

**LAUSD BOARD
APPROVED**



**05/28/19
(BR 384-18/19)
TERM: 2020-2025**

EL RIO



Community School

**CHARTER PETITION FOR A FIVE-YEAR
TERM 2020-2025
SUBMITTED APRIL 10TH, 2019**

SUBMITTED TO:
LAUSD CHARTER SCHOOLS DIVISION
333 S BEAUDRY AVE, 20th FLOOR, LOS ANGELES CA 90017

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ASSURANCES, AFFIRMATIONS, AND DECLARATIONS

El Rio Community School (also referred to herein as “El Rio” and “Charter School”) shall:

- Be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. (California Education Code (hereinafter “Ed. Code”) § 47605(d)(1).)
- Not charge tuition. (Ed. Code § 47605(d)(1).)
- Not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in section 422.55 of the Penal Code. (Ed. Code § 47605(d)(1); Ed. Code § 220.)
- Except as provided in Education Code section 47605(d)(2), admission to a charter school shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the pupil, or of his or her parent or legal guardian, within this state, except that an existing public school converting partially or entirely to a charter school under this part shall adopt and maintain a policy giving admission preference to pupils who reside within the former attendance area of that school. (Ed. Code § 47605(d)(1).)
- Admit all pupils who wish to attend Charter School. (Ed. Code § 47605(d)(2)(A).)
- Except for existing pupils of Charter School, determine attendance by a public random drawing if the number of pupils who wish to attend Charter School exceeds Charter School’s capacity. Preference shall be extended to pupils currently attending Charter School and pupils who reside in the Los Angeles Unified School District (also referred to herein as “LAUSD” and “District”). (Ed. Code § 47605(d)(2)(B).)
- If a pupil is expelled or leaves Charter School without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, Charter School shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil’s last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card, and health information. (Ed. Code § 47605(d)(3).)
- Meet all statewide standards and conduct the pupil assessments required pursuant to Education Code sections 60605 and 60851 and any other statewide standards authorized in statute or pupil assessments applicable to pupils in non-charter public schools. (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(1).)
- Consult, on a regular basis, with Charter School’s parents, legal guardians, and teachers regarding the school’s educational programs. (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(2).)

Charter School hereby declares that Charter School, operated as or by its nonprofit public benefit corporation, is and shall be the exclusive public school employer of Charter School’s employees for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act (EERA), Chapter 10.7 (commencing with Section 3540) of Division 4 of Title I of the Government Code. Charter School shall comply with all provisions of the EERA and shall act independently from LAUSD for collective bargaining purposes. In accordance with the EERA, employees may join and be represented by an organization of their choice for collective bargaining purposes.

NOTE: This Charter contains specific “District Required Language” (DRL), including the *Assurances, Affirmations, and Declarations* section above. The DRL should be highlighted in gray within each Charter element or section. The final section of the Charter provides a consolidated addendum of

the DRL. This intentional redundancy facilitates efficient charter petition review while ensuring ready access to the DRL for any given section of the Charter. To the extent that any inconsistency may exist between any provision contained within the body of the Charter and the DRL contained in the addendum, the provisions of the DRL addendum shall control.

ELEMENT 1 - THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

“The educational program of the charter school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the charter school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an “educated person” in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(A)(i).)

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

“If the proposed charter school will serve high school pupils, a description of the manner in which the charter school will inform parents about the transferability of courses to other public high schools and the eligibility of courses to meet college entrance requirements. Courses offered by the charter school that are accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges may be considered transferable and courses approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the “A” to “G” admissions criteria may be considered to meet college entrance requirements.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(A)(iii).)

LOCAL CONTROL FUNDING FORMULA (LCFF) AND LOCAL CONTROL AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN (LCAP)

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that it must comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (2013) (Local Control Funding Formula), as they may be amended from time to time, which include the requirement that Charter School shall annually submit a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)/annual update to the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools and the Charter Schools Division (CSD) on or before July 1. In accordance with Education Code sections 47604.33 and 47606.5, Charter School shall annually update its goals and annual actions to achieve those goals identified in the charter pursuant to Education Code section 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii), using the Local Control and Accountability Plan template adopted by the State Board of Education, as it may be changed from time to time. Charter School shall comply with all requirements of Education Code section 47606.5, including but not limited to the requirement that Charter School “shall consult with teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, parents, and pupils in developing the local control and accountability plan and annual update to the local control and accountability plan.” (Ed. Code § 47606.5(e).)

ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND SCHEDULES

Charter School shall offer, at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction set forth in Education Code section 47612.5, and the number of school days required by *California Code of Regulations*, title 5, section 11960.

MATHEMATICS PLACEMENT

Charter School shall comply with all applicable requirements of the California Mathematics Placement Act of 2015.

TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN

Charter School shall comply with all applicable requirements regarding transitional kindergarten. For purposes of admission to Charter School, transitional kindergarten shall be considered a part of kindergarten, and therefore students enrolled in transitional kindergarten at Charter School shall be considered existing students of Charter School for purposes of Charter School's admissions, enrollment, and lottery.

HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAMINATION

Charter School shall comply with all applicable requirements of Education Code sections 60850 – 60859, including but not limited to the requirements of sections 60851.6 and 60852.3.

WASC ACCREDITATION

If Charter School serves students in grades 9-12, before Charter School graduates its first class of students, Charter School shall obtain, and thereafter maintain, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation.

ENGLISH LEARNERS

Charter School shall identify potential English Learners in a timely manner in accordance with all applicable legal requirements. Charter School must provide all English Learners with an effective English language acquisition program that also affords meaningful and equitable access to Charter School's core academic curriculum. Instructional plans for English Learners must be (1) based on sound educational theory; (2) adequately supported with trained teachers and appropriate materials and resources; and (3) periodically evaluated to make sure the program is successful and modified when the program is not successful.

On an annual basis, upon request, Charter School shall submit a certification to the LAUSD Charter Schools Division (CSD) that certifies that Charter School has adopted and is implementing either the LAUSD English Learner Master Plan or Charter School's own English Learner (EL) Master Plan. If Charter School chooses to implement its own EL Master Plan, the plan shall provide a detailed description of Charter School's EL program, and shall address the following:

- How Charter School's EL Master Plan provides all of its English Learners, including but not limited to Long Term English Learners (LTELs) with an effective English language acquisition program as well as meaningful and equitable access to Charter School's core academic curriculum
- How English Learners' specific needs will be identified
- What services will be offered
- How, where, and by whom the services will be provided
- How Charter School will evaluate its EL program each year, and how the results of this evaluation will be used to improve the program, including the provision of EL services

Each year, Charter School shall provide to the CSD a report on its annual evaluation of the effectiveness of its EL program. Upon request, Charter School shall provide a copy of its current EL Master Plan to the CSD.

Charter School shall administer the CELDT/ELPAC annually in accordance with federal and state requirements.

Charter School shall reclassify English Learners in accordance with federal and state requirements.

Charter School shall provide parent outreach services and meaningfully inform parents with limited English proficiency of important information regarding Charter School matters to the same extent as other parents.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Federal Law Compliance

Charter School shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.

Special Education Program

Charter School shall ensure that no student otherwise eligible to enroll in Charter School shall be denied, directly or indirectly, admission due to a disability or to Charter School's inability to provide necessary services. Charter School acknowledges that policies and procedures are in place to ensure the recruitment, enrollment, service, and retention of students with disabilities at LAUSD-authorized charter schools, including Charter School.

Prior to LAUSD Board of Education approval of an initial Charter petition, and if a renewing Charter School intends to operate as a "school of the district" for special education services, Charter School shall execute a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") by and between LAUSD and Charter School regarding the provision and funding of special education services consistent with applicable state law and the LAUSD Special Education Local Plan Area ("SELPA") Local Plan for Special Education and shall be considered a "public school of the District" for purposes of Special Education pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b). However, Charter School reserves the right to make written verifiable assurances that it may become an independent local educational agency (LEA) and join a SELPA pursuant to Education Code Section 47641 (a) either on its own or with a grouping of charter school LEAs as a consortium following the requirements of Education Code section 56195.3(b).

SELPA Reorganization

The Los Angeles Unified School District is approved to operate as a single-District SELPA under the provisions of Education Code section 56195.1(a). As a single-District SELPA, the District has created two charter school sections (District-operated Programs and Charter-operated Programs) under the administration of one single Administrative Unit pursuant to a reorganization plan approved by the Board of Education on January 4, 2011 (149/10-11). Full implementation of the reorganized LAUSD SELPA commenced in the 2013-2014 school year requiring all District-authorized charter schools to elect one of the three options available under the LAUSD SELPA. Prior to an option election, all District-authorized charter schools were required to participate as a school of the District under the District-Operated Programs Unit. Prior to the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year, all District-authorized charter schools, other than those that had previously executed an Option 3 Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU"), were required to execute a new MOU setting forth the LAUSD SELPA option election for the remainder of the charter petition term. The Charter-operated Program schools do not have LEA status for the purposes of special education but will function in a similar role in that each charter school will be responsible for all special education requirements, including but not limited to services, placement, due process, related services, special education classes, and special education supports. Charter schools that have elected to participate in a District-operated programs option may apply for membership in the Charter-operated Program section of the SELPA. Charter schools accepted for participation in the Charter-operated Programs section receive support from a Special Education Director for the Charter-operated Programs.

Modified Consent Decree Requirements

All charter schools approved by the LAUSD Board of Education are bound by and must adhere to the terms, conditions and requirements of the *Chanda Smith* Modified Consent Decree ("MCD") and other court orders imposed upon the District pertaining to special education. The MCD is a consent decree entered in a federal court class action lawsuit initially brought on behalf of students with disabilities in LAUSD. It is an agreement of the parties approved by the federal court and monitored by a court-appointed independent monitor. The MCD includes nineteen statistically measureable outcomes and facilities obligations that the District has to achieve to disengage from the MCD and federal court oversight. All charter schools are required to use the District's Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual and Welligent, the District-wide web-based software system used for online Individualized Education Programs ("IEPs") and tracking of related services provided to students during the course of their education.

As part of fulfilling the District's obligations under the MCD, student level data requests from District-operated and Charter-operated charter schools are made on a regular basis. The requested data must be submitted in the Office of the Independent Monitor's ("OIM") required format in accordance with the OIM's required timelines and as follows:

- **End of Year Suspension**

District ID, SSIS ID, last name, first name, date of birth, gender, grade, date of suspension, number of days suspended, and reason for suspension.

- **Statewide Assessment Data**

The standard file including District ID.

- **Norm day**

District ID, SSIS ID, last name, first name, date of birth, gender, grade, location code, school name and local district for all students enrolled on norm day.

- **CBEDS**

- **All Students enrolled as of December 1 of each school year**

District ID, SSIS ID, last name, first name, date of birth, gender, grade, location code, school name and local district for all students enrolled on norm day.

- **Dropout**

District ID, SSIS ID, last name, first name, middle name, date of birth, grade, last location, school name and local district

- **Monthly SESAC and Suspension data**

- **Graduation roster from all charter schools with 12th grade students with disabilities**

The MCD requires charter schools to implement the District's integrated student information system, which is currently referred to as My Integrated Student Information System (MiSiS). MiSiS is a suite of applications which is designed to capture all District student data. All charter schools are required to utilize MiSiS directly or interface with MiSiS via a web based Application Programming Interface (API) in compliance with the requirements of the MCD and applicable timelines. Upon charter school

full utilization of MiSiS either directly or via a web based API, the list of required data above will automatically be captured within MiSiS.

General Information

<u>GENERAL INFORMATION</u>	
• The contact person for Charter School will be:	Katie Sobczak Chau, Co-Founder
• The contact address for Charter School will be:	PO Box 50967 Los Angeles CA 90050
• The contact phone number for Charter School will be:	(323) 366-0166
• The proposed address or ZIP Code of the target community to be served by Charter	90042
• This location will be in LAUSD Board District:	5
• This location will be in LAUSD Local District:	Central
• The grade configuration of Charter School will be:	TK-8
• The number of students in the first year will be:	132
• The grade level(s) of the students in the first year will be:	TK-3
• Charter School's scheduled first day of instruction in 2020-2021 will be:	August 18, 2020
• The enrollment capacity will be: (Enrollment capacity is defined as the total number of students who may be enrolled in Charter School regardless of student residency.):	324 ¹
• The type of instructional calendar (e.g. traditional/year-round, single track/multi-track, extended day/year) will be:	Traditional
• The bell schedule for Charter School will be:	8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
• The term of this Charter shall be from:	July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2025

El Rio Community School will be a TK-8 public charter school in the Highland Park community of Northeast Los Angeles, based on the acclaimed Waldorf model of education. The children of Highland Park need alternative educational options like El Rio Community School ("El Rio" or

¹ While El Rio will reach grades TK-7 and 324 kids by Y5, for purposes of renewal/an additional charter term, our intent is to be a full TK-8 span school with 444 at full capacity.

“Charter School”), which will offer an **arts-based, developmental approach** to learning created specifically to address to the needs of English Learners, while at the same time offering a **rigorous, standards-based education** that has been shown to deliver strong academic performance, particularly among students from underserved subgroups. This whole-child approach, which will offer multiple pathways to achievement, will help the children of this community excel in rigorous college preparatory high schools, and enroll in competitive colleges and universities well prepared to succeed in post-secondary education and beyond.

Community Need for Proposed Charter School

The Highland Park neighborhood of Northeast Los Angeles is a diverse community with a vibrant artistic heritage but a history of community disinvestment, and the area remains a pocket of educational need. Highland Park is still a primarily working-class neighborhood, populated with a high rate of families living in low or very low-income households, with nearly 60% of families subsisting on less than \$40,000 a year.² In addition, 20% of the population lives below the poverty level (currently just \$24,600 for a family of four),³ with about 9% relying on cash assistance or Food Stamps/SNAP.⁴ Highland Park packs just over 60,000 people into 3.5 square miles, giving it one of the highest population densities in both the city of Los Angeles and the County, and the percentage of school age children age 10 and under is one of the highest in the County as well.⁵

The demographics show that 73% of Highland Park residents identify as Latino, 14% as White, 11% as Asian, and 2.5% as Black.⁶ The diversity of the neighborhood can be seen in that fact that 45% of the population was born outside of the United States, and though the racial and ethnic makeup has shifted over time, the Hispanic/Latino population has consistently been the largest ethnic group.⁷ A third of community residents speak English “less than well,” and there are more than nine languages spoken within the neighborhood boundaries.⁸ The rate of English proficiency has implications for educational attainment and access to community and employment opportunities. As many researchers have found, recent immigrants and English Learners face significant stressors in coping with a new language and new culture: unwelcoming peers, school/community violence, racism and more can impact students’ learning and behavior.⁹ For adolescents especially, there are significant challenges in navigating different cultures between school life/their peers and their home life/parents. According to Qin, “Many [immigrant students] are torn between the attachment to their parents’ culture, the lure of the adolescent peer culture, and aspirations to join the American mainstream culture.”¹⁰

While there is a renewed focus on the needs of Long Term English Learners (LTEs), even students who have been reclassified still lack critical skills they need to succeed academically.¹¹ In the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD or District), while the overall 2018 graduation rate was

² <http://maps.latimes.com/neighborhoods/neighborhood/highland-park/?q=Highland+Park%2C+Los+Angeles%2C+CA%2C+USA&lat=34.1157564&lng=-118.1854042&q=Geocodify>

³ https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml

⁴ https://knowledge.luskin.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/The_State_of_Highland_Park.pdf

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml

⁹ Qin, 2009; Suarez-Orozco, Rhodes, & Milburn, 2009; Daoud, 2003; Peguero, 2009

¹⁰ Qin, 2009.

