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California Department of Education  
WAIVER SUBMISSION - General

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CD Code: 5075572

Waiver Number: 9-12-2016

Active Year: 2016

Date in: 12/9/2016 10:34:27 AM

Local Education Agency: Waterford Unified School District  
Address: 219 North Reinway Ave. Bldg. 2  
Waterford, CA 95386

Start: 7/1/2016

End: 7/1/2018

Waiver Renewal: N

Previous Waiver Number:

Previous SBE Approval Date:

Waiver Topic: Charter School Program

Ed Code Title: Geographic Limitations - Non-classroom Based

Ed Code Section: 47605(a)(1) and 47605.1

Ed Code Authority 33050

Ed Code or CCR to Waive. *Education Code* section 47605:

(a) (1) Except as set forth in paragraph (2), a petition for the establishment of a charter school [within a school district] may be circulated by one or more persons seeking to establish the charter school. A petition for the establishment of a charter school shall identify a single charter school [that will operate within the geographic boundaries of that school district.] A charter school may propose to operate at multiple sites [within the school district] if each location is identified in the charter school petition.

(5) [A charter school that is unable to locate within the jurisdiction of the chartering school district may establish one site outside the boundaries of the school district, but within the county in which that school district is located, if the school district within the jurisdiction of which the charter school proposes to operate is notified in advance of the charter petition approval, the county superintendent of schools and the Superintendent are notified of the location of the charter school before it commences operations, and either of the following circumstances exists:)

*Education Code* Section 47605 1.

(d) [Notwithstanding subdivision (a) or subdivision (a) of Section 47605, a charter school that is unable to locate within the geographic boundaries of the chartering school district may establish one site outside the boundaries of the school district, but within the county within which that school district is located. if the school district in which the charter school proposes to operate is notified in advance of the charter petition approval. the county superintendent of schools is notified of the location of the charter school before it commences operations and either of the following circumstances exist:)

- (e) (1) For a charter school that was granted approval of its charter before July 1, 2002, [and provided educational services to pupils before July 1, 2002,] this section only applies to new [educational services or] school sites established or acquired by the charter school on or after July 1, 2002.
- (2) [For a charter school that was granted approval of its charter before July 1, 2002 but did not provide educational services to pupils before July 1, 2002, this section only applies upon the expiration of a charter that is in existence on January 1, 2003.]
- (3) [Notwithstanding other Implementation timelines in this section, by June 30, 2005, or upon the expiration of a charter that is in existence on January 1, 2003, whichever is later, all charter schools shall be required to comply with this section for school sites at which education services are provided to pupils before or after July 1, 2002, regardless of whether the charter school initially received approval of its charter school petition before July 1, 2002. To achieve compliance with this section a charter school shall be required to receive approval of a charter petition in accordance with this section and Section 47605]
- (4) This section is not intended to affect the authority of a governmental entity to revoke a charter that is granted on or before the effective date of this section.

#### Outcome Rationale:

Our existing charter school, Connecting Waters Charter School ("CWCS"), originally chartered in April of 2002, is authorized by Waterford Unified School District in Stanislaus County and enrolls over 2,000 students in grades TK-12 in an independent study program. We have provided an enriched nonclassroom-based personalized educational model for 14 years. The charter was renewed by the district with a unanimous vote on June 12, 2014 and expires June 30, 2019. We specialize in serving a unique population of students who thrive in an alternative learning environment. Families often come to us when students are struggling academically, behaviorally, or socially. In addition, CWCS offers families with students who excel in sports, music, dance and theatre an alternative educational structure to allow students to pursue their talents without compromising academics. Our team of specialists partner with the parent and the credentialed teacher to customize a learning program to fill each student's strengths and interests through the resource center. CWCS has been able to address the state priorities as described in our local control accountability plan many needs of our families, and staff. The resource center provides a place for our families to view the various curricular options, check out materials, attend in-person classes, meet with their teachers, counselors, and other support staff, receive special education services and provides a location for parents/students to engage with their peers. CWCS has operated a resource center since its inception and it is one of the cornerstones of our success with working with our students and providing them the resources needed to excel.

Connecting Waters Charter School was created based on growing needs from families eager to encourage their students to become independent and resourceful learners. With family support aided by the expertise and experience of our credentialed teachers, students are able to learn at many different levels and within many different facets of education. Students learn best when they are in a positive, supportive, interesting, and challenging environment. Families (both students and parents/guardians) learn first-hand about learning styles, pedagogy, the curriculum selection process and the value we place on educating our youth. We seek to inform parents and students about innovative, creative teaching and learning strategies that will create life-long lessons students can refer back to after high school graduation. Connecting Waters Charter School's teachers and staff are tuned in to the latest and most effective tools for learning and assessment and sharing these methods with students and parents has become one of our hallmarks. Students take pride in the ownership of their own learning and parents are inspired to create new and exciting

avenues for learning.

