching career 40 years ago in the Teacher Corps in Louisville, Kentucky. After two years, he moved to San Francisco where he worked in education and the social services in San Francisco Unified School District's ("SFUSD") child development centers, Tenderloin senior programs, and in Chinatown with families. Prior to moving to Marin, he was a SFUSD Kindergarten teacher in SF's Visitacion Valley neighborhood. Following a year of very long commutes between San Anselmo and "the city" he was offered a position as a founding teacher in Ross Valley School District's Innovative Learning Community (later re-named the Multi-Age Program). He believes young children are innately creative, and that through their pursuit of their interests and ideas, creativity will continue to flourish. He believes a child's school experience should integrate literacy and mathematical skills, science, visual and performing arts, outdoor education, and play in a holistic curriculum that will excite and engage a child.

### **Scott Hummel**

Scott Hummel is a graphic designer who works with a range of clients, primarily in the finance and non-profit sectors, to give visual voice to their stories. Prior to starting Soar Creative, Scott initiated and developed programs at several universities—including Brown and Georgetown—enabling students to come together to engage in and enhance community-based

efforts while learning and building connection through their experiences. He has been a MAP classroom volunteer for seven years, as well as the lead organizer for Manor School's Field Day and a West Marin Little League baseball coach for three years. Scott earned both Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Virginia Tech and pursued post-baccalaureate studies at the California College of the Arts.

### **Emily Korrell**

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

### **Barry Price**

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

### **Deborah Read**

Deborah has 25+ years' experience in the branding and graphic design industry. She brings creative leadership with expertise in design strategy to projects large and small. Deborah leads teams to create powerful, compelling storylines for consumer goods and services for clients ConAgra Foods, Del Monte, Hormel, Safeway, PepsiCo, Williams-Sonoma, LVMH, Logitech, and Dominican University. Beyond client work, Deborah has regularly designed programs within the

Ross Valley School District including the Manor School Winter Faire, served on the PTA Executive Committee, and co-founded the Manor School Art & Garden Circle.

### **Amanda Sheeren**

Amanda Sheeren holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Utah and has nearly 15 years experience working with children. She has worked with at-risk youth as a mentor, foster-teens through the CASA organization, developmentally disabled children through the Riding High program, and, with children on the autism spectrum providing in-home therapy. Through these experiences, a passion for progressive education came alive. After becoming a mother, Amanda shifted gears and began working with children in an entirely new capacity, as a birth and postpartum doula. Amanda believes in a model of education that recognizes, and celebrates, individuality, while truly nurturing and nourishing each individual child. As a new MAP parent, she feels right at home.

### **Adam Smith**

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

### **Erika Smith**

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

### **Sonya Stanley**

Sonya Stanley has been involved in education for the past 15 years and actively participated in

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

#### **Alice Treves, LCSW**

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

#### **Nina Watson**

Nina Watson has 14 years' experience teaching 4th/5th grade in the MAP program. Nina has been a BTSA mentor, as well as a student teacher mentor. She is also the recipient of the Golden Bell award for teaching excellence at Manor School. Nina has attended the Teacher's College, Columbia University for numerous trainings in literacy, as well as conferences on Multiage Instruction, G.A.T.E., and Differentiated Instruction.

#### **Belynda Webb Marks**

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

public school access to alternative, project-based education drives her commitment to this charter school project.

**Madeleine Wood**

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

**Catherine Woodman**

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

**Angela Vidinsky**

Angela Vidinsky holds a bachelors degree in Anthropology from Colorado College. Prior to having children, Angela was employed in the non-profit arena working on social justice issues. As a bilingual community educator and direct service provider, she became intimately acquainted with the harsh realities of domestic violence and sexual assault. Working for an international public health organization, she learned the power of community mobilizing and social marketing as a means of effecting positive behavior change. Through executive-level advocacy, Angela gained further insight into the complex legal, ethical and political climate surrounding violence against women. For the past 10 years, Angela has had the privilege of devoting her time to raising her children, now aged eight and ten. She has embraced her role as “wife and mother” and is currently a proud advocate of progressive public education.

# Consultants and Advisors

## **California Charter Schools Association**

California Charter Schools Association (CCSA) runs a comprehensive portfolio of programs and services for operating charter schools and charter development teams. Through Charter Developer Membership, CCSA provides individualized support throughout the process, including technical assistance, workshops, web resources and templates. CCSA advances the charter school movement through state and local advocacy, leadership on accountability, and resources for member schools. CCSA is a trusted source of data and information on California's charter schools for parents, authorizers, legislators, the press and other interested groups.

## **Edtec Inc. Business & Development Specialists for Charter Schools**

EdTec is a social venture founded in 2001 to develop, support and advance quality charter schools. EdTec provides the quality business services and operations support. EdTec's team provides expertise and support to over 300 charter schools and charter developers across a comprehensive range of services. EdTec's economies of scale deliver experienced personnel specializing in various areas of school finance and operations, including: budgeting, cash flows and forecasts, accounting, payroll, accounts payable, financial reporting, compliance management and the development of benchmarks and best practices.

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

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

## **Brittany Erickson**

Brittany Erickson is currently a doctoral student at Harvard University studying Education Leadership, and she has extensive experience in and outside the field of education. Most recently, Brittany worked as the lead designer and researcher for The New School of San Francisco – an inquiry-based elementary school opening in Fall 2015 in partnership with the Exploratorium Museum. Prior to beginning her doctoral studies, Brittany was the Director of 21st Century Learning at Teach For America where she led research and implementation efforts related to deeper learning and social-emotional growth. Her work led the organization to change the way it measures student learning and teacher effectiveness, and dramatically redesign its educator-training model. Brittany's success in advocating for organizational change was informed by her prior work in management consulting at Oliver Wyman. There, she focused on new product development and organizational strategy for leading technology companies. Brittany began her career as a 6th grade English teacher in San Francisco, CA, and she attended the University of Pennsylvania, completing a Master's degree in Public Policy and

a Bachelor's degree in Political Science.

### **Anne-Marie Evans**

Anne received the benefit of an international education as a child in Europe and earned her Teachers Certificate from the University of London Institute of Education. Her 40+ year career in education has taken her all over the world, starting in Iran where she worked at Iran Girls College, a university for women, and later to California where she founded the Cascade Canyon School. In 1996, she became the principal of Santa Rosa Charter School. Under her leadership, the school was authorized to offer the Primary Years Programme (PYP) of the International Baccalaureate IB. She holds a Masters in Education from Greenwich University and has been a qualified field representative, workshop leader, consultant and school authorization and evaluation team leader for the IB since 2001. As a consultant, she has worked with schools in Hong Kong, Ghana, the Middle East, Europe, Indonesia and throughout the United States and Canada. In 2012, the IB commissioned her to be an editor of the book, Journeys in Learning Across Frontiers. Anne leads many workshops which participants rate highly. She is passionate about providing teachers and administrators the knowledge and skills to offer their students the highest quality education fit for the future; her workshops model the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills our students need.

### **Fernanda Gonzalez Hauske**

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

### **Merritt Richmond**

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

# Appendix G: Student Life Documents

- Sample School Calendar
- Sample Progress Report (4th/5th grade)
- A Day in the Life of Lucy (K/1st)
- A Day in the life of Jackson (4th/5th Grade)



Ross Valley Charter School

Fourth / Fifth Grade Student Progress Report

Student:  School Year: **2016-17** Grade Level:  Teacher:

KEY:  Consistent  Developing  Not Yet Observed

**READING**

	NOV	MAR	JUN
4th Grade Benchmark Reading Level: Q R S			
5th Grade Benchmark Reading Level: T U V			
Reads with accuracy and fluency at this level:			
Compares and contrasts characters, settings, events, and stories			
Determines a theme of a story, how characters respond to challenges; summarizes a story			
Determines the meaning of words and phrases as used in a text, including figurative language			
Quotes from a text when explaining what the text says and drawing inferences			
Determines main ideas of a nonfiction text and supporting details; summarizes a text			

**WRITING**

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

**21st CENTURY SKILLS**

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

**SOCIAL / EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

**WRITTEN CONVENTIONS**

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

**SPEAKING & LISTENING SKILLS**

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

**SCIENCE**

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

**SOCIAL STUDIES**

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

**SPECIAL CLASSES**

Specials Key

- M Meets standards
- P Progressing toward standards
- N Not meeting standards

**MUSIC**

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

**ART**

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Demonstrates effort			
Works responsibly			

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Understands concepts and actively participates			

**ATTENDANCE**

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Days Enrolled			
Days Absent			
Days Tardy			

**SUPPORT SERVICES:**

Student:

School Year: **2016-17**

Grade Level:

Teacher:

**MATHEMATICS (4th grade standards)**

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

**MATHEMATICS (5th grade standards)**

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

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

Comments:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## A Day in the life of Jackson: 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Grade

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

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

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

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

The teacher excuses the class for reading workshop. Jackson heads to his cubby to get his reading folder and pencil. He makes his way back to the rug, and while he waits, he looks at his character notes he's been writing for his book: Bud, Not Buddy. His teacher shares a story with the class, stopping along the way to share ways she can pay attention to the character's actions (what the character does), to establish their characteristics. She models how she looks to the way

the character acts and reacts, explaining the difference between the two. During a turn-and-talk, Jackson and his partner debate whether Bud running away is an action or reaction on Bud's part. When the mini-lesson is over, Jackson heads to a beanbag with his supplies to read. During his reading, Jackson takes notes about Bud's character to share with his partner. During partner time, Jackson shares his thoughts, at one point reading a passage to his partner to make his point. When they know they have two minutes left, they make a plan for reading that night. Jackson would like to read twenty pages again, as he feels it is the right pace for him.