¹¹ See, e.g., <https://gopublicschoolswwc.org/2019/03/reclassification-a-students-perspective/> (Californians Together in 2014 found that nearly 75 percent of the state’s English Learners had been in .California’s public schools for more than seven years without gaining the skills they needed to succeed academically)

76.6%, *only half* of the District's English Learners graduated from high school (51%), a lower rate than for students receiving special education (55%).¹²

The following are two charts showing the demographic breakdown of the existing neighborhood schools serving grades TK-8 in Highland Park (zip code 90042), as well as their scores on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). The community includes seven K-5 elementary schools, one K-1 primary center, one 2-6th grades elementary (Monte Vista), one middle school and one K-8 span school (Arroyo Seco). Arroyo Seco (K-8) and San Pascual Elementary are both whole-school magnet programs focused on science/STEAM; Burbank MS is comprised of both an Arts/Tech/Community magnet as well as a police academy magnet program. Buchanan includes a science/tech/math magnet program, Garvanza includes a Tech/Leadership magnet program, and Aldama Elementary includes a Dual Language academy within the school.¹³ There is just one charter school serving the community, Academia Avance Charter, a state-authorized charter school serving grades 6-12.

Approximately 83.8% of students in the community are economically disadvantaged, with 20.3% English Learners, 3.0% Foster/Homeless Youth and 14.8% students with disabilities; 90.1% are Latinx/Hispanic.

Surrounding Schools Special Populations and Demographics 2018-19									
Target Neighborhood: Highland Park, Los Angeles									
Surrounding Schools Special Populations and Demographics 2018-19	ENROLLMENT	ENGLISH LEARNERS	FOSTER YOUTH	HOMELESS	SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED	STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES	AFRICAN AMERICAN	LATINX	WHITE
Academia Avance Charter	391	14.8%	0.8%	1.8%	96.7%	11.5%	0.0%	92.3%	0.8%
Aldama Elementary	490	30.8%	0.8%	2.4%	77.8%	12.9%	1.2%	86.7%	9.4%
Annandale Elementary	165	17.0%	1.2%	4.2%	84.2%	28.5%	0.0%	93.3%	3.6%
Arroyo Seco Museum Science Magnet	555	12.1%	0.4%	1.1%	74.6%	12.6%	0.5%	90.3%	5.8%
Buchanan St Elementary	339	16.5%	0.9%	1.8%	81.1%	11.2%	0.3%	92.6%	2.4%
Bushnell Way Elementary	202	15.8%	1.0%	3.0%	84.2%	16.3%	1.5%	93.1%	1.5%
Garvanza St Elementary	315	24.4%	0.3%	1.6%	85.4%	14.0%	1.6%	90.5%	3.5%
Luther Burbank Middle School	1,055	9.1%	0.4%	3.5%	81.6%	17.6%	1.8%	88.5%	4.8%
Monte Vista St Elementary	336	25.3%	0.3%	3.3%	93.2%	16.7%	0.9%	88.1%	8.3%
Richard Riordan Primary Center	199	43.1%	0.0%	2.5%	87.4%	12.6%	0.5%	94.0%	3.5%
San Pascual STEAM Magnet	298	18.8%	1.0%	0.3%	76.2%	12.1%	1.7%	82.9%	7.0%
Yorkdale St Elementary	252	15.9%	1.2%	1.6%	82.9%	11.5%	0.8%	89.3%	3.2%
Neighborhood Average	383	20.3%	0.7%	2.3%	83.8%	14.8%	0.9%	90.1%	4.5%
LA County Average	1,464,002	18.6%	0.7%	3.7%	70.0%	12.5%	7.5%	65.2%	14.1%
CA State Average	6,186,278	19.3%	0.5%	3.4%	60.9%	11.7%	5.4%	54.6%	22.9%

Data was sourced from the California Department of Education Data Reporting Office based on 2018-19 school-wide reported averages.

¹² <http://laschoolreport.com/new-help-for-lausds-english-learners-individualized-plans-seek-to-boost-graduation-and-reclassification-rates/>

¹³ Magnet programs are not necessarily “resident” schools and may draw enrollment from across the District. Some magnets require selective admissions and are not, like resident schools or charter schools, open to anyone residing within designated boundaries who seeks to enroll.

On the 2018 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) standardized tests, on average, the schools in Highland Park performed slightly lower than LAUSD averages, with 38% of students Met/Exceeded in ELA (compared to 40.9% of students in grades 3-8 across LAUSD) and 28.3% of students Met/Exceeded in Math (compared to 32.2% across LAUSD for grades 3-8). Both ELA and Math averages in the community are 11-12 percentage points below State averages for the same grade levels.

Surrounding Schools CAASPP Scores for 2017 and 2018						
Target Neighborhood: Highland Park, Los Angeles						
Surrounding Schools CAASPP Scores for 2017 and 2018	ELA			MATH		
	2018 % Standard Met/Exceeded	2017 % Standard Met/Exceeded	% ELA change from 2017 - 2018	2018 % Standard Met/Exceeded	2017 % Standard Met/Exceeded	% Math change from 2017 - 2018
Academia Avance Charter	28.3%	19.4%	8.9%	21.8%	14.3%	7.5%
Aldama Elementary	31.5%	30.6%	0.9%	26.7%	28.5%	-1.8%
Annandale Elementary	28.2%	25.8%	2.4%	12.5%	15.3%	-2.8%
Arroyo Seco Museum Science Magnet*	49.5%	51.0%	-1.5%	39.2%	43.4%	-4.2%
Buchanan St Elementary	43.8%	34.7%	9.1%	29.6%	32.1%	-2.5%
Bushnell Way Elementary	25.8%	27.6%	-1.8%	19.6%	20.5%	-0.9%
Garvanza St Elementary	45.9%	36.5%	9.4%	30.6%	28.3%	2.3%
Luther Burbank Middle School	42.9%	42.0%	0.9%	36.6%	35.9%	0.7%
Monte Vista St Elementary	23.6%	27.4%	-3.8%	20.9%	19.8%	1.1%
Richard Riordan Primary Center	-%	-%	-%	-%	-%	-%
San Pascual STEAM Magnet*	43.8%	42.4%	1.4%	28.6%	26.0%	2.6%
Yorkdale St Elementary	55.1%	43.6%	11.5%	44.9%	34.3%	10.6%
Neighborhood Average (K-8)	38.0%	34.6%	3.4%	28.3%	27.1%	1.1%
LAUSD Average (K-8)	40.9%	37.6%	3.3%	32.2%	30.1%	2.1%
CA State Average (K-8)	48.8%	47.2%	1.6%	40.2%	29.0%	11.2%

*Magnet schools are not considered resident schools as they draw enrollment from all over the district.

While Highland Park has several magnet programs to which families can apply for enrollment, these are predominantly focused on STEAM/technology, with one dual language program (Aldama ES). While these programs may be appealing to some, we have found that many families in the community desire something different in public education for their children. In surveying and speaking with approximately 400 students and parents during our workshops and outreach in the research and planning phase for writing our charter petition, we heard from many parents and students that they were frustrated by the current options on offer at their local schools in Highland

Park. We learned there is a strong desire for an engaging education where students truly enjoy school, for students to have hands-on opportunities for learning instead of memorizing and test-taking, and for academic rigor and the opportunity for success in college and beyond. The sentiment of belonging was also expressed--students and parents want to feel a part of their school community, and for their talents and heritage to be recognized and welcomed. There is a desire for language and exposure to other world languages and cultures to be a focus--many students and parents speak Spanish and other languages in the home, but don't feel like this is often valued in school. Our curriculum design has been shaped by these conversations: our **language infusion model** and **story-based curriculum** will offer opportunities for telling the stories of and honoring the languages spoken by our families, while our **arts-infused academics** will offer an experiential, dynamic learning environment that meets the needs English Learners.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

In order to gain on-the-ground knowledge and expertise from the community, we have formed working relationships with various organizations and nonprofits in order to outreach to parents and families, build trust within the neighborhood, and garner community support. The following are organizations with whom we are currently collaborating on workshops, information sessions, and educational programming. They have also provided access to neighborhood families who have informed our school model by voicing their concerns and frustrations with their children's educational opportunities as well as their dreams and desires for alternative school models.

Highland Park Recreation Center

We have hosted three workshops at Highland Park's only recreation center (there is no current YMCA or Boys and Girls Club), including a collaborative, project-based STEAM workshop where 35 children designed and built Rube Goldberg machines in teams. Those students participated in a survey in which they evaluated the experience. Across the board, students had fun, felt engaged and challenged, and expressed the desire for similar activities to be offered at their school. We will continue to hold bi-monthly workshops focusing on introducing key elements of the Waldorf curriculum until we open in 2020. This will include several outdoor seasonal workshops for parents and children, such as rocket building/launching for Chinese New Year, dyeing and sewing family flags for May Day, and carving turnip lanterns for the various winter festivals of light.

Arroyo Seco Regional Library

We have partnered with the local library to host three Spanish-language music workshops for parents and children, followed by information sessions about El Rio, each attended by 20-30 interested families. These will be ongoing on a monthly basis until school opening. In market research conducted with these families, we found that given a choice of ten different priorities for their children's education, the majority of parents chose social emotional skills, outdoor education, and diversity over strong academics, proximity to home/work and safety. El Rio's Living Classroom program, which offers outdoor education in conjunction with the social-emotional skill-building of Council practice each Friday, was developed directly from this feedback.

Hathaway-Sycamores Child and Family Services

We have planned a series of five parent education and arts-based workshops for families at Hathaway-Sycamores Child and Family Services, which provides mental health services and transitional housing for children, youth and families in Highland Park. We plan to partner with them upon school opening as our mental health and wraparound services provider.

Bob Baker Marionette Theatre

We have established a partnership with Bob Baker Marionette Theatre, the oldest continuously operating puppet theatre in the country, which is moving into a new space in Highland Park in May 2019. Puppetry is already an integral part of the Waldorf Early Childhood curriculum, but we are working with Bob Baker to expand the pedagogical possibilities of puppetry. For example, having

marionette making techniques incorporated into yearly class plays and creating full-scale productions to address gender dynamics and relationships, risky behaviors, and sensitive health topics. We are planning a series of puppetry workshops with them that will marry their unique style and vision with Waldorf-inspired cultural stories for young children and parents.

Education and Cultural Learning Department, Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians

We are partnering with Dr. Makha Blu Wakpa, a tribal educator, on our indigenous curriculum, particularly as it pertains to the 3rd and 4th grade, where students study life in early California as well as the structures and practical arts of indigenous peoples. Dr. Wakpa—an enrolled citizen of the Itazipcho Lakota from The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe—is the Director of The Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians's Education and Cultural Learning Department.¹⁴ His scholarly, professional, and personal interests are in employing culturally-responsive education to strengthen the wellbeing of Indigenous peoples, nations, and our mother earth.

Center for Community Engagement, Service, and the Public Good at Cal State LA's Charter College of Education

We are partnering with faculty and graduate students interested in our innovative model to form a collaborative relationship where pedagogical and community-based research and academic service learning go hand in hand. The College is committed to urban education and serving the needs of Los Angeles's diverse learner population and will be a valuable ally in fomenting a teacher pipeline that is passionate about and reflects the populations served at El Rio.

How the Proposed Charter School Will Meet the Needs of the Community

Waldorf education is a 100-year-old educational model with over 1,000 schools worldwide. According to the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, there are currently 40+ public Waldorf schools in the U.S., and over 20 in California alone—most of them charters.¹⁵ However, the City of Los Angeles, with a population of approximately four million, has just one public Waldorf school: Ocean Charter School (OCS) in West LA. OCS recently was re-authorized by LAUSD for a third five-year charter term and has an average waitlist of 900 students who would like to attend the school.¹⁶ One of the El Rio Co-Founders was a founding teacher of OCS when it opened in 2004 and has maintained a deep connection with the OCS leadership team. OCS is partnering with El Rio to design and open a public Waldorf school to serve the diverse population of Highland Park in Northeast Los Angeles. While the two schools will have separate Boards of Directors, separate staff and operations, OCS will be providing helpful guidance and mentorship to the El Rio founding team; OCS's school leader is a member of El Rio's Board of Directors.

As detailed in the previous section, test scores of the existing schools in the Highland Park community demonstrate that these schools are struggling to meet the educational needs of their students: according to the California Department of Education's DataQuest information, currently only 4 in 10 students are proficient in ELA, and only 3 in 10 are proficient in math.¹⁷

¹⁴ In this position, he serves as Director of The California Indian Charter School of Los Angeles; manages the California Department of Education's American Indian Education Center grant; and coordinates with tribal organizations, school districts, and universities. Dr. Wakpa holds a Ph.D. in Education and an M.A. in American Indian Studies from the University of Arizona, Tucson. Previously, he worked as the Director of the San Francisco Bay Area organization, Sacred Sites Protection & Rights of Indigenous Tribes.

¹⁵ <http://www.allianceforpublicwaldorfeducation.org/find-a-school/>

¹⁶ <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uaDrTyT3dWsvydei1r3sYInl6UgAVIb0bF-AsgwBm0s/edit?usp=sharing>

¹⁷ <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest>

El Rio's Waldorf-based model of education, conversely, has proven successful in public schools across California, including in achieving strong results on the CAASPP. For example, in the 2017-2018 school year at Coastal Grove Charter in the Arcata Elementary School District (54% FRPL), students were 72% Met/Exceeded in ELA and 53% Met/Exceeded in Math, well above state averages for the same grades (49% in ELA and 40% in Math). The Community School for Creative Education is located in Oakland Unified, and has a 71% FRPL rate along with 39% ELs; the school is 96% non-white. On the 2018 CAASPP, their students in grades 3-8 were 30% Met/Exceeded in ELA and 23% Met/Exceeded in Math. While this is lower than state averages, it's notable that the scores are comparable to Oakland Unified's averages for the same grade levels (32% in ELA and 28% in Math).¹⁸

Select Waldorf-Based Public Charter School Demographic and CAASPP Data

Schools	Grade Levels Served	# of Students 2017-18	% FRPL	% SpEd	% F/H	% EL	% H/L	% AA	% Asian	% White	2018 EI Reclassification	2017 CAASPP ELA % Met/Exceeded	2017 CAASPP Math % Met/Exceeded	2018 CAASPP ELA % Met/Exceeded	2018 CAASPP Math % Met/Exceeded
Blue Oak Charter	K-8	375	56%	8%	0%	5%	17%	5%	4%	69%	0%	36%	29%	38%	31%
Coastal Grove Charter	K-8	231	54%	7%	0%	0%	5%	1%	0%	78%	0%	59%	49%	72%	53%
Community School for Creative Education	K-8	252	71%	10%	0%	39%	58%	19%	9%	4%	0%	16%	23%	30%	23%
Ocean Charter	K-8	504	26%	14%	0%	7%	22%	6%	5%	50%	5%	68%	57%	68%	54%
River Oak Charter	K-8	241	52%	9%	3%	8%	20%	2%	1%	66%	11%	45%	33%	40%	26%
Woodland Star Charter	K-8	249	45%	8%	0%	7%	33%	0%	2%	59%	47%	40%	27%	54%	41%
Yuba River Charter	K-8	313	56%	6%	0%	0%	7%	0%	2%	83%	0%	65%	53%	61%	44%

Source: <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest>.

