



California State Board of Education January 2019 Meeting – Item 10

Watsonville Prep School – Petition for Establishment



TONY THURMOND
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Timeline

- On May 23, 2018, Pajaro Valley Unified School District (PVUSD) voted to deny the Watsonville Prep School (WPS) petition by a vote of five to zero
- On August 16, 2018, Santa Cruz County Board of Education (SCCBOE) voted to deny the WPS petition by a vote of four to three
- The petitioners submitted a petition on appeal to the State Board of Education (SBE) on September 28, 2018



TONY THURMOND
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

California Department of Education Recommendation

The California Department of Education (CDE) recommendation is that the SBE hold a public hearing to **approve** the request to establish WPS, a kindergarten through grade eight (K–8) charter school, under the oversight of the SBE with the following condition to be met prior to opening:

- The WPS Board will provide the CDE with a revised multi-year budget including updated financial projections and complete narrative and assumptions.



TONY THURMOND
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Basis for Recommendation

Recommendation based on:

- Sound Educational Program
- Demonstrably likely to successfully implement the program
 - Fiscal Viability
 - History of operating other charter schools
- Reasonably comprehensive description of most charter elements



TONY THURMOND
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Advisory Commission on Charter Schools

- December 13, 2018 meeting
- Advisory Commission on Charter Schools (ACCS) moved staff's recommendation to approve the petition to the SBE
- The motion passed unanimously by a vote of eight to zero (one commissioner was not in attendance)



TONY THURMOND
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Background

- WPS intends to eventually serve kindergarten through grade eight
- Proposes to open in 2019–20 serving kindergarten through grade two
- Proposes to grow a grade a year serving 420 pupils in kindergarten through grade six by 2023–24



TONY THURMOND
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Facility

- Deadline to submit Proposition 39 facility request to the PVUSD was November 1, 2018
- The petitioner has requested a school within the City of Watsonville boundaries
- PVUSD responded by December 1, 2018, objecting to the average daily attendance projections
- WPS responded to PVUSD before January 2, 2019, verifying the accuracy of the projections
- Currently the school has 223 kindergarten to grade two meaningful intent to enroll forms



TONY THURMOND
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

CDE Findings – Sound Educational Program (1)

- WPS plans to locate and serve pupils primarily within the city boundaries of Watsonville
- Mission
 - The mission and vision of Navigator schools is to equip pupils to be learners and leaders in high school, college and beyond as well as improve communities through education
 - The petition describes instructional models for both kindergarten through grade five and grade six through grade eight



TONY THURMOND
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

CDE Findings – Sound Education Program (2)

- The following five key educational elements will define a pupil's kindergarten through grade eight experience at WPS:
 - A strong culture of excellence
 - Data-driven instruction
 - Consistent coaching and feedback for all staff
 - Robust multiple tiers of support for academics and behavior
 - State of the art technology to prepare pupils for the future
- Focus on achieving and maintaining a racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general population residing within PVUSD



TONY THURMOND
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

CDE Findings – Ability to Implement the Program

Fiscal Analysis

- Multi-year financial plan is fiscally viable
- Additional Grants
 - Charter School Growth Fund Grant - \$2,100,000
 - NewSchools Venture Fund - up to \$800,000
 - Walton Foundation - \$325,000
- CDE is recommending WPS provide an updated multi-year budget to include the above grants



TONY THURMOND
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

CDE Findings – History of operating other charter schools (1)

- Navigator Schools operates two college prep kindergarten through grade eight schools:
 - Gilroy Prep (GP), authorized by the Gilroy Unified School District (GUSD) in 2010
 - Renewed in 2018 for a five-year term from 2018–2023
 - Hollister Prep (HP), authorized by the Hollister School District (HSD) in 2013
 - Renewed in 2018 for another five-year term from 2018–2023.
- The 2016–18 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress data in ELA and mathematics for GP and HP have outperformed the district and county



TONY THURMOND
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

CDE Findings – History of operating other charter schools (2)

- The Navigator K–8 model, as implemented in HP and GP, is designed to prepare Navigator students for the rigors of high school.
- WPS petition states that the academic achievements of both GP and HP are products of a concentrated effort to create an educational model that can be easily replicated and personalized to meet the needs of the community being served



TONY THURMOND
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Deficiencies in Charter Elements

If approved by the SBE, the following charter elements need to be clarified by the petitioner:

- Measurable Pupil Outcomes
 - Does not include measurable pupil outcomes for each of the significant subgroups the petitioner proposes to serve
- Annual Independent Financial Audits
 - Specify who is responsible for contracting and overseeing the independent audit



TONY THURMOND
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Admission Preferences

- WPS petition does present a reasonably comprehensive description of the admission preferences
- The petition provides a preference for residents of PVUSD who reside within the city boundaries of Watsonville.
- Based on the petition, the CDE cannot determine the reasoning for this preference
- At ACCS, the petitioners stated that the intent was to target socioeconomically disadvantaged students



TONY THURMOND
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Summary

- CDE staff is recommending approval
- Sound educational program
- Ability to Implement
- Clarification of Charter Elements in petition needed