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

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

After recess, Jackson gets some water before heading into the classroom and to his cubby to get his writing notebook and pencil. He sits on the rug next to his writing partner. His teacher uses the presenter to share a student's boxes and bullets plan for a personal essay. Then she hands out copies of a personal essay she wrote, and a blank outline. Jackson works on figuring out boxes and bullets based on the essay. They find evidence of the thesis in the first paragraph and put that

inside the box. After the mini-lesson, Jackson goes off to create a box and bullet outline for his personal essay about what he's learned from being on a basketball team. During the bullet (supporting ideas), Jackson gets stuck and can't think of a third reason. He walks over to his partner and asks for help. His partner looks over what Jackson has already written and asks some questions. Jackson looks at his partner's box and bullets. Feeling like he has an idea, Jackson heads back to his work table and continues.

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

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

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

independently, and some are writing a guide to finding equivalent fractions for others to use.

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

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

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

# Appendix H: Enrollment and Lottery Procedures Board Policy

CHARTER SCHOOL POLICY AS AMENDED FEBRUARY 8, 2016

## **STUDENT APPLICATION ENROLLMENT AND PUBLIC RANDOM DRAWING/LOTTERY POLICY**

### **Overview**

This Policy shall apply to Ross Valley Charter (Charter School or RVC). This Policy shall be published in the instructions for student application for admission and the Charter School's Parent and Student Handbook.

All students who wish to attend the Charter School shall be admitted, subject to the Charter School's capacity. If there are more applications than the Charter School has capacity, enrollment, except for pupils currently enrolled in the Charter School (not applicable in the first year), shall be determined by public random drawing (or "lottery"), and conducted in accordance with the procedures described.

The initial lottery is held in late February or early March. Information about the date, time and location of the lottery will be posted on the Charter School's website, at the school site, included in public notices, newsletters and/or flyers posted in the community, and will be available by calling the Charter School information number that will be included on all student admissions/lottery materials.

The Charter School strongly encourages all potential applicants to review the charter and the Parent and Student Handbook (available on the Charter School's website after the first year) and published information regarding the Charter School, and visit the Charter School once it opens, prior to submitting an application for admission.

### **Assurances**

In addition to any other requirement imposed under law, the Charter School shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations, shall not charge tuition, and shall not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or

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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.

The Charter School's Board of Trustees shall ensure that student outreach activities and information sessions, including but not limited to those activities as described in the Charter School charter, which are designed to recruit a broad, diverse representation of students, are conducted in accordance with the charter.

#### **A. Application for Admission**

Submission of an application for admission is not a guarantee of admission to the Charter School; if there are more applications in any year than there are available spaces in each grade, the application will be entered into the Charter School's lottery. If an applicant does not submit an application by the posted open enrollment deadline, the applicant will not be entered into that enrollment period's lottery.

There is no fee to apply to or attend the Charter School.

Applications for enrollment must be submitted on-line, or submitted in hard copy to the Charter School's administrative office (after the first year), or (in the first year) submitted via mail to the Charter School's Post Office Box with a postmarked date no later than the specified application deadline date of the year of enrollment (e.g., deadline of February 8, 2016 for the first lottery for enrollment in the academic year 2016-17). RVC will hold orientation meetings from time to time and applications can be submitted at these meetings to the person designated at the meeting to accept applications.

Applications for admission for each academic year are valid solely for that academic year. Any offers of admission to the Charter School or waiting list positions from one academic year shall not carry over to any other academic years. Any applicant who was not offered admission in one academic year, and who wishes to reapply to the Charter School in the future, must submit a new application for the new academic year by the posted open enrollment deadline.

The application deadline will be posted on the Charter School's website and also indicated on all admissions applications. Email and facsimile copies of applications will not be accepted.

Once an application is received, it is "on file" for entry in the lottery. Applicants may phone or email the Charter School to ensure receipt of the application.

Applications submitted online, or received with a postmarked date, or otherwise received after the specified application deadline date will be automatically entered into the lottery for the

next open enrollment period for that school year. Subsequent open enrollment periods will be held as needed. Dates will be posted on the website for deadlines for these subsequent open enrollment periods and applicants involved will be emailed the public lottery details. Preferences will apply in all lotteries held.

**B. Admissions Selection Process and Public Random Drawing/Lottery**

1. Each year, the Board of Trustees, acting on recommendations from the Charter School Director (or designee), will approve a plan for school size for the upcoming academic year, which shall include the capacity per grade level, and in accordance with the charter. For capacity purposes, Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten will be considered one grade level. Transitional Kindergarten is for children who will have their fifth birthday between September 2 and December 2.
2. If, at the end of the first and any subsequent open enrollment period(s), the Charter School receives more applications than it has capacity for any grade as determined by the Board of Trustees, except for existing students of the Charter School, admission shall be determined by a public random drawing in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2). Applications received after the first open enrollment deadline will be held in abeyance and admission will be determined by subsequent lotteries, which will be scheduled as needed. Admissions preferences will be applied for each lottery.
3. **Lottery Date and Time:** The lottery shall be held within eight weeks or less of the application deadline. Public notice of the lottery will be posted at the school site (after school opens) and on the Charter School's website, regarding the date, time, and location of the lottery.
4. **Lottery Location:** The lottery will be held in one of the classrooms at the Charter School, or in the first year before school is opened it will be held at a public facility within the Ross Valley School District ("District") boundaries. If necessary, the location of the lottery will be arranged to ensure maximum parent participation in a public space large enough to safely accommodate all interested families. Attendance is not required for applicants.
5. **Admission Preference:** As specified in the Charter School's charter, preference for admission will be given in the following order:
  1. Existing pupils of the Charter School will be exempt from the lottery (not applicable in first year)
  2. Pupils residing in the district

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3. Pupils residing outside the district

6. **Sequence of admission:** At the end of each open enrollment period, all applicants will be added to either an admission list or waitlist (after taking into account admission of existing students) in order of preference. All applicants residing in the district (Preference 2) will be admitted or added to a waitlist before applicants residing outside the district (Preference 3) are added to an admission or waitlist.

Within the **applicants residing within the district** grade levels will be filled in the following sequence:

1. English Learners whose primary home language is not English and/or students who are eligible to receive Free or Reduced Price Lunch. Grades will be filled starting with 5<sup>th</sup> grade and in descending order.
2. Children of current employees of the Charter School and founders identified in the petition (both categories together not to exceed 10% of the Charter School's total enrollment, for both in-District and out-of-District students). Grades will be filled starting with 5<sup>th</sup> grade and in descending order.
3. Siblings of current students and successful applicants of the Charter School. Grades will be filled starting with 5<sup>th</sup> grade and in descending order.
4. All other residents of the district starting with 5<sup>th</sup> grade and in descending order.

Next, all **applicants residing outside the district** will be added to either an admission list or waitlist in the following sequence:

1. English Learners whose primary home language is not English and/or students who are eligible to receive Free or Reduced Price Lunch. Grades will be filled starting with 5<sup>th</sup> grade and in descending order.
2. Children of current employees of the Charter School and founders identified in the petition (both categories together not to exceed 10% of the Charter School's total enrollment, for both in-District and out-of-District students). Grades will be filled starting with 5<sup>th</sup> grade and in descending order.
3. Siblings of current students and successful applicants of the Charter School. Grades will be filled starting with 5<sup>th</sup> grade and in descending order.
4. All other applicants outside the district starting with 5<sup>th</sup> grade and in descending order.

**Children of current employees and identified founders** – Founders are identified in the charter petition or by the Governing Board. “Current employees of the Charter School” is defined as an employee of the Charter School who works at least half time.

**Siblings:** The term “sibling” is defined as a child who has at least one biological or adoptive parent in common with the existing pupil, or who has been legally adopted by or placed under legal guardianship of at least one biological or adoptive parent of the existing pupil, or is a step-sibling

7. **Existing students** are exempt from the lottery and are guaranteed enrollment in the next academic year if the following step is completed:

- a. Letter of Intent: The Charter School will distribute a “Letter of Intent” to parents of currently enrolled students annually in January. This letter must be returned to the Charter School by the specified date in order to secure the student’s enrollment at the Charter School. The letter will state the parents’ intention for their student(s) for the following year. Parents who do not return the letter by the specified date will be contacted by the Charter School at least two times to attempt to assure that the letter is returned. If the letter is not received within three weeks of the specified date, the Charter School will document in its records and inform the parents that the student is not re-enrolling at the Charter School.