At Ocean Charter School here in LAUSD, on the 2018 CAASPP, grades 3-8 students were 68% Met/Exceeded in ELA and 54% Met/Exceeded in Math, well above LAUSD averages of 41% in ELA and 32% in Math for the same grades. Most notably, OCS' English Learner (EL), Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL) and Hispanic/Latino subgroups outperformed District averages for the same grades in every measure, often by significant margins:

2018 CAASPP	ELA Overall	Math Overall	ELA EL	Math EL	ELA FRPL	Math FRPL	ELA Hispanic	Math Hispanic
Ocean Charter School	68%	54%	9%	36%	54%	36%	60%	45%
LAUSD (3-8)	41%	32%	4%	6%	35%	26%	35%	26%
California (3-8)	49%	40%	13%	13%	36%	27%	38%	28%

This data demonstrates that students at Waldorf-inspired public schools – including those from underserved subgroups -- perform as well or better than their peers at other public schools on standardized academic measures.¹⁹ Although teachers at these schools do not focus on “teaching to the test,” research has shown that by the middle grades students perform significantly better than

¹⁸ <http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest>

¹⁹ McDermott, R., Byers, P., Dillard, C., Easton, F., Henry, M. & Uhrmacher, P.B. (1996). “Waldorf education in an inner-city public school.” *Urban Review*, 28(2), 119-140. Oberman, I. (2007). *Learning from Rudolf Steiner: The relevance of Waldorf education for urban public school reform*. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED498362). Larrison, A.L., Daly, A.J., & VanVooren, C. (2012). “Twenty years and counting: A look at Waldorf in the public sector using online sources.” *Current Issues in Education*, 15(3). SCOPE Study.

their peers at other public schools in English Language Arts and at least somewhat better than their peers in math.²⁰

Findings from Stanford's Center for Opportunity Policy in Education (SCOPE)'s longitudinal research at a public Waldorf school in Sacramento, California, Alice Birney (a non-charter public school), suggest that bringing methods guided by the core principles of public Waldorf education to disadvantaged communities brings positive transformational change in educational performance.²¹ While studies suggest that the majority of students at Waldorf-inspired public schools perform as well or better than their peers on standardized tests, data from Alice Birney shows even greater gains for low income African American and Latino students.²² African American, Latino, and socio-economically disadvantaged students' scores on state standardized tests in English Language Arts increased by eight percentile ranks over a five-year period with a smaller, but positive, effect size in math.²³ The SCOPE Study's findings suggest that charter schools following similar education programs have the potential to find significant success in supporting all students in realizing their full potential.

In addition to standardized test data, students at public Waldorf-inspired schools have lower transiency and suspension rates, positive student achievement outcomes, and graduate from high school at high rates.²⁴ In particular, African American and Latino students at the Alice Birney public Waldorf-inspired school in Sacramento were shown to have a suspension rate ten times lower than similar students in the district.²⁵

All of this data suggests that designing an educational program inspired by the Waldorf method and focused on whole child development, combined with an experienced leadership team, will help to close the achievement gap by creating an environment that allows students from all socio-economic and racial/ethnic backgrounds to realize their full potential, including the subgroups we will be targeting in the Highland Park neighborhood. Additionally, our founding team will bring a wealth of educational expertise, on-the-ground knowledge and community roots that will ensure the growth of a thriving school community.

In the 1992 Charter Schools Act, it was the intent of the California legislature to "provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure,"²⁶ as a method to accomplish all of the following:

1. Improve pupil learning.
 - a. At El Rio, we will use arts-integrated, hands-on project-based learning, aligned to Common Core State Standards, to improve academic outcomes for all students.
2. Increase learning opportunities for all pupils, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for pupils who are identified as academically low achieving.
 - a. We will offer a supportive learning environment that features multiple pathways to learning, small class sizes, teacher looping and differentiated instruction specifically tailored to students at all levels of achievement.
3. Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.

²⁰ Larrison, A.L., Daly, A.J., & VanVooren, C. (2012). "Twenty years and counting: A look at Waldorf in the public sector using online sources." *Current Issues in Education*, 15(3). SCOPE Study.

²¹ SCOPE Study.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ SCOPE Study.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ California Charter Schools Act, enacted in 1992. <http://www.philender.com/sb1448.html>

- a. We will support teachers to innovate Waldorf-methods, which include experiential learning, project-based, multi-disciplinary core subject instruction, and the use of outdoor and nontraditional learning environments.
4. Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.
 - a. We will provide teachers with the training and support to have autonomy in creating differentiated instruction that is responsive to their own classes of students.
5. Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public-school system.
 - a. We will offer students and families arts-integrated, Waldorf-methods instruction that is focused on the whole child, with opportunities for parent education and involvement so that they can experience and support the innovative education their children are receiving.
6. Hold the schools established under this part accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes and provide the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.
 - a. We will have clearly defined student achievement outcomes as set forth in our LCFF goals and ensure staff, Co-Directors and Board are aligned in assessing measurable pupil outcomes on a weekly, monthly and annual basis.

FOUNDING TEAM

Our founding team brings a wealth of educational expertise, on-the-ground knowledge and community roots that will ensure the growth of a thriving school community. We are a diverse group of parents, educators, and community members who have developed a shared vision for El Rio through years of hard work, research, and deliberation. Our team's biggest strength is the depth and breadth of our experience in education and includes several career educators who have taught all over the country in both the public and private sectors. Our team has a wealth of expertise in Waldorf methodology as current Waldorf teachers, parents, and alumni, as well as experience in California public schools (traditional and charter). We have two founding team members of Ocean Charter School on our board, as well as another educational innovator who launched and runs a successful Waldorf-methods mixed-age preschool in Los Angeles that is in many ways another model for the school we want to open.

Our team also includes artist-entrepreneurs who bring a combination of small-business acumen, creative vision and entrepreneurial zeal. We also have a number of Highland Park residents, who bring a lived experience that creates very real stakes: those of us who live in this community have children whom we want to send to public school locally, but are eager to have a quality educational option that incorporates many of our values with emphasis on the arts, whole-child development, and outdoor education. As business owners and community activists, we have on-the-ground knowledge and connections to other local nonprofits, business owners, and city leaders.

TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

Katie Sobczak Chau (Co-Founder, Educational Director) is a certified teacher-leader, mother, and now, a school innovator. Originally from Michigan, she obtained her B.A. in English from UCLA, where she worked as an intern at Corinne A. Seeds University Elementary School (now known as the UCLA Lab School) in a mixed-age 1st and 2nd grade Primary classroom. She taught at a Catholic school before heading off to Paraguay as a Peace Corps volunteer to train elementary school teachers in bilingual education and innovative teaching methods. Upon her return to Los Angeles, she worked with high school English Learners as a 9th grade English teacher in LAUSD while obtaining a master's degree, BCLAD, and Clear Multiple/Single Subject teaching credentials from Loyola Marymount University. After finding her true passion as a Waldorf teacher and founding

teacher at Ocean Charter School, she obtained her Waldorf teacher training certificate and a master's degree in Waldorf Education from Touro University. As part of her passion for languages, she studied bilingual education methodology and programs as a Fulbright Teacher Exchange participant in a summer program in Uruguay. While at Ocean Charter School, she organized teachers there to form a union, and served as Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer, as well as a lead negotiator on the bargaining team in contract negotiations. She served on the Hiring Committee, participating in prospective teacher interviews and observing and providing feedback on prospective teacher demonstration lessons. Additionally, she supervised teachers as a Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Provider, offering feedback on lessons, lesson planning, and focused support as well as mentor leadership to assist teachers in fulfilling their requirements for Clear credentials. She graduated her first cohort of academically well-prepared students after five years with them in grades 4-8, then looped back and taught a second cohort in grades 1-2. She subsequently taught in a mixed-age kindergarten in Michigan at the Detroit Waldorf School and back in Los Angeles at Highland Hall Waldorf School, leading a cohort of students through grades 6-8, then took time off to start a family. In 2018, she was chosen for the highly selective Reframe Fellowship, an 18-month school launch program focused on community co-design, leadership development, and innovative school model design, supported by Reframe Labs, a nonprofit talent development organization that supports exceptional leaders of color and/or women to launch innovative new charter schools in LA County. Currently working as an Educational Facilitator for iLead Exploration in supporting homeschooling families as she prepares to launch El Rio, she is eager to propel her educational vision of opening a Waldorf methods charter school, updated for the 21st century and a truly diverse, urban environment in Northeast Los Angeles.

Rebecca Fishman (Co-Founder, Operations Director) is an entrepreneur, small business owner and artist. She attended Highland Waldorf School in the San Fernando Valley, followed by Brown University, where she graduated *cum laude* with a degree in Literature. She has worked as an arts educator in diverse settings, from prisons to after school programs, and was the Program director of Side by Side, a New York-based youth leadership program that brought Waldorf-inspired arts education and summer programs to several hundred socioeconomically disadvantaged children in Harlem. Her duties there included curriculum design, grant writing, outreach, hiring staff, and program implementation. After piloting the Side by Side program in Los Angeles, she then pivoted to the film industry, where she worked as a commercial production manager, responsible for hiring and managing crews of 50-100 people and bringing multi-million-dollar productions in under budget. She went on to produce and co-direct the micro-budget feature film "The Big Ask," which premiered at the Seattle Film Festival and was distributed by Tribeca Films. After starting a family and seeking a career friendlier to parenting, she built a successful luxury wedding photography and photobooth business and was recently named one of the top photographers in the country by Brides Magazine. A native Angeleno and mother of two young children, she is passionate about equity and inclusion in education and excited to bring Waldorf methods to her own neighborhood of Highland Park.

Jessica Fitzgerald-Ruvalcaba (Founding Specialty Teacher) is an artist, teacher and mother of two boys under the age of three. She graduated as a double major in Studio Art and Theatre from the University of California, Riverside, and worked in the arts and television for many years before transitioning into education. A first-generation American with roots in Mexico, she is bilingual in Spanish and English and taught at the Ak Lu'um Waldorf School in Playa del Carmen before moving back to LA to help start El Rio. As a Waldorf specialty teacher she has found a path in which she can express herself creatively while also helping to inspire and educate children and parents.

Kit Olbris (Founding Teacher) is a California Clear Multiple Subject credentialed teacher of nearly 30 years, with experience mentoring and teaching in Waldorf public charter schools and private Waldorf schools, in California, New York and Hawaii. She is knowledgeable regarding presenting an arts-based curriculum using the public school common core standards, as demonstrated in her 7

year tenure at Ocean Charter School in Los Angeles CA. At Ocean, she looped with the same cohort of students from 3rd-8th grade, developing and implementing all standards-aligned lesson plans and rubrics, individualizing instruction for EL and SpEd learners, and collaborating with special subject teachers to ensure curriculum alignment across subjects,

Kerry Zipper (Resource Specialist Consultant) has both a Master's of Science and Bachelors of Science in Special Education with specific focus on psychology and behavior. She brings over 15 years of experience as an educator with passion for supporting children and families with diverse learning needs. She has been a classroom teacher, a special education teacher, a special needs consultant, founded a Waldorf-inspired home school cooperative, and has been trained as a Doula and childbirth and parenting educator. Kerry has held multiple certifications and credentials in several different states including California, Massachusetts, and New York. She has attended several recent workshops focused on integrative learning and supporting diverse needs such as: *"Early Childhood Workshop: Making Sense of my Body, Space, Time, and Other People"*, *"Sensory Solutions"*, *"Deepening Observations Skills and Activities for Whole Classes"*, and *"Simplicity Parenting for Care Professionals."* Kerry's three school-aged children currently attend Ocean Charter School.

Carrie Ashby (Founding Teacher) graduated from Highland Hall Waldorf School and then received her B.A. from Sarah Lawrence College. She worked as a Waldorf kindergarten teacher for three years and has been a Waldorf class teacher for over 20 years. As a class teacher, she has looped with the same cohort of students from grades 1-8 once and has taken classes through the middle school years several times; she is currently the 1st grade class teacher at the Pasadena Waldorf School. In her spare time, she is an active community volunteer, teaching a once-a-week watercolor painting class for children at Para Los Niños during the summer months for three years. She was also the program director of Camp Tamarack, a Waldorf-inspired sleepaway camp in the Sierra Nevadas, for 10 years, and coordinated week-long backpacking trips for students for ten years. After teaching at independent schools for the last 20 years, she is in the process of enrolling with the CalStateTEACH program in order to obtain her multiple subject credential prior to El Rio's opening, and is excited to bring Waldorf methods to public education.

Krystal Banzon (Board Secretary) attended Smith College, where she received a B.A. in Women's Studies, and completed her Masters in New Media at NYU Tisch School of the Arts. After studying theatre in the Philippines as a Fulbright Scholar, she returned to New York, where she worked as a theatre director for several multicultural theatre companies. She then transitioned to Corporate Diversity at NBC, before moving back to the creative side as the manager of Diversity Programming at the network, where she managed pipeline programs to increase representation of women and people of color both in front of and behind the camera. After being selected for the 2018 CBS Writers' Mentoring Program, she transitioned to TV writing and was last staffed on Amy Poehler's NBC sitcom I FEEL BAD. She is a native Angeleno, lives in Northeast LA and is the mother of three young children.

Cornel Bonca, PhD (Board Member) is a tenured Professor of English at California State University, Fullerton, where he has taught for the past 28 years. CSUF graduates more future teachers at all levels, including elementary, middle and high school, than any other college in Southern California, and Cornel has worked closely with colleagues to develop a writing and literature curriculum that future teachers can use in their own classrooms; for example, using texts that are appropriate for junior or high school teaching, or demonstrating how various writing issues can be addressed in the classroom. He is also a contributing writer at the *Los Angeles Review of Books* and the author of *Paul Simon: An American Tune*, published by Rowan & Littlefield in 2014. For 11 years he sat on the board of the Cornerstone Homeowners Association, where he served as Treasurer. Early in his career he worked for the Internal Revenue Service, where he monitored compliance for thousands of businesses and individuals in the Los Angeles area. A lifelong

Angeleno and parent of young children, he is committed to diversity and equity in education and to bringing Waldorf education to a broader demographic.

Angeline Chen, Esq. (Board Member) is Senior Counsel at the Law Offices of Carl Shusterman and focuses her practice on immigration law. She is the co-founder of Rise to Reunite, a non-profit advocacy group for immigrant families who are being separated and detained at the border. She is also President of the Board of Directors of the YWCA Foothill-Pasadena Chapter, a member of Phi Beta Kappa, the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA), and the Los Angeles County Bar Association (LACBA). From 2004 to the end of 2007, Ms. Chen served as a Board Member and National Representative to the Los Angeles Chapter for the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF). Ms. Chen received her J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania Law School and received a Certificate of Study from the School of Business and Public Policy at Wharton. She graduated *cum laude* from University of California, Irvine, where she earned her B.A. in Sociology, with a minor in Philosophy and Criminology, Law and Society. She speaks English, Spanish and conversational Mandarin, and lives in Pasadena with her husband and 4-year-old son.

Elizabeth Gallardo (Board Member) is an urban planner for the City of Los Angeles and adjunct Professor of Urban Planning at Cal Poly Pomona. A native Angeleno and resident of Highland Park, her planning practice has a special focus in community planning and outreach, land use, active transportation and community development. Prior to her work at the City of Los Angeles, she worked as the LA Department of Transportation's Bicycle Coordinator, creating and implementing the Bicycle Friendly Business program. She holds her Master's in Urban Planning from Cal Poly Pomona and a BA from Oberlin College.

Tamar Kern (Board Member) has been a teacher at Ocean Charter School for the last 15 years. She was also the lead petitioner for OCS, writing both the original petition as well as start-up and implementation grants and shepherding the process through inception to completion. She received her B.A. in Psychology and Art History from UC Santa Cruz, and her Master's in Education from Elmira College in New York with an emphasis in reading instruction. She has served on the Board of the Alliance for Waldorf Education and was the elected teacher representative on the Board for 10 years at Ocean Charter School.