We integrate innovative educational components to the student's educational program such as Moodle classes online tutoring, mobile science labs, and computer adaptive learning programs. Our staff seeks to engage and motivate students through stimulating and meaningful learning experiences that pique student interest. Although our student population appears to be quite challenging when they enter, we observe hundreds of success stories as we work together to discover the keys to helping each student learn and thrive. Our families are highly satisfied with the opportunities, resources, and support they receive and deliver powerful testimonials of the importance of this program for their students. Years into the future, our graduates remain lifelong learners, contributing community members, and happily satisfied members of society

Connecting Waters Charter School students have been accepted to colleges and universities including UC Berkeley, UC Davis, Harvard University, Carnegie Mellon University, Cornell University, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Cal Poly Pomona, UC Merced, Grand Canyon University, Dixie State University, Biola University, Arizona State University, St. Mary's College Moraga, SF Academy of Art University, Brigham Young University, CSU Stanislaus, UC Santa Cruz, Liberty University Virginia, CSU Sacramento, Vanguard University, SF State, San Jose State University, CSU Fullerton, CSU Monterey Bay, University of the Pacific, Wichita State University, California Baptist University, and many more!

In 2015, the first year of official California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress ("CAASPP") test implementation for Connecting Waters Charter School (see graphs below), our English Language Arts ("ELA") scores surpassed the state of California average in most grade levels and our Math scores outshined both our chartering county and district.

#### Mission Statement & Vision

Connecting Waters Charter Schools a collaborative educational community promoting academic excellence in preparing students for college and career while providing individualized public education through challenging, unique, and varied learning.

#### Our vision:

Our vision is to enhance life-long educational outcomes by partnering with families to provide stimulating learning opportunities across multiple regions.

Goals for students and parents of CWCS include but shall not be limited to:

Parent involvement and support will be encouraged so that optimum student learning occurs

Students will be active in creating their personalized learning plan with the support of parent and CWCS staff.

Students will be intrinsically motivated.

Students will achieve competency in basic academic skills.

Students will make at least one year of academic achievement growth each year.

Students will be encouraged to explore their passions in academics, performing arts, career and the use of technology.

The Waterford Union School District has provided supervisorial oversight and performance monitoring services for the Charter School, including monitoring school and student performance data, reviewing the school's audit reports, performing annual visits to the school facilities and resource centers, and considering charter amendment and renewal requests. The Waterford Unified School District affirms that at all times the Charter Schools has operate its resource centers consistent with the advice and written guidance issued by the California Department of Education since 2002 (see Attachment).

On October 16, 2016 the 3rd District Court of Appeals ruled in AUHSD v. Shasta Secondary Home School that independent study charter schools may not have resource centers outside of the

boundaries of the school district in which the charter school is authorized, but within the same county. Currently, the Charter School has one resource centers located within Stanislaus County that are affected by the ruling. This waiver is necessary to allow the continued operation of Connecting Waters Charter School's existing resource center. Our resource center serves 1,500 students. We currently have 200 employees that utilize the resource center. The operational and fiscal impact is \$111,000 yearly, we current have two years remaining in our lease. Due to the specific needs of our students and staff, we are unable to locate a resource center in our district that meets these needs. We are located in a rural location with no structures large enough to provide the space needed to establish our resource center.

Student population: 2177

City type: rural

Public hearing date: 11/10/2016

Public hearing advertised: agenda is posted at the District main office and Charter School main office and resource centers.

Local Board Approval Date: 11/10/2016

Community Council Reviewed By: Charter School Board of Directors

Community Council Reviewed Date: 11/8/2016

Community Council Objection: N

Community Council Objection Explanation:

Audit Penalty YN: Y

Categorical Program Monitoring: N

Submitted by: Dr. Donald Davis

Position: Superintendent

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Name of Bargaining Unit: California School Employees Association (CSEA) Local Chapter #657

Bargaining Units consulted on: 2/2/17

Representative: Peggy Ward, President

Position of Bargaining Unit: SUPPORT

Name of Bargaining Unit: Waterford Teachers Association

Representative: Travis Walsh, President

Position of Bargaining Unit: NEUTRAL