8. **Lottery Procedures:** The lottery will be operated by at least two currently employed Charter School staff members with no personal interest in the lottery. The first year it will be conducted by Governing Board members and designees. The lottery will be open to the public and families will be encouraged to attend, however, families are not required to be present at the time of the drawing to be eligible for admission.

If the number of students exceeds the capacity of the Charter School, a lottery will be utilized to add all applicants to either an admission list or waitlist. The Lottery will be conducted in the sequence described in **Section 6: Sequence of Admission** with all applicants residing within the district being added to admission and wait lists first followed by all applicants who reside outside the district.

Each applicant will be assigned a number which will be written on poker chips that are of equal size, shape, and weight. The chip, or its associated number, will indicate if the applying student has a sibling(s) that has also submitted a timely application. Parents will be provided their chip number during the lottery check-in process.

All chips will be placed into a container or lottery device that will randomly mix the chips. The persons leading the lottery will draw the chips one at a time and read the number on the chip. As each chip is pulled its number will be posted visibly on a

display in the order it was chosen. Chip numbers will be given a numerical ranking based on the order they were drawn.

**Siblings in the lottery:** If a chip is drawn for an admission list and indicates a sibling, the sibling(s) will be assigned the next available numerical ranking for the sibling's grade level if that sibling has also submitted a timely application. The sibling(s) corresponding chip(s) will be removed from their associated grade level lottery pool. When drawing chips for the waitlist of any grade, the sibling(s) does **not** get added in this manner but will remain in the chips for that grade's lottery. Twins or K/TK siblings will be handled in the lottery as are other types of siblings.

If maximum capacity has been reached in a particular grade level, and the applicant drawn in the lottery has a sibling in that particular grade that has reached capacity and has also submitted a timely application, then the sibling will be added to the wait list. If that sibling on the wait list becomes the first name on the wait list, enrollment shall be determined on a case-by-case basis as determined by the School Director.

The drawing will continue until all chips have been drawn and all chip numbers have been assigned a numerical ranking. These rankings will be recorded on sheets of paper visible to the audience and in an electronic database that will be double checked by the lottery officials.

9. All applicants will be informed by email and U.S. postal mail within a week of the lottery whether their student was admitted and if not where on the wait list the student was placed. Follow up phone calls or emails will be made to those applicants who will be offered an enrollment spot as the spot becomes available.
10. **Waiting list:** If vacancies occur, the vacancies will be filled according to the waiting list. Students who are not offered seats for the academic school year for which the lottery was held will remain on the waiting list until the end of that academic school year unless otherwise requested by the parent/guardian to be removed. The order of applicants on the waiting list will not change throughout the academic year.

The waiting list shall be cleared at the end of the academic year for which the lottery was drawn and shall not carry over from one year to the next; students who remain on the waiting list at the end of the academic year will be required to submit an application again for the next school year.

11. If a student is extended an offer of admission due to one of the preferences or due to the sequence in which grade levels are filled, the Charter School may require **supporting documentation** from the parent/guardian with the student's enrollment package. The Charter School may conduct verification of such documentation prior to finalizing the student's enrollment and offers of admission may be rescinded if the Charter School deems that an application was completed inaccurately.

Acceptable proof of residency will include the following:

- a. Utility bill (current bill within 30 days)
- b. Homeowner's or renter's insurance policy
- c. Lease agreement
- d. Current property tax bill from the County Tax Collector's Office
- e. Official letter or form from a social services or government agency (current within 30 days)

Acceptable proof of status as an English Learner :

- a. Completion of the Home Language Survey indicating a language other than English is primarily spoken in the home

Acceptable proof of status as eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL)

- a. Completed FRPL enrollment form indicating eligibility

### **C. Admissions Offers, Acceptance of Offers, and Enrollment**

Following acceptance through the lottery, families who are offered admission at the Charter School will have fifteen (15) business days to complete and return/submit an Acceptance of Admissions Form, including any required documentation, which will be mailed and/or emailed to all admitted families. This may be extended by the School if contact with the family cannot be made.

Enrollment of students will be delayed until RVC has a facility and is capable of starting school. At that point the School will send parents who have accepted offers an admission a Registration Packet with a "Registration Check List" which will inform parents/guardians about the all information and paperwork which will need to be submitted prior to the beginning of school and when that information will need to be completed by. All forms in the Registration Packet must be completed by the date due to gain enrollment at the Charter School. This "Registration Check List" will assist parents/guardians in ensuring that all necessary paperwork is accounted for and submitted to the Charter School at the required time. All paperwork and documentation, as indicated in the packet, must be returned per the Charter School's instructions.

Enrollment offers are valid only for the applied-for academic year. There is no option to defer an offer for enrollment. No *added* preference in the future will be given to an applicant who is

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offered a slot and declines that slot. However, applicants who remain eligible for admissions preference, as defined above, may still receive such preference if they decline an offer of enrollment and then reapply for a future academic year.

If slots become available because an accepted student declines acceptance or a student leaves the Charter School after the start of the academic year, or as slots become available, the Charter School staff will notify families on the waiting list via telephone and/or email (as stated in the student's application for admission) in the order they appear on the waiting list. Families shall have 5 business days to accept the enrollment slot (via telephone or email to the Charter School) and proceed with the enrollment process. This may be extended by the School if contact with the family cannot be made. Applicants must complete a registration packet with all required documentation by the deadline given by the Charter School to confirm enrollment. This procedure may be repeated until all slots for the upcoming/current academic year have been filled with applicants who confirm their enrollment in the Charter School. If an applicant is offered admission and does not accept within five business days, the offer of admission may be rescinded, and the student be removed from the waiting list.

**D. Issues Not Covered Under this Policy**

In the case that the procedures herein do not cover a situation that arises during the admissions and enrollment process, the School Director or Board Chair in the absence of a School Director will take any additional steps necessary to execute the admissions and enrollment process.

# Appendix I: Job Descriptions

- Classroom Teacher
- Special Education Teacher
- English Language Development Teacher
- Intervention Teacher
- Spanish Teacher
- Physical Education Teacher
- Family Outreach/Support Coordinator
- Counselor
- Lunch and Recess Aids
- School Director
- Business Manager

## **CLASSROOM TEACHER**

Ross Valley Charter School (RVC) hires teachers who are committed to creating challenging learning environments and opportunities for all students, continuous learning and improvement, creating a culturally responsive classroom environment, and building meaningful connections with families and the community.

As an RVC public school educator, classroom teachers will have the opportunity to work with a diverse group of students alongside supportive and talented colleagues. They will be an integral part of the school's effort to ensure that every student who enrolls in our school will get an education preparing him and her to be ready for college, career, and life.

We want talented people from diverse backgrounds and experiences, who share our Core Beliefs, philosophy of learning, and who are motivated to unleash our children's potential. RVC teachers are strong collaborators, skilled communicators, problem solvers, and are comfortable in a community of continuous learning.

### **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

In accordance with the California Standards of the Teaching Profession, teachers work under the supervision of School Director and in collaboration with their school staff, families and community, and are responsible for the fulfillment of the essential duties set forth below:

- Support school-wide academic performance goals
- Create challenging learning environments and opportunities for all students
- Develop a culturally responsive and proficient classroom environment
- Work closely with colleagues to develop curriculum, analyze assessment results, support students, and reflect on teaching practices
- Seek continuous improvement of practice for self and colleagues
- Build connections with students, families, and community to support student learning
- Other duties as assigned by the School Director

### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

Possession of a valid California Elementary School Teaching Credential (or out-of-state equivalent)

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER**

Under the direction of the School Director, the special education teacher plans and provides for appropriate learning experiences for students with disabilities in a variety of educational settings. The person in this position is responsible for creating a flexible program and learning environment that provides specialized instruction for students with disabilities, such that the students benefit from the general education curriculum to the greatest extent possible when supported with supplemental aides, accommodations, and other needed supports.

### **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

(These are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work performed. The omission of specific duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.) The special Education Teacher is expected to:

- Provide direct and indirect instructional support to students in a positive environment.
- Collaborate with classroom teachers to provide support services for students with IEPs.
- Employ special educational strategies and techniques during instruction to improve the development of sensory- and perceptual-motor skills, language, cognition, and memory.
- Instruct students in academic subjects using a variety of techniques such as phonetics, multi-sensory learning, and repetition to reinforce learning and to meet students' varying needs and interests.
- Teach socially acceptable behavior, as determined by the students' individualized education programs (IEPs) by employing techniques in an overall positive behavioral support system.
- Modify the general education curriculum for students with disabilities based upon a variety of instructional techniques and technologies.
- Plan and conduct activities for a balanced program of instruction, demonstration, and work time that provides students with opportunities to observe, question, and investigate.
- Establish an environment conducive to learning for all students.
- Meet with parents to discuss their children's progress and to determine priorities for their children and their individualized educational needs.
- Confer with parents, administrators, testing specialists, social workers, and other professionals to develop individualized education programs (IEPs) designed to promote students' educational, physical, and social/emotional development.
- Maintain accurate and complete student records and prepare reports on children and activities, as required by laws, district policies, and administrative regulations.
- Develop plans for effective communication, monitoring, and follow-up of students in inclusive classroom settings.
- Provide crisis intervention, as needed, for students.
- Assist in collection of data for providing appropriate classroom interventions.
- Serve as a member of a multidisciplinary team as appropriate.
- Assist in preparation of data for local, state, and federal reports.
- Maintain professional competence by participating in staff development activities, curriculum development meetings, and other professional opportunities.