Kristy Mack-Fett (Board Member) is the Director of Ocean Charter School, currently the only Waldorf-methods charter school in Los Angeles. In leading OCS for the past 15 years, she has shepherded the school from its earliest days through three charter renewals and a major fundraising drive to construct a brand-new campus opening in Fall of 2019. Prior to OCS, she worked as an educational consultant for a local charter school, Los Angeles Academy of Arts and Enterprise, in charge of teacher hiring, evaluation, and curriculum development. After completing LAUSD's District Intern Program, she became an instructor there, training teachers who were completing their multiple subject credential. She has also worked as a middle school teacher, an English Department Chair at Millikan Middle School in Sherman Oaks, and as the director of Santa Monica College's ESS/ESL Tutoring Program. She holds a Master of Educational Leadership from UCLA and is currently completing the Doctorate program in Education there.

Kikanza Ramsey-Ray (Board Member) is a Los Angeles-based educator and community organizer. She is the founder, director, and lead teacher of Village Playgarden, a Waldorf-inspired early childhood program and organic/biodynamic farm based in Altadena. She has been an organizer in the social justice movement for 25 years working on issues of immigrants' rights, environmental justice, equality in education, and civil rights. She was the lead organizer of the Bus Riders Union and helped to shepherd a historic civil rights consent decree that protected mass transportation for working-class communities and communities of color in Los Angeles County. Kikanza graduated *magna cum laude* from Middlebury College, majoring in Spanish, Political



Science and Dance and spends her time today caring for the children, animals and land of Village Playgarden in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains.

Caroline Sawyer (Board Treasurer) is a Senior Manager at Kaiser Permanente, where she is responsible for the capital strategy for the Kaiser Downey Medical Center. In this role, she works with Medical Center leadership to ensure access to care for Kaiser members by evaluating and planning multi-million-dollar capital projects, including large scale renovations, land purchases, and new medical buildings. In the past, Caroline has worked in various roles in finance, procurement, project management, and consulting for Kaiser Permanente, Johnson & Johnson, and Hallmark Cards, where she gained experience working with large teams to build financial plans and budgets, analyzing and re-forecasting based on performance, and supporting team decision-making through financial analysis. Caroline holds an MBA from the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University, and lives in Highland Park with her husband, 3-year-old daughter, and 10-month-old son.

Emily Viglietta, Esq. (Board Chair) is an attorney at Huang Ybarra Gelberg & May LLP. She focuses her practice on commercial litigation and advising companies in entertainment and regulatory matters. She has represented clients in federal and state court, arbitrations, and administrative proceedings before government agencies. Before joining HYGM, Emily was a Senior Litigation Counsel at Warner Bros. Entertainment and Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP. She has handled a wide array of complex civil litigation, gaining particular expertise in the area of trade secrets. She also represented organizations operating in regulated industries in administrative proceedings. Early in her legal career, she clerked for the Honorable Brian M. Cogan, in the Eastern District of New York, and interned for the Honorable Shira A. Scheindlin in the Southern District of New York. She also spent several years affiliated with the Brooklyn Family Defense Project, a public defense organization that represents indigent parents in Brooklyn Family Court proceedings. She worked for the Brooklyn Family Defense Project as a student intern, an Associate Advisory Board member, and a *pro bono* attorney while in private practice. She received her J.D. from Fordham University School of Law, where she served on the *Fordham Law Review* and graduated *magna cum laude*. She completed her undergraduate studies at S.U.N.Y. Geneseo, where she received a B.A. in Psychology and graduated *magna cum laude*. She is the mother of two young sons and lives in Northeast Los Angeles.

Antoinette Walker (Board Member) is a labor and community organizer currently working as the Internal Campaign Coordinator for SEIU Local 721. In this capacity she trains and manages all staff, strategizes campaign development and acts as chief negotiator on contracts and disputes. A native Angeleno, she has worked for several local unions as well as nonprofits and community organizations as an organizer and political director. She received her BA in Political Science from Loyola Marymount University.

In addition to our founding team and community partners, we have cultivated a vibrant community of parents who are eager to send their children to our school and who have lent their talents to El Rio from the beginning, donating their time and expertise to everything from gathering signatures, designing our logo and branding, hosting meetings and events, collecting research and data, and giving valuable feedback on what they want in a school for their children. Although too numerous to name here, their contributions have been crucial to the development of our mission, vision and curriculum.

Student Population to be Served

El Rio's target school population will be comprised of students from TK-8 from Highland Park and surrounding neighborhoods. As illustrated above, approximately 85% of students in the community are economically disadvantaged, with 23% English Learners, 3% Foster/Homeless Youth and 13% students with disabilities; 91% are Latinx/Hispanic. We expect to draw a racially and socioeconomically diverse group students from the community who are seeking an alternative to the traditional educational experience and current STEAM/tech-themed magnets that are offered. El Rio is being designed to meet all students' needs through an innovative, arts-integrated, standards-based curriculum that addresses the whole child, allowing multiple pathways to learning and ensuring all students achieve success. Additionally, since we anticipate a high population of Latinx students we have adapted Waldorf curricular components to be culturally responsive, ensuring our students will maintain their cultural heritages, language and customs through our World Language program, festival life, and parent support such as translation services, bilingual parent education offerings, parent resources such as computer literacy support, and childcare for all parent meetings. Thus, El Rio will serve students whose families are seeking an alternative educational experience where the focus is on cultivating children's inherent capacities for creativity, empathy, critical and ethical thinking, analysis, and problem-solving in developmentally appropriate ways.

Five-Year Enrollment Roll-out Plan

Enrollment Roll-Out Plan					
Grade	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
K (incl. TK)	60	60	60	60	60
1	24	48	48	48	48
2	24	24	48	48	48
3	24	24	24	48	48
4		24	24	24	48
5			24	24	24
6				24	24
7					24
8					
Total	132	180	228	276	324

Goals and Philosophy

Mission

El Rio Community School will be located in the richly diverse, urban neighborhood of Highland Park, and will seek to transform public education using century-old Waldorf methods updated for 21st century learners. Based on the principles of creativity, self-reliance, and social responsibility, our

standards-aligned curriculum will meet students at each stage of their development and prepare them to face life as bold leaders who will shape their world with courage, empathy, curiosity and joy.

Vision

El Rio Community School seeks to create a diverse and inclusive community of students, parents and educators who love learning and are excited every day to come to school. We are committed to innovating Waldorf methods to further academic excellence, using experiential learning and an arts-infused curriculum to foster the growth of imagination, intellectual curiosity and a sense of wonder about the world as students master state standards. We will strive to instill in our students a sense of reverence and responsibility for all life on earth and a deep understanding of our interconnectedness as global citizens. We are focused on graduating lifelong learners and innovative, compassionate citizens who lead their lives and communities with purpose and integrity.

Definition of an “Educated” Person in the 21st Century

Education is more than the acquisition of information, rigid academic curricula, and high stakes testing. In fact, the world is changing so rapidly that no one can really predict what information or skills our children will need to know in the future.²⁷ However, it is clear that intellectual flexibility, creative thinking, independent judgment, moral discernment, refined written and oral communication skills, and the ability to collaborate effectively will be essential to success in today’s ever-changing, global community.²⁸ An educated person in the 21st century will be someone who is confident, self-motivated, competent, and responsible.

El Rio’s model will be grounded in the acclaimed P21 Skills Framework that allows students to be better prepared for success in today’s collaborative and innovative-focused workforce. The P21 Framework covers multiple subjects and potential strategies to train teachers and influence student outcomes.²⁹ We believe the skills identified below are critical to long-term student success and El Rio’s model is designed to promote student acquisition of these skills:

Learning/Innovation Skills	Information/Tech/Media Skills	Life/Career Skills
Creativity and Innovation	Information literacy	Flexibility and Adaptability
Critical Thinking/Problem Solving	Media Literacy	Initiative and Self-Direction
Communication	ICT Literacy	Social & Cross-cultural skills
Collaboration		Productivity & Accountability
		Leadership & Responsibility

Notably, the chart above situates media and tech literacy within a larger, more complex skill set of “information” skills. El Rio will provide a holistic foundation in digital literacy, combining information literacy with media literacy and technology. This approach will enable our students to embrace the

²⁷ Satell. G. These are the Skills that Your Kids Will Need for the Future. Inc. Accessed from <https://www.inc.com/greg-satell/here-are-skills-that-your-kids-will-need-for-future-hint-its-not-coding.html>.

²⁸ Waldorf Education. Waldorf Education in Our Schools. Accessed from <https://www.waldorfeducation.org/waldorf-education/in-our-schools>.

²⁹ Remake Learning. Demystifying Learning Frameworks: The P21 Framework. Accessed from <https://remakelearning.org/blog/2016/04/29/demystifying-learning-frameworks-the-p21-framework/>.

opportunities ahead in their academic and professional careers by giving them the tools they need not only to navigate the digital world, but also to exercise ethical thinking to make smart choices in the information age and to help shape new possibilities and technologies that will assist humanity in the future.

Although “hard” skills such as technology proficiency are critical, they stand alongside many other soft skills that are crucial pillars of Waldorf education: imagination, creativity, focus and attention, character and empathy, powers of observation and analysis, and divergent thinking.³⁰ Perhaps that is why so many leaders of the tech world are rejecting tech-heavy schooling for their own children, choosing instead to send them to Waldorf school.³¹ Of course, children need to be computer literate, but they must use technology with a critical eye, understanding how and why they were created. Our curriculum will situate technology within the history of innovation and give students hands-on coding experience and opportunities to design, create and build their own technology. Additionally, our Cyber Civics program will develop their moral and critical thinking as they become digitally literate, so that they become thoughtful consumers of technology and discerning digital citizens.

That sense of empathy must extend beyond relationships with peers and the local and global communities to also include a responsibility for and stewardship of the natural world. An “ecological intelligence”, as described by psychologist Daniel Goleman,³² encompasses a reverence and wonder for nature, a scientific understanding of its interconnected systems, and an understanding of the tools and practices of sustainability on a personal, local and global level. Luckily, this intelligence is easily fostered. A practice as simple as designing and planting a garden, then harvesting and preparing food from it offers myriad lessons in the link between community and ecology, living systems and interconnectedness of nature, and problem-solving real-world issues such as resource and waste management. Our program will focus on helping students:

- Understand living systems and interconnectedness of nature
- Understand the link between community and ecology
- Foster a sense of reverence and wonder for the natural world and one’s place within it
- Understand the scientific processes that occur in the natural world
- Work to decrease the human footprint through conservation and sustainability
- Work to design and implement sustainable practices on a personal and local level
- Understand global interdependence and the need to be a global citizen

El Rio’s Living Classroom, in which part of every Friday will be spent outdoors, barring severely inclement weather, along with regular hikes, yearly camping trips, a service-learning curriculum, gardening program and school-wide commitment to low/no waste will ensure students become conscientious stewards of their school, their city, and their world.

In addition to developing ecological intelligence, El Rio’s program will also cultivate strong social intelligence in students focused on building the following:

- Respect for individual and cultural differences
- Ability to work cooperatively
- Sense of social justice
- Emotional intelligence and understanding of individual and group dynamics
- Ethical decision-making skills

³⁰ Waldorf Education. Waldorf Education in Our Schools. Accessed from <https://www.waldorfeducation.org/waldorf-education/in-our-schools>.

³¹ Richtel, Matt “A Silicon Valley School That Doesn’t Compute” New York Times, Oct 11, 2011.

³² Daniel Goleman. (2009). Accessed from <http://www.danielgoleman.info/ecological-intelligence-definition/>.

- Ability to “de-center” themselves and listen to others empathically
- Values and respects the roles of others in relation to themselves
- Resilience: the ability to persevere and problem solve through setbacks

El Rio’s focus on learning and innovation, digital literacy, and life skills at the developmentally appropriate time will serve to prepare students to take on the challenges of rigorous college-preparatory high schools, college and professional careers as confident, prepared, and self-motivated life-long learners.

How Learning Best Occurs

All children deserve to have the opportunity to learn in a way that is joyful, that respects the unique physical, intellectual and emotional capacities of each child, and that meets them where they are at each developmental stage. Research has consistently shown that learning best occurs when what is presented is practical, relevant, and engaging, and done within the context of a supportive learning community.³³

At El Rio, we believe learning best occurs when the pedagogy is focused on four core, research-based instructional practices: whole child development; arts-integrated, project-based learning; community building; and outdoor education. These four core components of the El Rio model will follow the tenets of Waldorf education that have existed and been put into practice in classrooms around the world for the past century.

Whole Child Development

Waldorf methods are supported by a variety of educational theories, including the importance of **experiential learning**³⁴ espoused by constructivist thinkers, and the fact that the entire school day is designed to meet the conditions of Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development. The model creates a collaborative environment full of teacher and peer scaffolding and opportunities for inbreath and outbreath, alternating hands-on learning and physical activity with periods of concentrated focus.³⁵ Data suggests that especially in urban settings, a Waldorf-inspired education with a holistic approach to student development offers a promising alternative to meeting the needs of a diverse student population.³⁶ The use of teacher looping, summarization, and interdisciplinary teaching are all positively correlated with high performance on a variety of metrics, including standardized tests.³⁷ From multicultural myths and legends in first grade to biographies of artists and scientists in seventh grade, much of El Rio’s curriculum will be shared with students via storytelling. **Storytelling** engages the emotions and activates areas in the brain that focus attention. Deep engagement with stories

³³ Bryk, A.S., P.B., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S. & Easton, J.Q. (2009). Organizing schools for improvement: Lessons from Chicago. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

³⁴ Kolb, David. (2014). *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Saddle Creek, NJ: Pearson.

³⁵ Doolittle, P. E. (1997). Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development as a theoretical foundation for cooperative learning. *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching*, 8(1), 83-103.

³⁶ Friedlaender, D., Beckham, K., Zheng, X., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2015). Growing a Waldorf-Inspired Approach in a Public School District. Stanford, CA: Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education (hereinafter “SCOPE Study”).

³⁷ Marzano, Robert J. *What works in schools: Translating research into action*. ASCD, 2003.

has been shown to improve literacy skills and memory³⁸ and promote critical³⁹ and creative thinking.⁴⁰ Storytelling nurtures the capacity for innovation and creativity by fostering the imagination.⁴¹ Cognitive scientist Mark Turner says that stories are the fundamental instruments of thought.⁴² Stories encapsulate knowledge, information, context, and emotion in one package, making them important cognitive events.⁴³ Stories are one of the basic tools of understanding invented by the human mind. They convey complex ideas in meaningful and memorable ways.

Stories promote emotional growth because they allow teachers to implicitly address difficult emotions like anger, fear, and isolation and enable students to face and accept their own circumstances by coming to terms with their own needs. Through the use of tailored stories teacher can also address conflicts in the classroom.

Storytelling also promotes a sense of community between teachers and students and builds empathy and strong ethics, which is important for meaningful collaboration and the development of a sense of respect for teachers and other students.⁴⁴ The Waldorf pedagogy uses stories to give students strong moral pictures, which develops a sense of right and wrong in the individual student and in the community of the class. In a 2001 study of moral reasoning, Waldorf-educated students scored significantly higher on a test of moral reasoning than students in both traditional high schools and religiously affiliated high schools.⁴⁵ That study also found Waldorf students were more likely than other students to voice opinions based on sound reasoning principles.⁴⁶

Arts-Integrated, Project-Based Learning

At El Rio, arts will be integrated on a daily basis in every core content area through interdisciplinary, thematic instruction that will be aligned to the California Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Students will sing, make music, recite poetry, and dance every day. Those in 1st-8th grade will also create visual art each day in the form of painting, drawing, modeling, or woodworking. Students will also write and perform an annual play. All of these visual and performing arts activities will be aligned with the CCSS and *Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve* and the Frameworks for Instructional Design. Involvement with the arts has been shown to offer unparalleled opportunities for learning. According to the study, "What the Arts Change about the Learning Experience," students who study the arts

³⁸ Susan C. Cantrell et al. (2014). "The Impact of Supplemental Instruction on Low-Achieving Adolescents' Reading Engagement," *Journal of Educational Research* 107, no. 1 (2014): 36–58. Agosto, Denise (2013). "Why Storytelling Matters: Unveiling the Literacy Benefits of Storytelling." *Storytelling Self Society An Interdisciplinary Journal of Storytelling Studies* 9(1):53-76. Fiona Collins (1999). "The Use of Traditional Storytelling in Education to the Learning of Literacy Skills." *Early Child Development and Care*.152:1, 77-108.

³⁹ Cantrell et al. (1994) "The Impact of Supplemental Instruction on Low-Achieving Adolescents' Reading Engagement." AND Nancy J. Ellsworth, "Literacy and Critical Thinking," in *Literacy: A Redefinition*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 91–108. Agosto, Denise (2013). "Why Storytelling Matters: Unveiling the Literacy Benefits of Storytelling." *Storytelling Self Society An Interdisciplinary Journal of Storytelling Studies* 9(1):53-76.

⁴⁰ Louise Phillips (2000). "Storytelling: The Seeds of Children's Creativity," *Australian Journal of Early Childhood* 25, no. 3: 1–5.

⁴¹ Zak, P. (2013). "How Stories Change the Brain." https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_stories_change_brain

⁴² Turner, Mark. (1996). *The Literary Mind: The Origins of Thought and Language*.

⁴³ Norman, Don (1994). *Things That Make Us Smart: Defending Human Attributes in the Age of the Machine*.

⁴⁴ Rebecca Hibbin (2016). "The psychosocial benefits of oral storytelling in school: developing identity and empathy through narrative." *Pastoral Care in Education*, 34:4, 218-231. Barraza JA, Alexander V, Beavin LE, ET Terris ET, Zak PJ. (2015). "The Heart of the Story: Peripheral Physiology During Narrative Exposure Predicts Charitable Giving." *Biological Psychology*. 105:138-43. In his well-known books on the development of a moral and spiritual intelligence in children, child psychologist Robert Coles stresses an immersion in moral stories.

⁴⁵ Hether, Christine Anne, (2001). *The Moral Reasoning of High School Seniors from Diverse Educational Settings*, Ph.D. dissertation, Saybrook Graduate School and Research Center.

⁴⁶ Ibid

consistently perform better in academic pursuits.⁴⁷ Recent neuroscience research suggests an explanation for this correlation: making music and art helps build the cortical circuits that are critical for success in reading, writing, and mathematics.⁴⁸

Arts integration has been shown to have positive effects on student achievement and engagement, as well as on developing other important skills:

- Engagement with the visual arts has been shown to promote reading readiness, sophisticated reading skills, and the interpretation of text;⁴⁹ extend focus;⁵⁰ promote hypothesizing and evidential reasoning;⁵¹ and improve visual analysis.⁵²
- Dance encourages creative thinking, originality, and flexibility of thinking in addition to improving self-confidence, persistence, social tolerance, and expressive skills.⁵³
- Music enhances achievement and proficiency in math as well as reading⁵⁴ and has been shown to boost SAT verbal scores for students who learn English as a second language.⁵⁵ Researchers have found that students who study music are more cooperative with one another.⁵⁶ Music training has also been shown to facilitate the development of fine motor skills and emotional and behavioral maturation.

Arts integration does much more than provide students with a creative outlet. It helps students learn from mistakes, make better critical judgments, be more creative, and improve their ability to focus, thus fostering the whole child development we seek to emphasize.⁵⁷ Data also suggests arts integration is correlated with raising graduation rates, higher attendance, fewer disciplinary infractions, and higher test scores.⁵⁸ Integrating the arts in education allows educators to reach groups not often reached in traditional learning environments. The arts connect students to themselves, each other, and the larger world outside the classroom, improving community cohesion.⁵⁹

⁴⁷ Fiske, Edward B. "Champions of change: The impact of the arts on learning." (1999).

⁴⁸ Hardiman, M., Magsamen, S., McKhann, G., & Eilber, J. (2009). *Neuroeducation: Learning, arts, and the brain*. New York: Dana Press.

⁴⁹ Deasy, R. (2002). *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development*. Arts Education Partnership. (2006). *Teaching Literacy through Art*. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² Deasy, R. (2002). *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development*. Arts Education Partnership. Hetland, Lois; Winner, Ellen; Veenema, Shirley; Sheridan, Kimberly M. (2007). *Studio Thinking: The Real Benefits of Arts Education*. Teachers College Press.

⁵³ Deasy, R. (2002). *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development*. Arts Education Partnership.

⁵⁴ Deasy, R. (2002). *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development*. Arts Education Partnership.

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Oppenheimer, Todd. (1999). "Schooling the Imagination." *Atlantic Monthly*.

⁵⁷ Hetland, Lois; Winner, Ellen; Veenema, Shirley; Sheridan, Kimberly M. (2007). *Studio Thinking: The Real Benefits of Arts Education*. Teachers College Press. Mariale Hardiman, Ed.D., Susan Magsamen, Guy McKhann, M.D., and Janet Eilber (2009). *Neuroeducation: Learning, Arts, and the Brain*. Johns Hopkins University School of Education.

⁵⁸ (1990). *The Role of the Fine and Performing Arts in High School Dropout Prevention*. Florida State University Center for Music Research. (2009). *Staying in School: Arts Education and New York City High School Graduation Rates*. The Center for Arts Education. (2010). *Arts Education Makes a Difference in Missouri Schools*. Missouri Alliance for Arts Education.

⁵⁹ Fiske, Edward B. "Champions of change: The impact of the arts on learning." (1999). McCarthy, Kevin F., Elizabeth Heneghan Ondaatje, Arthur Brooks, and Andras Szanto (2005). *A Portrait of the Visual Arts: Meeting the Challenges of a New Era*. RAND Corporation.

Importantly, arts integration can help create a more level playing field by closing achievement gaps between socioeconomic groups.⁶⁰ A 2012 report by the National Endowment for the Arts that focused on teenagers and young adults of low socioeconomic status (SES) showed that eighth graders of low SES who had high levels of engagement in the arts from kindergarten through elementary school had higher test scores in science and writing than their peers with lower levels of engagement in the arts.⁶¹ Low SES students with arts-rich experiences also had higher GPAs than peers who did not have arts-rich experiences (this was also true for students of high SES); they were five times more likely to graduate high school, more likely to aspire to college and to attend competitive colleges, and three times more likely to earn bachelor's degrees than students with less arts engagement.⁶²

Along with comprehensive visual and performing arts integration throughout the curriculum, project-based learning will be central to El Rio's curriculum and occur at every grade level. Students will engage all their senses in observing, experiencing, and engaging with the real-life, everyday world that surrounds them through project-based learning. Project-based learning encourages deeper student engagement, which has a positive effect on academic achievement as well as behavior.⁶³ Studies have shown that students engaged in project-based learning generate more problem-solving strategies;⁶⁴ show higher levels of achievement on curriculum-aligned tests,⁶⁵ standardized tests,⁶⁶ and tests of collaboration and metacognitive skills (such as explaining evidence).⁶⁷ These students also showed a deeper understanding of content⁶⁸ as well as improved reasoning and collaboration skills⁶⁹ and they reported that they felt more confident about being successful learners.⁷⁰ Studies show that the largest gains in moving from traditional learning methods to project-based methods are among economically disadvantaged students.⁷¹ In one study, a project-based curriculum

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Catterall, James, Susan A. Dumais, and Gillian Hampden-Thompson (2012). *The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies*. National Endowment for the Arts. Research Report #55.

⁶² Ibid

⁶³ Gordon, P.R., Rogers, A.M., Comfort, M., Gavula, N., & McGee, B.P. (2001). "A taste of problem-based learning increase achievement of urban minority middle-school students." *Educational Horizons*, 79(4), 171-175.

⁶⁴ Drake, K. N. & Long, D. (2009). "Rebecca's in the dark: A comparative study of problem-based learning and direct instruction/experiential learning in two fourth-grade classrooms." *Journal of Elementary Science Education*, 21(1), p 1-16.

⁶⁵ Lynch, S., Kuipers, J., Pyke, C., & Szesze, M. (2005). "Examining the effects of a highly rated science curriculum unit on diverse students: Results from a planning grant." *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 42(8): 912-946.

⁶⁶ Geier, R., Blumenfeld, P. C., Marx, R. W., Krajcik, J. S., Fishman, B., Soloway, E., & Clay-Chambers, J. (2008). "Standardized test outcomes for students engaged in inquiry-based science curricula in the context of urban reform." *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 45(8), 922-939. Chang, C. (2001). "Comparing the impacts of problem-based computer-assisted instruction and the direct-interactive teaching method on student science achievement." *Journal of Science Education and Technology*, 10(2):147-53.

⁶⁷ Kolodner, J. L., Camp, P. J., Crismond, D., Fasse, B., Gray, J., Holbrook, J., Puntambekar, S., & Ryan, M. (2003). "Problem-based learning meets case-based reasoning in the middle-school science classroom: Putting Learning by Design into practice." *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 12(4), 495- 547.

⁶⁸ Kolodner, J. L., Camp, P. J., Crismond, D., Fasse, B., Gray, J., Holbrook, J., Puntambekar, S., & Ryan, M. (2003). "Problem-based learning meets case-based reasoning in the middle-school science classroom: Putting Learning by Design into practice." *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 12(4), 495- 547. Gallagher, S. A., & Stepien, W. J. (1996). "Content acquisition in problem-based learning: Depth versus breadth in American studies." *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 19(3), 257-275.

⁶⁹ Wieseman, K. C., & Cadwell, D. (2005). "Local history and problem-based learning." *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, 18(1), 11-14.

⁷⁰ Liu, M., Hsieh, P., Cho, Y. J., & Schallert, D. L. (2006). "Middle school students' self-efficacy, attitudes, and achievement in a problem-based learning environment." *Journal of Interactive Learning Research*. 17(3). 225-242.

⁷¹ Kolodner, J. L., Camp, P. J., Crismond, D., Fasse, B., Gray, J., Holbrook, J., Puntambekar, S., & Ryan, M. (2003). "Problem-based learning meets case-based reasoning in the middle-school science classroom: Putting Learning by Design into practice." *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 12(4), 495- 547.

practically erased the achievement gap between second graders of high and low socio-economic backgrounds.⁷²

Community Building

At El Rio, community building -- among students with their peers, with all stakeholders in the school community (teachers, staff, parents, board members), and with the community surrounding the school and world at large -- will be another central focus of our curriculum and school activities. In addition to strategies such as storytelling, arts integration and project-based learning, all of which foster community building and student engagement in learning, we will use strategies such as teacher looping, study of world languages, Council, parent engagement and service-learning to foster community building. Research shows that Waldorf education is associated with greater creativity⁷³ and higher levels of critical thinking⁷⁴ as well as increased potential for engagement as citizens of the world.⁷⁵ Students attending Waldorf schools show more mature social and moral impulses.⁷⁶ They have better social skills⁷⁷ and are less likely to bully their peers.⁷⁸

Teacher looping, in which the same teacher stays with students over multiple years, offers the opportunity for both student and teacher to develop strong, meaningful relationships; for families to feel comfortable with the teacher and form partnerships; for efficiency in terms of assessment and planning; for understanding student needs, strengths, and areas for growth; the ability to truly **differentiate instruction** for all learners based on data; and for effective classroom management due to the strength of relationships built over time.⁷⁹ The Class Teacher provides leadership and acts as guardian of the class. This gives the class continuity over several years of development and builds a relationship between student and teacher that facilitates trust, understanding, and ethical reasoning as well as the learning process.⁸⁰ Research has shown that there are strong advantages for relationship-based learning models.⁸¹ According to Linda Darling-Hammond, a Stanford University education professor and current President of the State Board of Education, "Meaningful relationships and social and emotional learning are a crucial part of teaching the whole child."⁸² When there are situations in which the "looping" teacher/student relationship is not harmonious and

⁷² Halvorsen, A., Duke, N. K., Brugar, K. A., Block, M. K., Strachan, S. L., Berka, M. B., & Brown, J. M. (revised 2014). "Narrowing the achievement gap in second-grade social studies and content area literacy: The promise of a project-based approach." *Theory and Research in Social Education*, 40, 198-229.

⁷³ Ogletree, E. (1971). "A cross-cultural examination of the creative thinking ability of public and private school pupils in England, Scotland, and Germany." *Journal of Social Psychology*, 83(2), p 301-302.

⁷⁴ Gidley, J. (1998). "Prospective youth visions through imaginative education." *Futures*, 30, 395-408.

⁷⁵ Dahlin, B. (2010). "A state-independent education for citizenship? Comparing beliefs and values related to civic and moral issues among students in Swedish mainstream and Steiner Waldorf schools." *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, 31(2), 165-180. Oberman, I. (2008). "Waldorf education and its spread into the public sector: Research findings." *ENCOUNTER: Education for Meaning and Social Justice*, 21(2), 10-14.

⁷⁶ Armon, J. (1997). "The Waldorf curriculum as a framework for moral education: One dimension of a fourfold system." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Chicago, IL, March 24- 28). Dahlin, B. (2010). "A state-independent education for citizenship? Comparing beliefs and values related to civic and moral issues among students in Swedish mainstream and Steiner Waldorf schools." *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, 31(2), 165-180. Rivers, I., & Soutter, A. (1996). "Bullying and the Steiner school ethos." *School Psychology International*, 17, 359-77.

⁷⁷ Payne, K. J., River-Bento, B., & Skillings, A. (2002). "Initial report of the Waldorf ADHD Research project." *Research Bulletin*, 7(1) The Research Institute for Waldorf Education.

⁷⁸ Rivers, I., & Soutter, A. (1996). "Bullying and the Steiner school ethos." *School Psychology International*, 17, 359-77.

⁷⁹ (1997). *Looping: Supporting Student Relationships Through Long Term Relationships*. Northeast and Islands Regional and Educational Laboratory at Brown University.

⁸⁰ Bulau, R. J. (2007). *Looping and its impact on student connectedness* (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University).

⁸¹ Marzano, R. (1992). *A Different Kind of Classroom: Teaching with Dimensions of Learning*.

⁸² The Collaborative Classroom: An Interview with Linda Darling-Hammond, The Stanford University education professor says social and emotional learning is a crucial part of teaching the whole child. 2008.

learning outcomes are being affected for the student or class, the Educational Director will provide guidance and support for the Class Teacher to find alternate means of connecting with the student, the model and goal being that any long-term relationship requires work, negotiation and collaboration. Using an MTSS approach, the Educational Director will establish tiered strategies to provide the appropriate level of intervention needed and ensure the teacher is supported in resolving the situation. The teacher will also be supported by grade level and faculty colleagues in devising additional strategies and there will be regular check-ins to assess and monitor progress. If in the rare circumstance, irreconcilable differences are discovered at the Tier 3 level, then when possible, the opportunity to transfer to the other class at that grade level (when available) could be considered, with a final decision on placement made by the Educational Director.