- Perform related work as required.

## **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

Special Education Certification

At least 3 years of experience as a Special Education Teacher

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## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT TEACHER**

The English language development (ELD) teacher at Ross Valley Charter (RVC) is a part-time teacher. The ELD teacher is responsible for ensuring the school's English language acquisition services are effective in meeting the needs of English language learners (ELs). This includes coordinating beginning-of-year home language questionnaires, administration of CELDT tests for ELs, and development of a plan for services based on students' needs. The ELD teacher provides pull-out support for ELs as appropriate. The ELD teacher also provides support for core academic teachers on sheltered instruction and other strategies to meet the needs of ELs in the regular classroom.

## **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The ELD teacher at Ross Valley Charter is expected to:

- Possess a clear and effective pedagogy that embodies our beliefs that instruction must be engaging, relevant, and challenging.
- Understand and apply effective strategies for intervention and differentiation for ELs in the classroom. Provide support for other RVC teachers in implementing effective intervention strategies for ELs.
- Create a weekly schedule and provide quality instruction and support for small groups of ELs.
- Communicate with other RVC teachers regarding ELs' needs and required classroom modifications and accommodations.
- Provide push-in support as needed and as time allows during core academic classes.
- Administer the Student Language Data Form/Parent Home Language Questionnaire as part of the enrollment process to identify students whose Primary or Home Language is Other Than English (PHOLTE).
- Administer a CELDT test at the beginning of each year for all PHOLTE students. Administer appropriate assessments for ELs annually each spring to ensure ELs are making adequate progress.
- Monitor the academic progress of ELs throughout the year to ensure they are making progress toward becoming proficient in English.
- Embed opportunities for student critical-thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, as well as use of technology and digital media, into all work with students.
- Develop appropriate and healthy relationships with students, including advocating for them and their success.
- Maintain open and consistent communication with teachers, students, and their families about their academic progress. Also communicate proactively with colleagues about student needs to ensure integrated support.

- Be an active participant in a supportive professional community that fosters respect, trust, risk-taking, open-mindedness, flexibility, collaboration, and continuous improvement.
- Operate in a demanding but rewarding environment that requires staff to be flexible problem-solvers who manage ambiguity and challenges well.
- Dedicate oneself to the school's mission and Core Beliefs, adopting a "whatever-it-takes" attitude in helping our students succeed.

## **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

ELD Certification

At least 3 years experience

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## **INTERVENTION TEACHER**

The Intervention Teacher supports the Charter School and its students to provide access and equity, and to ensure students have the habits, skills, and dispositions necessary for 21st Century success. The Intervention Teacher will work with students and school staff to monitor progress and provide targeted, intensive instruction designed to accelerate learning for designated groups of struggling students, including students with Special Needs. The Intervention Teacher provides direct intervention services to students, supports classroom teachers, and coordinates with other staff to ensure that all children can achieve at grade level through academic interventions. Methods used include (but not be limited to) implementation of intervention programs to assist children who do not master grade level skills from first instruction. The Intervention Teacher may work outside of traditional school-day hours to coordinate or provide academic support to students before or after school. The Intervention Teacher will have an opportunity to receive training and professional development in the use and integration of appropriate instructional materials and assessments in order to effectively deliver academic intervention to designated students.

## **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The part-time Intervention Teacher reports to the school Director and is responsible for the fulfillment of the essential duties set forth below:

### **1. Deliver and Demonstrate Targeted Instruction to Small Groups of Students or Individuals**

- Provide best-practice instruction in English/language arts, English language development, or mathematics to targeted groups of students with the objective of dramatically accelerating their academic achievement; students will be identified by data analyzed in collaboration with the school principal, teachers, and leadership team
- Develop and deliver instruction using culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy and assessment that incorporates effective student engagement strategies

- Ensure instruction is equally effective for students across all ethnicities, language backgrounds, and genders
- Actively participate in student performance data analysis and academic progress monitoring
- Collaborate and plan with the charter school staff.

## **2. Identify and maintain progress data for students that need intensive support**

- Assist with administration of identified student assessments (diagnostic, formative, summative) of students and enter the student data in the district data system
- Create indicators for intervention and criteria for intervention, schedules, exit criteria, and communication with parents and teachers
- Assist with collecting data from instructional assessments to identify areas of academic areas of strength and needed growth or support
- Participate in Student Support Team and IEP meetings as appropriate

## **3. Improve Standards of Practice for Self and Colleagues**

- Provide additional support across the school to ensure high levels of student learning and engagement (i.e., vetting academic interventions and teaching other teachers about them)
- Proactively communicate with parents regarding student progress towards identified learning goals and academic interventions implemented
- Assist teachers in developing and implementing differentiated instruction and/or classroom-based interventions

### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

Either a General or Special Education Credential  
At least 3 years Response To Intervention experience

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## **SPANISH TEACHER**

### **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Spanish Teacher is expected to:

- Implement Ross Valley Charter's Spanish Language curriculum and utilize classroom routines and procedures with consistency
- Develop engaging and effective lesson plans and assessments
- Collaborate with classroom teachers to discuss student work and share best practices
- Participate in on-going professional development in the spirit of continuous improvement.
- Adjust instructional strategies in order to reach year-end goals
- Be receptive to feedback and a desire to continuously improve
- Use outstanding instructional skills, including the ability to motivate and challenge students and maintain an orderly classroom environment

## **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIOS**

Bachelor's degree required  
Must have preliminary credential in Spanish  
Fluency in Spanish  
Experience teaching Spanish to children

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## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER**

The physical education teacher develops in each student an understanding of the relationship of good body function and exercise; motivates each student to cultivate physical fitness, hygienic habits, and good social and emotional adjustment; discovers and develops talents of students in physical achievement; and develops strength, skill, agility, poise, and coordination in individual, dual, and team physical activities and sports, in accordance with each student's ability.

## **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Physical Education Teacher is expected to:

- Teach knowledge and skills in physical fitness, health education, rhythms and dance, and individual, dual, or team sports, and other appropriate learning activities.
  - Analyze, demonstrate, and explain basic skills, knowledge, and strategies of formal sports, games, rhythms, and fundamentals of body movement.
  - Provide individualized and small group instruction in order to adapt the curriculum to the needs of each pupil, to the extent feasible.
  - Provide appropriate safety instruction and makes safety checks on equipment and field areas to insure the over-all safety of pupils.
  - Incorporate information about physical and emotional health and nutrition.
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## **FAMILY OUTREACH/SUPPORT COORDINATOR**

The Family Outreach/Support Coordinator focuses on providing support to families whose primary language isn't English, and families from lower socio economic backgrounds, who may feel intimidated about participating in school events or activities or helping in the classroom. The Family Outreach/Support Coordinator provides parents with the 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.

## **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Family Outreach/Support Coordinator is expected to:

- Recruit students from diverse backgrounds, assist with the enrollment process, and support families once they enroll at the Charter School.
- Ensure a strong home-school connection for EL families.
- 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.
- Provide translation services during parent/teacher conferences as needed.
- Help advocate access to Charter School resources, ensure that students and their parents feel welcome/comfortable in the Charter School community, and serve as a bridge to help communicate with the student's educational team (i.e. teachers, support personnel, and administration).

## **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

Fluent in Spanish

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## **COUNSELOR**

### **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The school Counselor is expected to:

- Coordinate with teachers, administrators, resource specialists and/or community (e.g. service clubs, courts, child protective services, etc.) for the purpose of providing/receiving requested information and/or making recommendations.
- Counsel students, parents, and guardians for the purpose of enhancing student success, academically, socially, and emotionally, in school.
- Monitor students' progress for the purpose of identifying issues and taking appropriate action for increasing student success.
- Prepare a variety of written materials for the purpose of documenting activities, providing written reference, and/or conveying information.
- Present information for the purpose of communicating information, gaining feedback and ensuring adherence to established internal controls.

## **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

Bachelor's degree required

Must have or be working towards school counseling certification

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## **LUNCH AND RECESS AIDES**

Lunch and Recess aides are expected to have the following knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Knowledge of applicable school regulations, practices and procedures, or the ability to rapidly acquire such knowledge
- Knowledge of games appropriate for play during recess
- Some knowledge of the field of child development
- Some knowledge of student behavior management techniques
- Ability to effectively communicate with students, staff and others
- Ability to effectively monitor elementary students and to supervise playground and recreational activities
- Ability to communicate with students during lunch periods
- Considerable patience and demonstrated skills in working with children
- Excellent human relations skills

### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

First aid and CPR certificate desirable.

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## **SCHOOL DIRECTOR**

The School Director of the RVC is the administrative leader at RVC, who models RVC's Beliefs and Mission, is the community leader of the Charter School and spearheads the development of culture, and has overall responsibility for student learning and performance. The School Director is hired by and reports to the Board. The School Director will be the President of the Corporation. The School Director attends all Board meetings but will not be a member. The School Director is a member of the interviewing and selection committee for other school staff. The School Director collaborates with the teachers as they develop the academic program, request professional development activities, and improve curriculum and instruction. The School Director provides support and resources aimed at increasing teacher effectiveness and leadership. The School Director also ensures that the connection between RVC and families is strong, mutually respectful, and marked by continuous communication about student learning and behavior. The School Director creates, facilitates, and supports a positive and productive ongoing collaboration between parents and staff at RVC consistent with RVC's Beliefs and Mission. The School Director is 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.

### **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

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

- Promote the success of all students and supports the efforts of the Governing Board to keep RVC focused on learning and achievement;
- Be responsible for all personnel and human resource functions and duties (The Leadership Council shall be involved in hiring processes and the selection of interview panels), including supervision and evaluation all RVC employees;

- Value, advocate, and support public education and all stakeholders;
- Recognize and respect the differences of perspective and style on the Board and among staff, students, parents, and the community—and ensure that the diverse range of views inform board decisions;
- Act with dignity, treat everyone with civility and respect, and understand the implications of demeanor and behavior;
- Serve as a model for the value of lifelong learning and support the Board’s continuous professional development;
- Work with the Board as a “governance team” and assure collective responsibility for building a unity of purpose, communicating a common vision and creating a positive organizational culture;
- Understand that authority rests with the Board as a whole; provide guidance to the Board to assist in decision-making; and provide leadership based on the direction of the Board as a whole;
- Communicate openly with trust and integrity, including providing all members of the Board with equal access to information, and recognizing the importance of both responsive and anticipatory communications;
- Accept leadership responsibility and accountability for implementing the beliefs, vision, goals, and policies of the Charter School;
- Facilitate staff professional development and improvement;
- Ensure teachers have adequate collaboration time;
- Support, mentor, and encourage teachers, giving them feedback and working with them to improve their craft;
- Guide RVC in its collection and analysis of student learning data as outlined in Elements 2 and 3 of this petition and subsequent LCAPs;
- Oversee all necessary RVC, District, County, State, and Federal applications and reporting, and ensure they are completed in an efficient, accurate, and timely manner;
- Reach out to parents, Ross Valley School District, the County Office of Education, and the community to build collaboration directed at student success;
- Manage school revenues and expenses to stay within agreed upon budget;
- Be available for contact with parents, students, and staff to discuss student progress and problems after class, evenings, or on weekends (via phone or in person);
- Maintain work hours extending beyond school hours for other professional duties or functions such as staff meetings, etc.;
- Maintain professional standards and a school environment that is productive, safe, and focused on the organizational and school mission;
- Participate in school-wide and individual professional development;
- Promote collaborative problem solving and open communication between teachers, students, and families;
- Consult with the Leadership Council on decisions affecting RVC, and bringing Council recommendations to the Board;
- Make recommendations to the Board for approval of hiring and termination of RVC teachers and all other RVC employees;
- Ensure a safe, respectful school environment that is welcoming to the community and supportive of student effort and achievement;
- Communicate with RVC’s legal counsel as needed;
- Stay informed on current school laws and regulations, including those unique to RVC;
- Ensure that all legal qualification requirements are met by all RVC personnel;
- Monitor site safety, facilities and manage all operations and maintenance of facility;

- Approve all purchase orders, pay warrants, and requisitions according to the policies and procedures adopted by the governing board;
- Supervise grant writing processes;
- Administer/oversee enrollment and attendance, including development and implementation of policies and practices, and administration of waiting list;
- Oversee the preparation of all necessary financial and ADA reports.
- Coordinate RVC's annual financial audit, under the direction of the Board;
- Along with financial auditor, present financial audits of RVC to the Board, and after review and approval by RVC Board, ensure presentation to the authorizer, County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and the California Department of Education and oversee implementation of all finding correction measures;
- Handle crime reports and other legal matters;
- Facilitate the charter renewal process;
- Oversee website, public relations, marketing, and outreach processes, as support may be needed or requested by the Council;
- Oversee Special Education program and attend IEP meetings, as necessary;
- Handle Child Protective Services referrals;
- Supervise student disciplinary matters;
- Coordinate the administration of CAASPP testing;
- Plan and coordinate student and parent orientation;
- Facilitate educational and RVC events and activities;
- Oversee strategic planning;
- Develop RVC Board meeting agendas in conjunction with the Board Chairman in compliance with the Brown Act; oversee preparation and distribution of all Board meeting materials;
- Propose policies and make recommendations for adoption by the Board;
- Oversees maintenance of RVC policies and employee, parent, and student handbooks in conjunction with the Council and with the approval of the Board;
- Develop RVC Council meeting agendas in conjunction with the Council Facilitator; oversee preparation and distribution of all Council meeting materials;
- Correlate RVC goals with a user-friendly strategic fiscal plan;
- Develop, in conjunction with the Board, staff, and parents, an annual user-friendly RVC budget and LCAP meeting all the input and participation subgroup requirements of California law; and
- Facilitate LCAP process.

## **QUALIFICATIONS OF THE SCHOOL DIRECTOR ARE IN ELEMENT 5**

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## **OFFICE MANAGER**

The Charter School Office Manager is responsible for planning, coordinating, and supervising the day-- ~~to~~ ~~the~~ business operations of the school office, and serves as administrative aide to the School Director, relieving him/her of administrative details.

### **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Office Manager is expected to:

- Promote and maintain a positive and effective school climate by ensuring that all interactions with staff, students, parents, and the public at large are prompt, efficient, helpful and friendly.
- Assist students, parents, and teachers in the school office.
- Supervise the preparation of student enrollment and attendance reports.
- Supervise the maintenance of student records, including assessment results, test scores, discipline citations, medical reports and records, and other documents.
- Supervise student medication dispensation and injury reports.
- Supervise requisitions; receive, and distribute/store classroom, school office and work room materials and supplies; maintain ongoing inventory; process packing slips.
- Prepare and process field trip requests.
- Support the School Director in the developing school budgets; prepare budget changes as appropriate; monitor charter school budget.
- Prepare and maintain purchase orders and other expense records; approve, log, and monitor expenditures; reconcile site records with monthly financial reports; resolve discrepancies; and ensure expenditures are within budget allowances for the month and year.
- Organize interview process for hiring certificated and classified staff.
- Serve as the custodian of school office records.
- Arrange for conferences and travel of administrators and staff; prepare related purchase order or payment requisitions; and follow up with receipts, invoices, and expense claims.
- Investigate circumstances of employee on-the-job injuries; prepare required documentation; and report safety hazards to School Director.
- Jointly with the School Director, scrutinize facility wear and tear and makes recommendations as to facility improvement (i.e., carpet replacement, exterior and interior paint, turf).
- Recognize problems and impediments and report them promptly with options for solutions to the School Director; promote and assist with constructive resolutions.
- Establish and maintain professional and cooperative working relationships with all stakeholders: parents, students, staff, neighbors, and partners.
- Prepare reports on student performance assessment data.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the charter School Director.

### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

Relevant and Appropriate Experience

# Appendix J: Articles of interest

- “Examining the Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Childhood Education”, Valarie Mercillott Hewett<sup>1</sup>
- Progressive Education: Why It’s Hard to Beat, But Also Hard to Find
- “What does a Growth Mindset School look like?” Carol S. Dweck, Ph.D.

# Examining the Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Childhood Education

Valarie Mercillott Hewett<sup>1,2,3</sup>

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

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

## INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

## THE IMAGE AND ROLE OF THE LEARNER

### The Child as Having Rights

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

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

### The Child as an Active Constructor of Knowledge

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

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

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

### The Child as a Researcher

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

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

### The Child as a Social Being

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

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

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

### THE ROLE OF THE INSTRUCTOR

#### The Teacher as a Collaborator and Co-Learner

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

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

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

#### The Teacher as a Guide and Facilitator

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

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

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

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

#### The Teacher as a Researcher

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

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

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

### **The Teacher as a Reflective Practitioner**

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

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

## **THE NATURE OF THE KNOWLEDGE TO BE LEARNED**

### **Knowledge as Socially Constructed**

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

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

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

### **Multiple Forms of Knowing**

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

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

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

## The Reggio Emilia Approach

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

### Knowledge as Whole

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

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

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

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

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

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

## CONCLUSION

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

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

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# Progressive Education

## Why It's Hard to Beat, But Also Hard to Find

By Alfie Kohn

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If progressive education doesn't lend itself to a single fixed definition, that seems fitting in light of its reputation for resisting conformity and standardization. Any two educators who describe themselves as sympathetic to this tradition may well see it differently, or at least disagree about which features are the most important.