Stemming from the indigenous practice of speaking and listening from the heart, all grades classes participate in the powerful social-emotional learning strategy and community building activity called **Council** that promotes an environment of trust, respect, and understanding both in the classroom and at school.⁸³ Many schools today, including throughout LAUSD, use Council as an effective conflict resolution and social-emotional development tool in the school day.

The **study of world languages** (Spanish and Mandarin) and cultures, allows for students to connect with their heritage languages, in many cases, and offers rich opportunities for cross-cultural connections, classroom partnerships, and cultural exchanges. The study of two world languages is in alignment with UNESCO's global education goals for multilingual education, which includes the study of three languages (the mother tongue, a national or regional language, and a world language) in school to promote cultural diversity and global understanding.⁸⁴

Parent engagement in their children's learning is another critical aspect of community building. When parents feel like stakeholders in the school community, learning is enhanced for their children. Toward that end, parents are considered the heart of the school, and are invited to participate in all aspects of their children's education with weekend and evening workshops in activities such as knitting that will help parents learn new skills alongside their children. Parents also will be invited (but never required) to volunteer with the school, helping plan frequent cultural and seasonable celebrations and festivals, and to bring and share activities, demonstrations, and stories from their culture and heritage with the school community. Parents also will be invited to help facilitate class-based service projects that will help build a spirit of togetherness and community, fostering cooperation, trust-building and problem-solving.⁸⁵ Parents will be informed in the Parent-Student Handbook and at orientations and meetings with El Rio's leaders that, as required by Education Code 47605(n), volunteering is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, the Charter School.

Outdoor Education

Outdoor education is a priority in Waldorf education, and especially in the extremely dense urban environment of Northeast Los Angeles, getting outside into nature locally is key to avoid what Richard Louv describes in terms of the harm to children caused by a marked decrease in exposure to nature in our society.⁸⁶ At El Rio it will be our intention to educate our students on the imperative nature of preserving our planet and arm them with tools that will ensure mankind's survival in a world increasingly crowded with environmental catastrophes. This "ecological intelligence" begins by

⁸³ Ways of Council. Council in Schools. Accessed from <http://waysofcouncil.net/council-in-schools/>.

⁸⁴ http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco-liaison-office-in-new-york/about-this-office/single-view/news/multilingual_education_key_for_sustainable_development/

⁸⁵ Wu, H. (2011). Social Impact of Volunteerism. Points of Light Institute. http://www.pointsoflight.org/sites/default/files/site-content/files/social_impact_of_volunteerism_pdf.pdf

⁸⁶ Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder.

planting the seeds of reverence and respect for the natural world; children learn to see themselves as a piece of a dynamic, living system that is impacted greatly by their actions.⁸⁷ As they become more aware of the “ecology of life,” they learn that thinking sustainably is more than just recycling or reducing consumption of fossil fuels but must begin to touch everything we do, both individually and societally.⁸⁸

Based on Goethe’s phenomenology of nature, a phenomenological approach to science is one that uses careful observation as its foundation and takes a qualitative approach to research and experimentation as a starting point. This 200-year-old concept is directly aligned with new Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), which emphasize hands-on engagement in inquiry and problem-solving. Students study the world around them through the lens of what they can actually observe and experience. Sensory impressions are the basis for all empirical knowledge. Every concept we form, in science or in any other field, starts from these sense impressions. In a phenomenological approach to science, students are given an opportunity to experience a phenomenon, and then to try and connect their experience to laws or relationships. Whereas in a traditional science setting, students are given the laws and relationships, then guided through a proof of why they hold true, in a phenomenological approach thinking becomes active and there is room to question deeply and make room for new insights. El Rio will align outdoor education experiences with these strategies to foster student engagement in science and other subjects.

The school itself will be a model of whole-system sustainability, with a zero/low-waste policy, gardens that supply food and compost green materials, renewable energy sources and greywater recycling. Students will play an active role in maintaining these systems and innovating new measures to lessen our impact. In addition, a robust outdoor education will nourish students’ relationship with the natural world as well as give them practical tools for navigating, preserving, and enjoying it.

Studies show that spending time in nature and reducing screen time has a myriad of benefits: it increases physical, emotional, and mental health;⁸⁹ supports children’s healthy intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, and physical development;⁹⁰ and supports creativity, problem solving, and cooperative play.⁹¹ Children who spend time in nature are better able to get along with others;⁹² they exhibit more self-discipline and self-control⁹³ and less stress.⁹⁴ In addition, children who spend time gardening and growing their own food have been shown to eat more fruits and vegetables,⁹⁵ demonstrate more knowledge of nutrition,⁹⁶ and are more likely to continue healthy eating habits

⁸⁷ Doolittle, P. E. (1997). Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development as a theoretical foundation for cooperative learning. *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching*, 8(1), 83-103.

⁸⁸ Ecimovic, T. (2006). The Information Theory of Nature and Our Common Enemy. SEM Institute for Climate Change. Access from: http://www.epf.um.si/fileadmin/user_upload/Knjiznica/The_Information_Theory_of_Nature.pdf.

⁸⁹ (2017). “Why Kids Need to Spend Time in Nature.” Childmind. <https://childmind.org/article/why-kids-need-to-spend-time-in-nature/>

⁹⁰ Kellert, S. (2005). *Building for Life: Designing and Understanding the Human-Nature Connection*. Washington, DC: Island press.

⁹¹ Dymont, JE and Bell, AC (2008). “Grounds for movement: green school grounds as sites for promoting physical activity.” *Health Educ Res.* 23(6):952-62. Epub 2007 Oct 22.

⁹² Burdette, HL and Whitaker, R (2005). “Resurrecting free play in young children: looking beyond fitness and fatness to attention, affiliation, and affect.” *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med.* 2005 Jan;159(1):46-50.

⁹³ Taylor, A., Kuo, F.E., and Sullivan, W.C. (2002). “Views of nature and self-discipline: Evidence from inner-city children.” *Journal of Environmental Psychology, Special Issue: Environment and Children*, 22, 49-63.

⁹⁴ Wells, N. and Evans, G. (2003). “Nearby Nature: A buffer of life stress among rural children.” *Environment and Behaviour.* 35(3), 311-33.

⁹⁵ Bell, A.C. & Dymont, J. (2008). “Grounds for health: the intersection of green school grounds and health-promoting schools.” *Environmental Education Research.* 14:1, 77-90.

⁹⁶ Waliczek, & Zajicek, (2006). “Effects of a Gardening Program on the Academic Progress of Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grade Math and Science Students.” *HortTechnology.* April-June 2006 vol. 16 no. 2 262-264).

throughout their lives.⁹⁷ Nature-based experiential education is also associated with higher motivation levels and significant gains in academic performance in social studies, science, language arts, and math.⁹⁸

Goals for Enabling Pupils to Become/Remain Self-Motivated, Competent, and Lifelong Learners

“Waldorf schools encourage self-motivated learning.” – “Free Thinkers: The Next Steve Jobs,” by Joshua Davis and Jason Kehe, WIRED, Nov. 2013.

We believe that ready access to deep education that is intentionally practiced by well-prepared and devoted teachers results in the goal of meaningful learning for all children. We believe this education that results in being a self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learner is a fundamental human right. Linda Darling-Hammond, who in March 2019 became the president of California’s State Board of Education, writes in her book, *The Right to Learn: A Blueprint for Creating Schools that Work*, “This book asks how we can reinvent the system of U.S. public education so that it ensures a right to learn for all of its students, who will enter a world in which a failure to learn is fast becoming an insurmountable defeat.” At El Rio, as students master state content standards, our over-arching goal is for students at El Rio to continuously develop their capacity for lifelong learning. El Rio’s goals for developing lifelong learners will be grounded in a fundamental respect for children and childhood. Recognizing that each child has an innate intelligence and creative capacity waiting to be cultivated, we will strive to enliven the learning environment and present multiple pathways for success in order for students to gain self-confidence, curiosity, and enthusiasm for learning. To ensure optimal learning, El Rio will prioritize the preservation of childhood. El Rio will foster a healthy, cooperative, and non-competitive environment distinguished by a love of learning. The preservation of childhood encourages self-motivation by supporting a student’s autonomy in a developmentally appropriate way.

In 2015, a Stanford University research team led by Dr. Darling-Hammond produced a report, “Growing a Waldorf-Inspired Approach in a Public School District.” The research question was, *can a public school working out of a holistic learning theory establish a strong foundation for the long-term success of its students?* The Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education (SCOPE) found the Waldorf theory of learning *in practice* produced “ongoing benefits of curiosity, love of learning, and commitment to improving the world.”⁹⁹

While our approach at El Rio will be child-centered, it will also be teacher-led, giving educators wide latitude to bring their own passion and love of learning to their students. We will use educational strategies in which both process and outcome are given equal weight; academic elements will be presented within an artistic, hands-on, creative and imaginative context. This framework lays the groundwork for students to become and remain self-motivated, competent, life-long learners. Our curriculum will be based on learning strategies that describe what, when, and how things are taught, all aligned with the cognitive, psychosocial, and kinesthetic phases of child development. El Rio will

⁹⁷ Morris, J. and Zidenberg-Cherr, S. (2002). “Garden-Enhanced Nutrition Curriculum Improves Fourth-Grade School Children’s Knowledge of Nutrition and Preference for Vegetables.” *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. 10, 91-93.

⁹⁸ Children in Nature Network article “Want Your Kids to Get Into Harvard? Tell ‘Em To Go Outside.” (2005). “Effects of Outdoor Education Programs for Children in California.” American Institutes for Research. <http://www.seer.org/pages/research/AIROutdoorSchool2005.pdf>

⁹⁹ Friedlaender, D., Beckham, K., Zheng, X., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2015). *Growing a Waldorf-Inspired Approach in a Public School District*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education, pp 6.

measure/assess that our students' capacity for learning has increased through a variety of benchmark assessments to ensure students on track to achieve the relevant learning outcomes.

The overarching goal of El Rio's holistic learning theory for enabling pupils to become and remain self-motivated, competent, and life-long learners is for students ***to learn to be somebody*** – to form a resilient identity and learn how to co-create with reality rather than being passive bystanders in their life and the world's future. This goal will be realized through El Rio's cadre of expert teachers who will collegially and continuously develop their practice together as an art, a craft and a science. We believe that teachers as lifelong learners stoke a desire for lifelong learning in their students.

The **holistic learning goals** for El Rio students are to *grow the abilities and dispositions of life-long learning so that our students will become healthy participants in their families and cities, and constructive doers in life and work.* More specifically:

- Our goal for El Rio students is that they never outgrow their childhood disposition for **curiosity, play, and wondering why**. By learning all core subjects through interactive, participatory, constructive and questioning approaches, students will acquire the disposition and ability to remain curious life-long learners.
- Our goal for El Rio students is to be able to draw on **creativity** and **resilience** in all of life's complexity. By learning all core subjects through art, poetry, music, myth and theater, students will acquire the disposition and ability to 'be comfortable with uncertainty', engage their imagination, and grow their capacity for innovation.
- Our goal for El Rio students is to develop **cognitive strength**. By learning about ecological processes, science and math through first-hand, in-real-life phenomenological experience with and in nature students will learn to apply systemic logic to their thought processes, behavioral decisions, and to their actions and creations in today's STEAM-oriented and globally-aware world.
- Our goal for El Rio students is to have a **sense of worth, belonging, and character**. Through a developmental curriculum that respects childhood's universal learning clock, learning is attuned to the learner's age and stage and is more easily further differentiated and personalized to the needs of each child. By "looping" with their teacher and class over successive years, students, with their families, become practiced in co-creating an inclusive, practical, and participatory social ecosystem. In a whole class participation culture, students will experience themselves as seen, heard, understood and unconditionally accepted and loved. Students will grow in their ability and disposition to see, hear, understand and unconditionally accept and love others in turn. By treating students ethically and being mindful, teachers will be able to realize the greatest possible differentiated and personalized achievement for every student every day.

El Rio will know these goals are being met through the teacher and school leader observations, stakeholder surveys, behavioral and school climate data and more to track the following measures:

- The students are actively engaged in learning, ask questions in class, persevere through challenges, and create expressive and original art and writing
- There are few discipline problems, students do not bully one another, and engage in quality, cooperative play during recess
- Students like to come to school
- Students respect the diversity of their peers and feel a sense of belonging.

Requirements of Education Code § 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii)

EL RIO COMMUNITY SCHOOL LCFF STATE PRIORITIES						
GOAL #1						
<p>El Rio will ensure optimal conditions for learning, by means of access to expanding opportunities for all student groups through an arts-infused project-based learning environment with qualified and appropriately credentialed teachers, full implementation of state standards, and a safe, clean and welcoming school facilities.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Related State Priorities:</p> <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 33%;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> 4</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> 7</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> 5</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> 8</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> 3</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> 6</div> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Local Priorities:</p> <div style="display: flex;"> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/>:</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/>:</div> </div>					
Specific Annual Actions to Achieve Goal						
<p>Priority 1 – (Basic Services)</p> <p>Outcome 1: Degree to which teachers are appropriately assigned pursuant to Education Code section 44258.9 and fully credentialed in the subject areas and for the pupils they are teaching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hire, supervise, evaluate and retain qualified teaching staff. - Ensure verification of proper credentials and DOJ clearance prior to start of employment. - Actively recruit diverse teachers and staff that reflect student demographics. <p>Outcome 2: Pupils will have access to standards-aligned instructional materials pursuant to Education Code section 60119.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide appropriate, enlivening, standards-aligned instructional materials. - Maintain an annual inventory of instructional materials and respective purchase of materials. - Annual review to ensure adequate budget for instructional materials is in place, including materials for students with special needs: EL, SpEd and other learning challenges. <p>Outcome 3: School facilities are maintained in good repair pursuant to Education Code section 172002(d).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilities will be maintained and cleaned by custodial staff. - Conduct annual and monthly facility inspections to screen for safety hazards. - Utilize Site Inspection Lists and provide daily general and spot checks by custodial staff. <p>Priority 2 – (State Standards)</p> <p>Outcome 1: Implementation of effective and inspiring instruction on CCSS for all pupils, including English learners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participate in ongoing professional development on creative and effective implementation of CCSS in ELA and Math. - Provide creative and effective CCSS-aligned ELA and math instruction for all students including all subgroups. - Provide professional development to teachers in collecting and examining CAASPP and other state and internal assessment scores and regularly review progress to implement data-driven decision-making. 						
Expected Annual Measurable Outcomes						
<p>Priority 1; Outcome 1: All teachers will be properly certificated and assigned.</p> <p>Metric/Method for Measuring: Documentation of required credentials (as per CCTC) maintained and current for each teacher.</p>						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2020- 2021	2021- 2022	2022- 2023	2023- 2024	2024- 2025
All Students (Schoolwide)	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Priority 1; Outcome 2: All students (including all statistically significant subgroups) will have access to appropriate, enlivening, standards-aligned materials and additional instructional materials.
Metric/Method for Measuring: % of all students who will have sufficient access to enlivening standards-aligned materials and other instructional materials

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students (Schoolwide)	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Priority 1; Outcome 3: Facilities will be maintained and cleaned by custodial staff and include daily spot checks and Site Inspection Lists, pursuant to Education Code section 17002(d).

Metric/Method for Measuring: % of Items on the Site Inspection Lists and daily spot checks that are in compliance/good standing.

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students (Schoolwide)	N/A	≥90%	≥90%	≥90%	≥90%	≥90%

Priority 2; Outcome 1: Ensure the implementation of effective and inspiring instruction on CCSS for all pupils, including English learners.

Metric/Method for Measuring: % of students creative and effective CCSS-aligned ELA and math instruction using integrated and designated ELD instructional strategies to all students, including ELs.

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students (Schoolwide and all Significant Subgroups)	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

GOAL #2

Provide a developmental, differentiated education to each student through Waldorf methods of arts-integrated and project-based learning and support each student's mastery of grade level content standards and the school's learning objectives

Related State Priorities:

- ☐ 1 ☒ 4 ☒ 7
☐ 2 ☐ 5 ☒ 8
☐ 3 ☐ 6

Local Priorities:

- ☐
☐

Specific Annual Actions to Achieve Goal

Priority 4- (Pupil Achievement)

Priority 4; Outcome 1: Performance on standardized tests and overall schoolwide assessments such as the state dashboard.

- Provide highly qualified instructional personnel and Resource Specialists to implement high-quality instruction with continuous monitoring by the Educational Director.
- Provide highly qualified comprehensive professional development to support student achievement.
- Analyze CAASPP scores and internal measures and evaluations throughout the school year to review progress towards annual targets.

Priority 4; Outcome 2: Share of English Learners that become English proficient.

- See above; plus implement the LAUSD English Learner Master Plan.

- Provide qualified teachers with appropriate EL authorization who will continuously monitor instruction and achievement of ELs.
- Identify ELs by proficiency level, ensure ELD instruction is standards-aligned, and monitor student progress in program implementation.
- Provide professional development related to EL support, including ELPAC training and re-designation criteria.
- Ensure re-designated ELs will continue to be supported via MTSS including support for struggling readers.

Priority 4; Outcome 3: English Learner reclassification rate

- Same as Priority 4 Outcome 2 above plus:
- Budget will be reviewed annually to ensure adequate budget for appropriate EL instructional materials is in place.
- Add additional supports for our EL students through exam preparation, differentiation, teacher coaching, and additional tutoring to meet EL student instructional needs.

Priority 7 – (Course Access)

Outcome 1: Provide access to all required subjects as well as to our specialized curricular elements (handwork, music, Council, Living Classroom, World Languages, etc.) as outlined in our charter for all students, including all student subgroups.

- Provide well-qualified and experienced teachers that loop with students over multiple years and continuously differentiate techniques to ensure full access to a broad curriculum for all students, including all student subgroups.
- Provide resources, time and materials for all students including all student subgroups, to engage in and arts-rich, project-based engaging learning environment with outdoor learning.

Priority 8 – (Other Pupil Outcomes)

Outcome 1: Provide students, including significant subgroups, with an array of learning experiences that engage the whole child: head, heart, and hands, as described in the school's charter. Specific courses starting in 1st grade and continuing through 8th grade include Handwork, Woodwork, World Language, Movement, and Music. Experiences and instruction in Visual Arts, Music, Performing Arts, Social Emotional Learning, Leadership, Digital Literacy and Citizenship, and Gross and Fine Motor Integration are brought daily by class teachers.

Expected Annual Measurable Outcomes

Priority 4; Outcome 1: Students, including all significant subgroups, will meet or exceed targets for growth once set by the State (or by the Board of Directors in the annual LCAP process) on the CAASPP (and CAA for students with special needs) in the areas of ELA and Mathematics.

Method for Measuring: Internal benchmark assessments, classroom assessments, and SBAC results.

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students (Schoolwide and all Significant Subgroups)	N/A	Establish baseline with first CAASPP testing.	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet or exceed targets for growth on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet or exceed targets for growth on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet or exceed targets for growth on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.	School-wide and all significant subgroups will meet or exceed targets for growth on the CAASPP in ELA and Math.

					ELA and Math.	
Priority 4; Outcome 2: EL students will advance at least one level on the ELPAC each year. Method for Measuring: ELPAC results.						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
English Learners	N/A	Establish baseline.	Percentage of students who achieve one level of growth on the ELPAC each year will meet or exceed District rate.	Percentage of students who achieve one level of growth on the ELPAC each year will meet or exceed District rate.	Percentage of students who achieve one level of growth on the ELPAC each year will meet or exceed District rate.	Percentage of students who achieve one level of growth on the ELPAC each year will meet or exceed District rate.
Priority 4; Outcome 3: EL students will achieve similar or higher rate of reclassification as compared to the District. Method for Measuring: Reclassification rates for LAUSD and El Rio Community School.						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
English Learners	N/A	Establish Baseline.	Percentage of students who are reclassified each year will meet or exceed Resident Schools' rate.	Percentage of students who are reclassified each year will meet or exceed Resident Schools' rate.	Percentage of students who are reclassified each year will meet or exceed Resident Schools' rate.	Percentage of students who are reclassified each year will meet or exceed Resident Schools' rate.
Priority 7; Outcome 1: All students, including all student subgroups, will have access to all required core content (ELA, Math, Science and Social Science/History) as well as to our specialized curricular elements as outlined in our charter. Method for Measuring: % of access to all available programs and services outlined in charter petition.						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students (Schoolwide and all Significant Subgroups)	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

GOAL #3						
Foster student, teachers/staff, parent, and community engagement in school life and achieve high rates of stakeholder satisfaction through a positive school climate and culture.				<div style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold; margin-bottom: 5px;">Related State Priorities:</div> <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="margin-right: 10px;"><input type="checkbox"/> 1</div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;"><input type="checkbox"/> 4</div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;"><input type="checkbox"/> 7</div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;"><input type="checkbox"/> 2</div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5</div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;"><input type="checkbox"/> 8</div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3</div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6</div> </div> <div style="text-align: right; font-weight: bold; margin-top: 5px;">Local Priorities:</div> <div style="margin-top: 5px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> : <input type="checkbox"/> : </div>		
Specific Annual Actions to Achieve Goal						
<p>Priority 3 – (Parental Involvement)</p> <p>Outcome 1: Efforts to seek parent engagement and input in decision-making.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage parents in a series of relevant and interesting workshops related to their child’s success. - Maintain a school website in English and Spanish as a communication tool for the community. - Offer a monthly newsletter in hardcopy, available in both English and Spanish, to communicate critical information for parents and families which will supplement the website content. <p>Priority 5 – (Pupil Engagement)</p> <p>Outcome 1: School attendance rates and chronic absenteeism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parent outreach and communications will stress the importance of attendance and arriving at school on time each day. - Office staff and faculty will help ensure strong attendance and decrease habitual truants through home calls and/or visits, meetings with students and families, and culturally-responsive reinforcement. <p>Outcome 2: Middle school dropout rates</p> <p>Track grades, credit completion and individual student crises/challenges outside school walls to ensure any middle grade students at risk of failure/dropout are identified and provided with appropriate academic and/or psycho-social support.</p> <p>Priority 6 – (School Climate)</p> <p>Outcome 1: Pupil suspension rates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish classroom management procedures, foster positive relationships, and actively create an atmosphere of trust, respect, and high expectations. - Provide training and professional development for administration, teachers, and all support staff in our positive school-wide behavior program including social-emotional learning and Council programs. <p>Outcome 2: Pupil expulsion rates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish classroom management procedures, foster positive relationships, and actively create an atmosphere of trust, respect, and high expectations. - Provide training and professional development for administration, teachers, and all support staff in our positive school-wide behavior program including social-emotional learning and Council programs. <p>Outcome 3: Establish local measures including surveys of pupils, parents and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement annual school experience surveys to assess stakeholder satisfaction. 						
Expected Annual Measurable Outcomes						
<p>Priority 3; Outcome 1: Encourage parents to attend at least 2 events each year —specific goal to be set in annual LCAP.</p> <p>Method for Measuring: Number of parents attending 2+ events annually.</p>						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students (Schoolwide and all Significant	N/A	Establish Baseline.	Increase parent	Increase parent participation	Increase parent participation	Increase parent

Subgroups)			participation rate annually (targeted at 2-3% annually).	rate annually (targeted at 2-3% annually).	rate annually (targeted at 2-3% annually).	participati on rate annually (targeted at 2-3% annually).
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Priority 3; Outcome 2: Establish a Title 1 Parent Advisory Council to provide input to the Co-Directors on school programs and operations that will be promoted and supported to be fully operational and self-sustaining.

Method for Measuring: Analysis of attendance utilizing sign-in sheets, consistent membership.

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students (Schoolwide and all Significant Subgroups)	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Priority 5; Outcome 1: Maintain a high attendance rate and low rate of chronically absent students.

Method for Measuring: Attendance records and chronic absenteeism monitoring.

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students (Schoolwide and all Significant Subgroups)	N/A	Establish Baseline.	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually).	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually).	Maintain high attendance rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteeism or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually).	Maintain high attendanc e rate (>95%) or increase annually as needed; Maintain low chronic absenteei sm or decrease annually as needed (estimated target of 1-2% annually).

Priority 5; Outcome 2: Maintain low middle school dropout rates

Method for Measuring: dropout rates

APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students (Schoolwide and all Significant Subgroups)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Establish Baseline (est. ≤1%) with first cohort of middle grades	Maintain low middle school dropout rate (est.

					students.	≤1%)
Priority 6; Outcome 1: Maintain a low suspension rate that is ≤ 1%						
Method for Measuring: % of student suspensions.						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students (Schoolwide and all Significant Subgroups)	N/A	Establish baseline.	≤1%	≤1%	≤1%	≤1%
Priority 6; Outcome 2: Maintain a low expulsion rate that is ≤.05%.						
Method for Measuring: % of student suspensions.						
APPLICABLE STUDENT GROUPS	Baseline	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students (Schoolwide and all Significant Subgroups)	N/A	Establish Baseline.	≤.05%	≤.05%	≤.05%	≤.05%

Curricular and Instructional Design

El Rio's instructional design will be aligned with the core principles of Public Waldorf Education, the CCSS/NGSS and Frameworks for Instructional Design, and will be delivered through four core approaches of our model described above: Whole Child Development; Arts-Integrated, Project-Based Learning; Community Building and Outdoor Education. The ways in which these research-based, standards-aligned philosophies will meet the needs of our student population in Highland Park are detailed here.

Whole Child Development

El Rio's whole child approach will ensure that each student is healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged. Within this core instructional strategy, the whole child approach will be achieved through the implementation of the following key components:

- The Main Lesson
- Storytelling and Narrative
- Social/Emotional Learning
- Developmental Approach to Use of Media/Technology
- Authentic/Narrative Assessment

The Main Lesson: In grades 1-8, each day will be centered around the Main Lesson: two-hour blocks of concentrated instruction aligned to the CCSS/NGSS and other state standards, offering developmentally appropriate, in-depth learning.¹⁰⁰ Each day's Main Lesson focus on Mondays through Thursdays will alternate between English Language Arts/Social Science (Humanities) and Math/Science on alternating days. Fridays' Main Lesson content will be incorporated into Outdoor Learning or our "Living Classroom" (see below). The Main Lesson will be scheduled in 3-4 week unit blocks of interdisciplinary, thematic study that focus on mastery of core content. interwoven with the arts, hands-on projects and storytelling. A Main Lesson block will be designed to provide multiple entry points for student mastery of core content, integrating mental math and practice, music, movement and hands-on activities that engage the senses, along with student-created textbooks,

¹⁰⁰ Foer, J. (2011). Moonwalking with Einstein: The Art and Science of Remembering Everything. Penguin Press, 2011.

which artistically and creatively capture their lesson content through drawings and other artistic media along with written narratives and other visual content.

In the lower grades (1-5), Main Lesson will be presented at the beginning of the day, when the students are most alert and receptive to learning; at the middle school level (6-8), Main Lesson will begin in the later morning, when research has shown that adolescent brains are finally awake.¹⁰¹ A successful Main Lesson connects with the student through “head, heart, and hands,”¹⁰² cultivating clear, independent thinking, an emotional connection to the work and the larger world, and motivation to take action to achieve goals and make meaningful contributions.

Each Main Lesson follows a two-day rhythm: new skills introduced on day one and then “slept on” and recapitulated in day two to ensure maximum sensory processing and deep learning. This “**New/Do/Review**” model unfolds in the following way:

- The morning begins with **opening skill-building activities** in literacy and numeracy, often incorporating movement and designed to inspire and enliven the students. These can include playing the flute, singing, reciting poetry and verses, and participating in guided movement activities that help students cross their midlines.
- **Review of previous day’s material** begins with students recapitulating the previous day’s story, concept, or experiment, with minimal but conscious guidance from the teacher. In *Classroom Instruction that Works*, Dr. Robert Marzano established that summarization and effective questioning boosts student achievement more than nearly any other known teaching strategy. Additionally, research in cognitive psychology has found that long-term memory is greatly improved if students process material in a deep and meaningful way, such as occurs during sleep. Self-generated elaboration (as happens when a child retells or summarizes information) leads to better recall than mere study of material, as it establishes a long-term memory trace. In this way, the content becomes “possessed” and “reconstructed” in new ways by the students.
- The second phase of the lesson begins with the teacher **introducing a New concept, story, or experiment**. In a history block, this might be a story from an original text or the biography of a key figure. In a mathematics block, this might be a new concept around the study of fractions in 4th grade or geometry in 6th grade. This information is delivered orally by the teacher, enhanced with realia and/or artistic expression such a chalkboard drawing or watercolor painting. The teacher will guide students through specific learning activities, teaching from the whole-to-part, which typically starts with concrete and familiar examples and moves from there into more abstract concepts. Ideas will be presented within a broader context, first using narrative, pictures through chalkboard drawings, and an experiential, hands on approach and broken down into smaller digestible pieces. This will allow students to eventually creatively reconstruct ideas, concepts, and theories. At El Rio, we believe students are able to relate better, and ultimately learn better, if they are taught to first deconstruct something rather than given many random pieces and then expected to construct a narrative, creation, idea, or theorem.
- The final stage of the lesson allows students to **do meaningful work integrating new material**. Students create work in their Main Lesson book about the story, concept, experiment, or other “New” content, work that includes a key visual image from the story as well as a class-composed text from the story. In early grades, the writing process is modeled

¹⁰¹ Dunn, R., and K. Dunn. (1993). *Teaching Secondary Students Through Their Individual Learning Styles: Practical Approaches for Grades 7-12*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

¹⁰² Bright Water Waldorf School. *Educating the Whole Child: The Head, the Heart, and the Hands*. Accessed from <https://www.brightwaterwaldorf.org/pedagogyeducational-methods-and-philosophies/educating-the-whole-child-the-head-the-heart-and-the-hands/>.

for the entire group by the teacher while incorporating student input. In upper grades students compose their own texts. The teacher will also include grammar, spelling, and punctuation lessons throughout this process. An example of a first-grade story is a fairytale: a lengthy, detailed and magical portrayal of characters in an imaginative setting that allows the children to create rich visual images in their minds. An example of a 6th grade story is an excerpt from the autobiography of Frederick Douglass, which the students would summarize in their own words. Finally, the students will be instructed to carefully put away their materials and clear their desks as they move figuratively inward to listen to the next segment of the teacher-delivered story. These stories are specific to the child's age and are drawn from the curriculum. In fourth grade, the flow of the Main Lesson would be similar to that in first, but the activities reflect the growing abilities of the students.

Using our unique Main Lesson Book methodology, each student will produce a tangible body of work for every block of study. What begins as a blank canvas becomes an individual record of experiences, observations and gained knowledge, along with hand-drawn illustrations and often poetry. As a portfolio of work, Main Lesson Books reflect key understandings and skills students have learned, while also displaying their inspiration. Multidimensional, complex and thoughtful, the book shows the child's day-to-day ups and downs as well as their finished work, illustrating the learning process in authentic ways. Students will benefit from producing a finished product that is a personal accomplishment and valuable record of their learning. In some blocks, hands-on projects in addition to Main Lesson Books will be created, either individually or by the entire class. These long-term projects, such as a structure for a 3rd grade house-building block, or a model of Leonardo's flying machine for a 7th grade block on the Renaissance, build students' creativity, problem-solving, and collaborative skills.