Talk to enough progressive educators, in fact, and you'll begin to notice certain paradoxes: Some people focus on the unique needs of individual students, while others invoke the importance of a *community* of learners; some describe learning as a process, more journey than destination, while others believe that tasks should result in authentic products that can be shared.[1]

### What It Is

Despite such variations, there are enough elements on which most of us can agree so that a common core of progressive education emerges, however hazily. And it really does make sense to call it a *tradition*, as I did a moment ago. Ironically, what we usually call "traditional" education, in contrast to the progressive approach, has less claim to that adjective — because of how, and how recently, it has developed. As Jim Nehring at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell observed, "Progressive schools are the legacy of a long and proud tradition of thoughtful school practice stretching back for centuries" — including hands-on learning, multiage classrooms, and mentor-apprentice relationships — while what we generally refer to as traditional schooling "is largely the result of outdated policy changes that have calcified into conventions." [2] (Nevertheless, I'll use the conventional nomenclature in this article to avoid confusion.)

It's not all or nothing, to be sure. I don't think I've ever seen a school — even one with scripted instruction, uniforms, and rows of desks bolted to the floor — that has completely escaped the influence of progressive ideas. Nor have I seen a school that's progressive in every detail. Still, schools can be characterized according to how closely they reflect a commitment to values such as these:

**Attending to the whole child:** Progressive educators are concerned with helping children become not only good learners but also good people. Schooling isn't seen as being about just academics, nor is intellectual growth limited to verbal and mathematical proficiencies.

**Community:** Learning isn't something that happens to individual children — separate selves at separate desks. Children learn with and from one another in a caring community, and that's true of moral as well as academic learning. Interdependence counts at least as much as independence, so it follows that practices that pit students against one another in some kind of competition, thereby undermining a feeling of community, are deliberately avoided.

**Collaboration:** Progressive schools are characterized by what I like to call a “working with” rather than a “doing to” model. In place of rewards for complying with the adults' expectations, or punitive consequences for failing to do so, there's more of an emphasis on collaborative problem-solving — and, for that matter, less focus on behaviors than on underlying motives, values, and reasons.

**Social justice:** A sense of community and responsibility for others isn't confined to the classroom; indeed, students are helped to locate themselves in widening circles of care that extend beyond self, beyond friends, beyond their own ethnic group, and beyond their own country. Opportunities are offered not only to learn about, but also to put into action, a commitment to diversity and to improving the lives of others.

**Intrinsic motivation:** When considering (or reconsidering) educational policies and practices, the first question that progressive educators are likely to ask is, “What's the effect on students' *interest* in learning, their desire to continue reading, thinking, and questioning?” This deceptively simple test helps to determine what students will and won't be asked to do. Thus, conventional practices, including homework, grades, and tests, prove difficult to justify for anyone who is serious about promoting long-term dispositions rather than just improving short-term skills.

**Deep understanding:** As the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead declared long ago, “A merely well-informed man is the most useless bore on God's earth.” Facts and skills do matter, but only *in a context* and *for a purpose*. That's why progressive education tends to be organized around problems, projects, and questions — rather than around lists of facts, skills, and separate disciplines. The teaching is typically interdisciplinary, the assessment rarely focuses on rote memorization, and excellence isn't confused with “rigor.” The point is not merely to challenge students — after all, harder is not necessarily better — but to invite them to think deeply about issues that matter and help them understand ideas from the inside out.

**Active learning:** In progressive schools, students play a vital role in helping to design the curriculum, formulate the questions, seek out (and create) answers, think through possibilities, and evaluate how successful they — and their teachers — have been. Their active participation in every stage of the process is consistent with the overwhelming consensus of experts that learning is a matter of constructing ideas rather than passively absorbing information or practicing skills.

**Taking kids seriously:** In traditional schooling, as John Dewey once remarked, “the center of gravity is outside the child”: he or she is expected to adjust to the school’s rules and curriculum. Progressive educators take their cue from the children — and are particularly attentive to differences among them. (Each student is unique, so a single set of policies, expectations, or assignments would be as counterproductive as it was disrespectful.) The curriculum isn’t just based on interest, but on *these children’s* interests. Naturally, teachers will have broadly conceived themes and objectives in mind, but they don’t just design a course of study *for* their students; they design it *with* them, and they welcome unexpected detours. One fourth-grade teacher’s curriculum, therefore, won’t be the same as that of the teacher next door, nor will her curriculum be the same this year as it was for the children she taught last year. It’s not enough to offer elaborate thematic units prefabricated by the adults. And progressive educators realize that the students must help to formulate not only the course of study but also the outcomes or standards that inform those lessons.

Some of the features that I’ve listed here will seem objectionable, or at least unsettling, to educators at more traditional schools, while others will be surprisingly familiar and may even echo sentiments that they, themselves, have expressed. But progressive educators don’t merely say they endorse ideas like “love of learning” or “a sense of community.” They’re willing to put these values into practice even if doing so requires them to up-end traditions. They may eliminate homework altogether if it’s clear that students view after-school assignments as something to be gotten over with as soon as possible. They will question things like honors classes and awards assemblies that clearly undermine a sense of community. Progressive schools, in short, follow their core values — bolstered by research and experience — wherever they lead.

### What It Isn’t

Misconceptions about progressive education generally take two forms. Either it is defined too narrowly so that the significance of the change it represents is understated, or else an exaggerated, caricatured version is presented in order to justify dismissing the whole approach. Let’s take each of these in turn.

Individualized attention from caring, respectful teachers is terribly important. But it does not a progressive school make. To assume otherwise not only dilutes progressivism; it’s unfair to traditional educators, most of whom are not callous Gradgrinds or ruler-wielding nuns. In fact, it’s perfectly consistent to view education as the process of filling children up with bits of knowledge — and to use worksheets, lectures, quizzes, homework, grades, and other such methods in pursuit of that goal — while being genuinely concerned about each child’s progress. Schools with warm, responsive teachers who know each student personally can take pride in that fact, but they shouldn’t claim on that basis to be progressive.

Moreover, traditional schools aren’t always about memorizing dates and definitions; sometimes they’re also committed to helping students understand ideas. As one science teacher pointed out, “For thoughtful traditionalists, thinking is couched in terms of comprehending, integrating, and

applying knowledge.” However, the student’s task in such classrooms is “comprehending how the *teacher* has integrated or applied the ideas... and [then] reconstruct[ing] the teacher’s thinking.”[3] There are interesting concepts being discussed in some traditional classrooms, in other words, but what distinguishes progressive education is that students must *construct* their own understanding of ideas.

There’s another mistake based on too narrow a definition, which took me a while to catch on to: A school that is culturally progressive is not necessarily educationally progressive. An institution can be steeped in lefty politics and multi-grain values; it can be committed to diversity, peace, and saving the planet — but remain strikingly traditional in its pedagogy. In fact, one can imagine an old-fashioned pour-in-the-facts approach being used to teach lessons in tolerance or even radical politics.[4]

Less innocuous, or accidental, is the tendency to paint progressive education as a touchy-feely, loosey-goosey, fluffy, fuzzy, undemanding exercise in leftover hippie idealism — or Rousseauvian Romanticism. In this cartoon version of the tradition, kids are free to do anything they please, the curriculum can consist of whatever is fun (and nothing that isn’t fun). Learning is thought to happen automatically while the teachers just stand by, observing and beaming. I lack the space here to offer examples of this sort of misrepresentation — or a full account of why it’s so profoundly wrong — but trust me: People really do sneer at the idea of progressive education based on an image that has little to do with progressive education.

### **Why It Makes Sense**

For most people, the fundamental reason to choose, or offer, a progressive education is a function of their basic values: “a rock-bottom commitment to democracy,” as Joseph Featherstone put it; a belief that meeting children’s needs should take precedence over preparing future employees; and a desire to nourish curiosity, creativity, compassion, skepticism, and other virtues.

Fortunately, what may have begun with values (for any of us as individuals, and also for education itself, historically speaking) has turned out to be supported by solid data. A truly impressive collection of research has demonstrated that when students are able to spend more time thinking about ideas than memorizing facts and practicing skills — and when they are invited to help direct their own learning — they are not only more likely to enjoy what they’re doing but to do it better. Progressive education isn’t just more appealing; it’s also more productive.

I reviewed decades’ worth of research in the late 1990s: studies of preschools and high schools; studies of instruction in reading, writing, math, and science; broad studies of “open classrooms,” “student-centered” education, and teaching consistent with constructivist accounts of learning, but also investigations of specific innovations like democratic classrooms, multiage instruction, looping, cooperative learning, and authentic assessment (including the abolition of grades). Across domains, the results overwhelmingly favor progressive education. Regardless of one’s values, in other words,

this approach can be recommended purely on the basis of its effectiveness. And if your criteria are more ambitious — long-term retention of what’s been taught, the capacity to understand ideas and apply them to new kinds of problems, a desire to continue learning — the relative benefits of progressive education are even greater.[5] This conclusion is only strengthened by the *lack* of data to support the value of standardized tests, homework, conventional discipline (based on rewards or consequences), competition, and other traditional practices.[6]

Since I published that research review, similar findings have continued to accumulate. Several newer studies confirm that traditional academic instruction for very young children is counterproductive.[7] Students in elementary and middle school did better in science when their teaching was “centered on projects in which they took a high degree of initiative. Traditional activities, such as completing worksheets and reading primarily from textbooks, seemed to have no positive effect.”[8] Another recent study found that an “inquiry-based” approach to learning is more beneficial than conventional methods for low-income and minority students.[9] The results go on and on. In fact, I occasionally stumble upon older research that I’d missed earlier — including a classic five-year investigation of almost 11,000 children between the ages of eight and sixteen, which found that students who attended progressive schools were less likely to cheat than those who attended conventional schools — a result that persisted even after the researchers controlled for age, IQ, and family background.[10]

### Why It’s Rare

Despite the fact that all schools can be located on a continuum stretching between the poles of totally progressive and totally traditional — or, actually, on a series of continuums reflecting the various components of those models — it’s usually possible to visit a school and come away with a pretty clear sense of whether it can be classified as predominantly progressive. It’s also possible to reach a conclusion about how many schools — or even individual classrooms — in America merit that label: damned few. The higher the grade level, the rarer such teaching tends to be, and it’s not even all that prevalent at the lower grades.[11] (Also, while it’s probably true that most progressive schools are independent, most independent schools are not progressive.)

The rarity of this approach, while discouraging to some of us, is also rather significant with respect to the larger debate about education. If progressive schooling is actually quite uncommon, then it’s hard to blame our problems (real or alleged) on this model. Indeed, the facts have the effect of turning the argument on its head: If students aren’t learning effectively, it may be because of the persistence of *traditional* beliefs and practices in our nation’s schools.

But we’re also left with a question: If progressive education is so terrific, why is it still the exception rather than the rule? I often ask the people who attend my lectures to reflect on this, and the answers that come back are varied and provocative. For starters, they tell me, progressive education is not only less familiar but also much harder to do, and especially to do well. It asks a lot more of the students and at first can seem a burden to those who have figured out how to play the

game in traditional classrooms — often succeeding by conventional standards without doing much real thinking. It's also much more demanding of teachers, who have to know their subject matter inside and out if they want their students to “make sense of biology or literature” as opposed to “simply memoriz[ing] the frog’s anatomy or the sentence’s structure.”[12] But progressive teachers also have to know a lot about pedagogy because no amount of content knowledge (say, expertise in science or English) can tell you how to facilitate learning. The belief that anyone who knows enough math can teach it is a corollary of the belief that learning is a process of passive absorption — a view that cognitive science has decisively debunked.

Progressive teachers also have to be comfortable with uncertainty, not only to abandon a predictable march toward the “right answer” but to let students play an active role in the quest for meaning that replaces it. That means a willingness to give up some control and let students take some ownership, which requires guts as well as talent. These characteristics appear not to be as common as we might like to think. Almost a decade ago, in an interview for this magazine, I recalled my own experience in high school classrooms with some chagrin: “I prided myself on being an entertaining lecturer, very knowledgeable, funny, charismatic, and so on. It took me years to realize [that my] classroom was all about me, not about the kids. It was about teaching, not about learning.”[13] The more we're influenced by the insights of progressive education, the more we're forced to rethink what it means to be a good teacher. That process will unavoidably ruffle some feathers, including our own.

And speaking of feather-ruffling, I'm frequently reminded that progressive education has an uphill journey because of the larger culture we live in. It's an approach that is in some respects inherently subversive, and people in power do not always enjoy being subverted. As Vito Perrone has written, “The values of progressivism — including skepticism, questioning, challenging, openness, and seeking alternate possibilities — have long struggled for acceptance in American society. That they did not come to dominate the schools is not surprising.”[14]

There is pressure to raise standardized test scores, something that progressive education manages to do only sometimes and by accident — not only because that isn't its purpose but also because such tests measure what matters least. (The recognition of that fact explains why progressive schools would never dream of using standardized tests as part of their admissions process.) More insidiously, though, we face pressure to standardize our practices in general. Thinking is messy, and deep thinking is really messy. This reality coexists uneasily with demands for order — in schools where the curriculum is supposed to be carefully coordinated across grade levels and planned well ahead of time, or in society at large.

And then (as my audiences invariably point out) there are parents who have never been invited to reconsider their assumptions about education. As a result, they may be impressed by the wrong things, reassured by signs of traditionalism — letter grades, spelling quizzes, heavy textbooks, a teacher in firm control of the classroom — and unnerved by their absence. Even if their children are obviously unhappy, parents may accept that as a fact of life. Instead of wanting the next generation to get better than we got, it's as though their position was: “Listen, if it was bad enough for me, it's

bad enough for my kids.” Perhaps they subscribe to what might be called the Listerine theory of education, based on a famous ad campaign that sought to sell this particular brand of mouthwash on the theory that if it tasted vile, it obviously worked well. The converse proposition, of course, is that anything appealing is likely to be ineffective. If a child is lucky enough to be in a classroom featuring, say, student-designed project-based investigations, the parent may wonder, “But is she really *learning* anything? Where are the worksheets?” And so the teachers feel pressure to make the instruction worse.

All progressive schools experience a constant undertow, perhaps a request to reintroduce grades of some kind, to give special enrichments to the children of the “gifted” parents, to start up a competitive sports program (because American children evidently don’t get enough of winning and losing outside of school), to punish the kid who did that bad thing to my kid, to administer a standardized test or two (“just so we can see how they’re doing”), and, above all, to get the kids ready for what comes next — even if this amounts to teaching them badly so they’ll be prepared for the bad teaching to which they’ll be subjected later.[15]

This list doesn’t exhaust the reasons that progressive education is uncommon. However, the discussion that preceded it, of progressive education’s advantages, was also incomplete, which suggests that working to make it a little more common is a worthy pursuit. We may not be able to transform a whole school, or even a classroom, along all of these dimensions, at least not by the end of this year. But whatever progress we can make is likely to benefit our students. And doing what’s best for them is the reason all of us got into this line of work in the first place.

# The Growth Mindset, Carol Dweck, PH.D.

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## Why the Growth Mindset?

When students and educators have a growth mindset, they understand that intelligence can be developed. Students focus on improvement instead of worrying about how smart they are. They work hard to learn more and get smarter. Based on years of research by Stanford University's Dr. Dweck, Lisa Blackwell Ph.D., and their colleagues, we know that students who learn this mindset show greater motivation in school, better grades, and higher test scores.

## What does a Growth Mindset School look like?

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

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

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

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

## What is the impact of Mindset?

### ***Mindsets Predict Motivation and Achievement***

In one study, Blackwell and her colleagues followed hundreds of students making the transition to 7th grade. They found that students with a growth mindset were more motivated to learn and exert effort, and outperformed those with a fixed mindset in math—a gap that continued to increase over the two-year period. Those with the two mindsets had entered 7th grade with similar past achievement, but because of their mindsets their math grades pulled apart during this challenging time. (Blackwell, L.S., Trzesniewski, K.H., & Dweck, C.S. (2007). Implicit theories of intelligence predict achievement across an adolescent transition: A longitudinal study and an intervention. *Child*

*Development*, 78. 246-263, Study 1.)

### ***Growth Mindset Training Boosts Motivation and Achievement***

In another study, also with adolescents, Blackwell and her colleagues divided students into two groups for a workshop on the brain and study skills. Half of them, the control group, were taught about the stages of memory; the other half received training in the growth mindset (how the brain grows with learning to make you smarter) and how to apply this idea to their schoolwork. Three times as many students in the growth mindset group showed an increase in effort and engagement compared with the control group. After the training, the control group continued to show declining grades, but the growth-mindset group showed a clear rebound in their grades. (Blackwell, L., Trzesniewski, K., & Dweck, C.S. (2007). Implicit theories of intelligence predict achievement across an adolescent transition: A longitudinal study and an intervention. *Child Development*, 78. 246-263, Study 2).

### ***Growth Mindset Training Narrows the Gender Gap in Math***

In a third study with adolescents, students who received growth mindset training (compared to matched controls who received other instruction) showed significantly increases in both their math and verbal achievement test scores. It was interesting to note that girls who received the growth mindset training narrowed the gender gap in math. (Good, C., Aronson, J., & Inzlicht, M. (2003). Improving adolescents' standardized test performance: An intervention to reduce the effects of stereotype threat. *Applied Developmental Psychology*, *24*, 645-662.)

### ***Growth Mindset Training Narrows the Racial Achievement Gap***

Aronson and colleagues taught college students a growth mindset and taught the control group about multiple intelligence (don't feel bad if you don't do well in one area, you may still be smart in other areas). There was also a no-training control group. The growth mindset group showed significantly higher grades than the control groups. This was particularly true for African American students, who also showed a sharp increase in their valuing of school and their enjoyment of their academic work. (Aronson, J., Fried, C. B., & Good, C.

(2002). Reducing the effects of stereotype threat on African American college students by shaping theories of intelligence. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *38*, 113-125.) You can read more about mindset and narrowing the achievement gap by downloading this [free report fom UNC Greensboro](#).

### ***Brainology® Improves Resilience, Behavior, and Achievement***

Direct studies of the Brainology program demonstrate the efficacy of this program. In a large study in Scotland, classrooms were randomly assigned to receive Brainology. These classrooms, compared to matched controls, showed significant increases in their reading achievement test scores, as well as greater resilience in the face of setbacks and increased life satisfaction.

In a recent study of California middle schoolers, Brainology led to an increased grade point average among Latino students (compared to a matched control group), as well as improved conduct scores for students who had prior conduct problems.

See [handout summarizing results from recent studies on Brainology®](#) and the

Mindset Works® EducatorKit.

***Research shows that Intelligence is Malleable***

It's also important to know that the growth mindset has been receiving scientific confirmation from cognitive psychology and from neuroscience. For example, neuroscientists tracked students during their teenage years. For many students, they found substantial changes in performance on verbal and non-verbal IQ tests. Using neuroimaging, they found corresponding changes in the density of neurons in the relevant brain areas for these students. In other words, an increase in neuronal connections in the brain accompanied an increase in IQ-test performance, while a decrease in neuronal connections in the brain accompanied a decrease in IQ-test performance. This is just what Brainology teaches. (Ramsden, S., Richardson, F.M., Josse, G., Thomas, M., Ellis, C., Shakeshaft, C., Segquier, M., & Price, C. (2011). Verbal and non-verbal intelligence changes in the teenage brain. *Nature* **479**, 113–116.

See other articles about the growth mindset in [In The News](#), or read our co-founder Carol Dweck's book [Mindset: The New Psychology of Success](#).

# Appendix K: Program History

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

The parents of the ILC were deeply involved in forming the approach to the curriculum, establishing the structure and hiring the initial teaching staff based on this Reggio Emilia approach. The ILC’s first year was in 1996 with three multi-age classes. The program formed slowly through its first four years, guided primarily by parents and teachers with minimal District administrative involvement.

In January 2001 the school District administration and a new Manor School Principal assumed some of the program’s administrative responsibilities, and an Advisory

Board, which included the principal, was formed to guide program governance. This Advisory Board Structure – with teachers having three votes, parents four, and the administrator one – has for 15 years operated on the basis of consensus. As a practical matter, however, when any two of the three represented interests has agreed on something, the third interest group most often has found a way to accommodate. This practice of collaborative self-governance has been critical to empowering the teachers and parents and allowing them to model a MAP Core Belief for the students, namely 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 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

In the ensuing years, the program was renamed the Multi-Age Program and significant documented formality was added to the program including MAP Fundamentals, MAP Philosophy, MAP Handbook, MAP Enrollment Procedures, MAP Field Trip Guidelines, and MAP Parent Volunteer Guidelines.

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

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

MAP has continued to flourish as it has gained stability. Four of the current six teachers have taught in the program for 10 or more years, and the other two have been teaching in MAP for 5 and 9 years. There is consistent parental interest in the program, with a wait list of more than 100 students throughout the grade levels. Parent satisfaction in the program is evidenced by the fact that 97% of children who have entered MAP, a program of choice, in the last five years have remained in the program. MAP students' scores on standardized tests are in the same range as the average test scores in the rest of RVSD, which is a high performing District. MAP

students transition well to White Hill Middle School, with GPAs at or above the average of all White Hill students.

We feel grateful to the Ross Valley School District Trustees and administrators for providing us the space and support we have needed over most of these 19 years, to seed the Program and allow it to evolve to its current state. We feel becoming a charter school is a natural step in our evolution, and believe it will be beneficial for the Ross Valley community.



LAW OFFICES OF YOUNG, MINNEY & CORR, LLP

SACRAMENTO ■ LOS ANGELES ■ SAN DIEGO ■ WALNUT CREEK

OCTOBER 15, 2015

VIA: HAND DELIVERY

Cindy Chan, Director  
Charter Schools Division  
California Department of Education  
1430 N Street, Suite 5401  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Description of Changes to Ross Valley Charter, Charter Petition on Appeal to the State Board of Education**

Dear Ms. Chan:

The Ross Valley Charter (the “Charter School”) charter petition was submitted to Ross Valley School District (the “District”) on July 15, 2015. The District Board voted to deny the petition on August 18, 2015. The Petitioners appealed the District’s denial to the Marin County Board of Education (the “County”), and the County Board voted to deny the charter on October 13, 2015.

The Charter School respectfully submits its charter petition to the State Board of Education (the “SBE”). We have listed below the relevant and appropriate changes to the charter petition, which are necessary to reflect approval by the SBE:

1. Chartering Authority

*Any text referring to Ross Valley School District or the District as the chartering authority would be revised to read “State Board of Education” or “SBE,” or the “California Department of Education” or “CDE” as the oversight agency.*

2. Special Education

*The Charter School shall operate as its own local educational agency for purposes of special education, and will apply for membership in the El Dorado County Charter Special Education Local Plan Area (“SELPA”) or another charter school SELPA. The Charter School shall assume full and exclusive responsibility for all special education and related services activities contemplated in the charter.*

### 3. Dispute Resolution

*The Dispute Resolution language in the charter petition will be followed by the paragraph below:*

“The Charter School recognizes that, because the SBE is not a local educational agency, the State Board of Education may choose 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.”

### 4. Technical Amendments

*The Charter School will comply with any and all technical amendments to its charter as required by the SBE and the California Department of Education (“CDE”).*

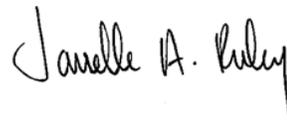
\* \* \*

We will make every effort to submit any supplemental documentation that the SBE or CDE may request in a timely manner.

We look forward to working with the SBE and the California Department of Education during consideration of the charter petition appeal. Please feel free to contact me, or the Charter School’s Development Coordinator and Chief Financial Officer, Conn Hickey ([connbhickey@gmail.com](mailto:connbhickey@gmail.com); (415) 250-5879) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

**LAW OFFICES OF  
YOUNG, MINNEY & CORR, LLP**



Janelle A. Ruley  
**ATTORNEY AT LAW**





**Ms. Cindy Chan, Director  
Charter Schools Division  
California Department of Education  
1430 N. Street, Suite 5401  
Sacramento, CA 95814**

**April 13, 2016**

**Dear Ms. Chan:**

**Ross Valley Charter School ("RVC") hereby requests a material revision to its charter petition authorized by the California State Board of Education ("SBE") on January 14, 2016.**

**The reason RVC is requesting a material revision is that we believe we may not be able to open the charter school by the Operational Date of September 30, 2016 as required by the State Board of Education Standard Conditions of Opening and Operation. The reason for likely delay is that RVC may not be able to secure a facility and make necessary improvements and regulatory approvals by that date. Attached to this letter, as Exhibit One, is a detailed description of the considerable efforts RVC has been making over the last many months to secure a facility.**

**RVC believes that it will be able to secure a facility by September 2017, through the submission of a Proposition 39 facilities request, or through other means, and is therefore asking for a one-year delay of its opening date, changing the charter term to July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2022.**

**RVC is also seeking to make a change to its facility plan: in addition to continuing to work to secure a lease for a stand-alone facility, it will also submit a Proposition 39 facilities request to the Ross Valley School District ("District") for the 2017-2018 school year. RVC did not include a Proposition 39 facilities request in its charter petition as a gesture of good will to the District and because it desires its own separate site. But after RVC was authorized in January, the District was not willing to negotiate a lease with the charter for 10 unrented classrooms at a surplus property closed school, and instead has put the 10 classrooms out for public bid, the winner to be awarded in late April. There is at least one private school bidder, so RVC's competitive bid may or may not be selected. Even if RVC is the successful bidder, we anticipate approximately six months of construction work and regulatory approvals required (after a lease is agreed to) to ready the site for school opening. Given this situation, if RVC delays opening a year, a Proposition 39 request will be made for next year as outlined in the Facilities section of the petition. RVC would still like to have a separate facility and will continue to work toward that goal, so we are budgeting \$191,000 a year for rent in our budget, for these 10 classrooms or another stand alone facility.**

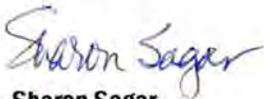
**There was some misunderstanding on the part of RVC regarding the CDE's admission preference technical amendments so we are also proposing slight revisions, for clarification purposes, which we believe are in line with the discussion we had with SBE members during the January 14, 2016 meeting, in Element Eight.**

**The material revision also includes a revision in the budget narrative and the 5-year budget and cash flow documents to reflect the change of years of operation.**

**RVC believes that we have reached agreement with the CDE on the technical amendments approved by the SBE in the appeal process and, therefore, the material revisions to the petition have started with the resulting agreed-upon changes.**

**Thank you for your consideration. Please contact one of us if you have any questions.**

Sincerely,



**Sharon Sagar**  
**Ross Valley Charter Board Chair**  
[Sagarsharon@yahoo.com](mailto:Sagarsharon@yahoo.com)



**Conn Hickey**  
**Treasurer and Development Coordinator**  
[connbhickey@gmail.com](mailto:connbhickey@gmail.com)

**Attached: Exhibit One**