Because the population of Highland Park includes a high percentage of students classified as English Learners, El Rio will be committed to ensuring that the methodology informing our instruction is mindful of the particular needs of this subgroup.¹⁰³ In comparing five markers of successful best practices for instructing English Learners and Speakers of Non-Standard English in the Main Lesson, these best practices are in fact inherent to the teaching strategies required by the Main Lesson. The Main Lesson will incorporate the use of realia, hands-on demonstrations of concepts, explicit vocabulary instruction, artistic and kinesthetic presentations of content that incorporate the multiple modalities of song, movement, and the visual arts, as well as the consistent presence and loving authority of the class teacher in order to lower the affective filter.¹⁰⁴ These key components of Main Lesson, first indicated by Rudolf Steiner and currently used by Waldorf teachers in schools around the world, are, not coincidentally, the very factors that are consistently cited as best practices for the instruction of English Learners.¹⁰⁵

Recognizing that there are multiple pathways to learning and each child has their own strengths, El Rio will offer a frequent rotation of activities that matches children's natural rhythms and balances cognitive, emotional/social and active learning. Inbreath and outbreath are terms used to describe the careful planning that goes into alternating between periods of concentrated cognitive activities and physical/kinesthetic activities to allow for healthy balance.¹⁰⁶ This can be seen within the Main Lesson as well as in how the day will be scheduled with special subject classes.

¹⁰³ We note that our Co-Founder, Katie Sobczak Chau, wrote her Master's thesis on meeting the needs of English Learners through Waldorf Education and has a BCLAD as well as experience in working with English Learners.

¹⁰⁴ Sophia Institute. Waldorf/Steiner Main Lessons and Main Lesson Blocks. Accessed from <https://www.sophiainstitute.us/wcmainlesson.html>.

¹⁰⁵ Calderón, M., Slavin, R., & Sánchez, M. (2011). Effective instruction for English learners. *The Future of Children*, 103-127.

¹⁰⁶ Nicol, J & Taplin, J. Understanding the Steiner Waldorf Approach: Early Years Education in Practice. Routledge, 2017. pg. 83

Storytelling and Narrative: As the world grows smaller and we grow more diverse as a society, it is imperative that children develop the ability to listen to others' stories, know their own, and be able to relate the two. At El Rio, narrative will give a conceptual framework to orient students and give them a sense of themselves in a place and time. Essential listening and speaking skills (emphasized in the CCSS for ELA/ELD) will be built from the very beginning, as teachers will tell their students stories in their own words: folktales and fables in the younger grades and biographies or history with middle schoolers. The use of storytelling is profoundly engaging for students of all ages. A 2010 study in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences showed that the brain activity of speakers and listeners "syncs up" in conversation; by using compelling narrative, teachers are able to reach students both emotionally and biochemically.¹⁰⁷ Beyond the development of linguistic, speaking and listening skills, students build empathy by identifying with characters in stories. Teachers will also use story as a classroom management tool, allowing for calm and quiet reflection while listening, and bringing in inspirational or provocative ideas that will take the place of overt lecturing or moralizing.

Narrative will also frame the social science/history curriculum in the early grades as the children will learn from a wide range of sources. Folk and fairy tales, fables and parables, myths, legends and literature all aligned to grade-level social science/history standards and the ELA/ELD standards will be introduced to give conceptual pictures of how people have told and passed on their histories in the past, before moving on to recorded history and historical fact using primary source materials. Oral storytelling is key, particularly in the early grades, and will offer students the chance to use their imaginations to make their own mental pictures as they visualize the stories in their minds. Later, biography and autobiography will be used to situate larger historical moments within a relatable, human context and strengthen student identification with changemakers of the past. Along with listening, the narrative framework will allow children to build communication skills by giving feedback, exchanging perspectives, and debating what they have heard. Children who engaged in storytelling and story reading in class and at home had increased scores in creativity, literacy tests and problem solving when compared to children who did not engage in such activities.¹⁰⁸

Social-Emotional Learning: The entire curriculum at El Rio Community School will be centered upon the developmental milestones of each age and stage of childhood, mirroring and directing our instruction to meet the needs of each life stage. Social and emotional development will be imbedded into each day. Much research has been done about the importance of social emotional learning on children's overall health and their academic performance. Specifically, CASEL, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, is an organization whose mission is to help make evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) an integral part of education from preschool through high school. (casel.org) CASEL has identified five interrelated sets of cognitive, affective and behavioral competencies. The definitions of these five competency clusters for students are:

- **Self-awareness:** The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.
- **Self-management:** The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.
- **Social awareness:** The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.

¹⁰⁷ "Speaker-listener neural coupling underlies successful communication" Greg J. Stephens, Lauren J. Silbert, Uri Hasson. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences Jul 2010, 201008662; DOI:10.1073/pnas.1008662107

¹⁰⁸ Peters, S. J. (1993). Where have all the children gone?: Storyreading in kindergarten and pre-kindergarten classes. Early Child Development and Care, 88, 1-15

- **Relationship skills:** The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.
- **Responsible decision making:** The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others.

(casel.org)

These five competencies will be carefully observed by the teachers over the course of a child's time at El Rio. During Main Lesson and practice periods, class teachers will deliberately and carefully observe their students and take note of both areas of strength and areas for growth in the social emotional realm, and then use these observations to shape Council sessions and the Compassionate Campus program. Having common language to discuss social emotional competencies aids teachers' practice of observation as well as conversations with parents, and with students when they are older. Part of what makes the school's ability to help students grow in the social emotional realm is our practice of looping whereby teachers stay with a class for multiple years (see below).

In grades 5-8, the **Life Skills Program** will explore the innate mysteries of individuality, as well as, nurturing the interpersonal connections that make us human. In accordance with the Health Framework for California Public Schools and The California Healthy Youth Act, Education Code (EC) sections 51930-51939, El Rio will have a collaborative, comprehensive program to teach health, nutrition, and life skills education. The curriculum will focus on the developmental tasks of early adolescence, health education, nutrition, and life skills education.

Students in 5th - 8th grade will participate in process-oriented coursework that will explore issues of self-esteem, self-awareness, and appreciation of others. Individuation tasks in the formation of identity, cognitive skills such as perspective taking, and skills necessary for making good choices regarding health, sexuality, and nutrition will be examined. During the years between 5th and 8th grade, students will study Human Development and Sexuality, with an age-appropriate emphasis on puberty and the physical, emotional and social changes of adolescence. When human reproductive organs are included, permission of a parent or guardian will be obtained (Education code, Section 51550). Drug education, examination of cultural and social messages and their impact on teen consumers, as well as a focus on organizational/study skills prepare young people to navigate their personal and school lives in a healthy manner. 8th graders will continue their study of health, fitness, and nutrition with the added elements of HIV awareness, stress reduction, and gender issues.

Developmental Approach to Use of Media/Technology: Electronic media has profound effects, both positive and negative, on children's cognitive, social and behavioral development.¹⁰⁹ At El Rio, we will educate parents on the effects of media and encourage them to limit their children's media exposure, particularly in the early grades. We believe it is imperative to allow children to first develop their own imaginative capacities, social skills, and inner qualities before being asked to wrestle with the barrage of imagery and ideas thrown at them by screens and devices. As students mature, teachers and parents will collaborate on a plan to expose them to age-appropriate electronic media in a manner that is thoughtful and responsive to each child's individual development.

¹⁰⁹ Kirkorian, H. L., Wartella, E. A., & Anderson, D. R. (2008). Media and young children's learning. *The Future of Children*, 18(1), 39-61.

A 2006 report from the MacArthur Foundation supports a slow-tech approach, saying that we must first foster the social skills and cultural knowledge necessary so students may deploy technological tools properly and gain their full benefit. “Our goal should be to encourage youth to develop the skill, knowledge, ethical framework, and self-confidence needed to be full participants in contemporary culture.”¹¹⁰ Media literacy will therefore be presented in context, as the latest iteration of how people communicate and situated within the continuum of history, from the role of the printing press to present day advertising aimed at teens as consumers. El Rio’s Cyber Civics curriculum, introduced in middle school, will address how to be a good digital citizen, what it means to be a conscientious consumer of media, and the unintended consequences of communication revolutions.

Computer-based skills such as coding and robotics will be presented as tools of their time, much like a sculptor’s chisel or a potters’ wheel. Our holistic approach to technological education will use project-based learning to trace the arc of technological history. From making their own knitting needles to coding their own computer, students in each grade will complete projects that teach them firsthand the transformative power of technological innovation.

To address current Common Core Standards, El Rio will introduce keyboarding and online practice assessments in 3rd grade in preparation for standardized testing. We look forward to being a leader among Waldorf charter schools, integrating technology in a thoughtful manner that prepares students for success while honoring the development of their imaginations.

In the 6th- 8th grade years, students will study the use of technology and social media and its impact on their lives. Through the award-winning Cyber Civics curriculum, students will learn the principles of good citizenship and how they relate to their digital footprints.

Authentic/Ongoing Assessment and Narrative Reports: Authentic assessments are a hallmark of the Waldorf methodology, in which students are asked to complete real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills. El Rio, in conjunction with the work of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, has created, and continues to add to in collaboration with member schools, a compendium of CCSS-aligned rubrics for Main Lesson blocks, which will be given out at the beginning of each block or project so that students will be aware of how their performance will be evaluated. In a sense, authentic assessment actually drives the curriculum, since teachers first determine the tasks that students will perform to demonstrate their mastery of core content and other “soft” skills, and to know if this model is successful, students must be able to perform these meaningful tasks that replicate real-world challenges, showing mastery. Additionally, at the end of the school year, and in preparation for twice a year parent-teacher conferences, teachers will write narrative assessments that describe each student’s learning, which allows for a far richer depiction of learning than is possible with traditional letter grades. Because the class teacher will stay with the same group of students for multiple years (looping, described in more detail below), the teacher will know the children, and will be able to paint a picture of them through specific observations that make clear assessment statements, backed up by evidence. Skills covered and assessed will be included in the narrative.

Arts-integrated, Project-Based Learning

El Rio’s instructional design will use arts integration and project-based learning to engage all students in their learning, including gifted students and those with special needs. Arts integration and project-based learning both allow language learners to engage and express themselves every day. These methodologies also provide a wide array of activities, engage multiple modalities, and offer various means of demonstrating student mastery of core content, all of which specifically meet the needs of special needs students (including those with autism and attention deficit disorders).

¹¹⁰ Jenkins, H., Purushotma, R., Clinton, K., Weigel, M., & Robinson, A. J. (2006). *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century*.

Following is a description of the key components of El Rio's approach:

- Thematic, project-based learning
- Specialty Subjects
- Class Plays

Thematic, Project-based Learning: As noted above, the Main Lesson will be centered on a three- to four-week standards-aligned thematic unit in either the Humanities, Math/Science or where possible, both. At the same time, collaborative planning will allow for special subject teachers (world languages, handwork, woodwork, strings/music teachers, etc.) to also connect to these themes and topics, offering an even more in-depth, interconnected experience of the theme. In middle school, students will engage in Learning Expeditions to Los Angeles' wealth of cultural institutions, with community partnerships and ongoing collaborations that enrich and enliven the topics being studied.

Specialty Subjects: Specialty subjects, taught by teachers who are trained in each area and who will collaborate closely with the Class Teachers, will not be seen as extras but as essential components of the curriculum, developing all of the capacities of the human being in balance. Specialty subjects include world languages, handwork, woodwork, music, movement/games and gardening, all aligned to CCSS/NGSS. Specialty teachers will meet weekly with Class Teachers to plan lessons and ensure alignment with what students in each grade will be learning in their Main Lessons and other core classroom activities.

World languages (Spanish and Mandarin): The teaching of world languages plays an essential part in the Waldorf pedagogy, which will inform El Rio's curriculum. El Rio will endeavor to offer two world languages, Mandarin and Spanish, to all students in grades 1-8. Although developing the ability to communicate effectively in the target languages will be a key goal of El Rio's World Languages program, it will not be the only, or even the primary goal. Instead, the primary aim in offering two world languages will be to foster global citizenship, giving students an awareness of the wider world and the interconnectedness of all human beings, a respect for diversity and an interest in people and cultures other than those like them, true global understanding, and a sense of responsibility for equity and social justice through the study of other cultures and their unique histories. Charlemagne is attributed with the proverb: "to have another language is to possess a second soul." In other words, learning multiple languages offers a multitude of ways to see the similarities and differences between the target languages and one's own mother tongue, and these added perspectives are invaluable for increased empathy and understanding.

In the early grades (1-3), the teacher will use creativity and the oral tradition to bring an immersive language experience to the students. Through immersion in the living atmosphere of the spoken word, entirely in the target language, the teacher will use storytelling and target language literature via dramatized narration, games, movement, songs and artistic activities to offer sensory experiences that will allow children the opportunity to absorb the sounds and rhythms of the other languages. Recitation of poetry, simple finger and circle games, and rhythmical counting will serve to provide opportunities for the children to hear and imitate the sound and soul of the other languages. Though the exact meaning of particular words or phrases may not be immediately understood, the gestures, visual props, puppets, and toy animals that accompany the stories, poetry, and songs will help children to understand the essence of what is being imparted. In the upper grades, experiential learning will still be at the heart of language learning, but in addition, grammar will begin to be taught in a conscious, but still creative and lively way through movement and music, and written work in student-made books will become part of the approach to learning to communicate through listening, speaking, writing, and reading in the target languages.

Because an interconnected curriculum will be at the heart of El Rio's educational program, World Languages will be tied into what will be taught into key themes of the Main Lesson curriculum. World Language teachers and class teachers will work together to plan the curriculum prior to the start of each school year to enhance this integration and deepen learning. For instance, when students will be studying the Age of Discovery in the seventh grade, they will look at China's own Age of Discovery, which happened much earlier, as well as the effects of the Age of Discovery and colonization on the Americas from the perspectives of Latin American civilizations such as the Aztecs and Incas, and use primary source and target language materials to examine multiple perspectives.

The city of Los Angeles offers a myriad of opportunities for students to connect with the Chinese and Latino cultures and native language speakers of Mandarin and Spanish, and El Rio students will take full advantage, celebrating festivals such as the Lunar New Year/Chinese New Year, Día de los Muertos, cultural festivals of light, and other festivals decided upon by the families of El Rio with the school and local communities. In the upper grades (grades 4-8), as students gain confidence in their world language abilities, El Rio will offer opportunities for students to put on entire class plays in the target languages, take students on field trips that offer opportunities to connect with native speakers of the target languages and the cultures of those speakers, and participate in homestay programs/exchange programs with students from sister schools overseas in the target languages. We will also thoughtfully use technology to connect to native speakers and students overseas in the target languages, and work on service-learning projects together in the upper grades when developmentally appropriate.

Handwork: Handwork is a key component of Waldorf pedagogy and will be carefully planned with respect to the developmental and physical stages of the students. Handwork has a great number of benefits, both physical and intellectual as well as academic. Handwork projects provide the opportunity for students to be creative and produce tangible results, using the "head, heart, and hands" to connect deeply with their work. The many benefits of the handwork program include developing hand-eye coordination; the ability to follow directions, plan a project and follow through to carry it out; perseverance; geometry; math skills; ability to focus for an extended period of time, and improved memory.¹¹¹ Handwork also develops hand-eye coordination, and the fine motor ability of "crossing the midline" so that each brain hemisphere communicates with the other in order to coordinate learning and movement.¹¹² In addition, handwork develops mobility and dexterity, and strengthens fine motor skills.

Academically, this is important for a variety of reasons. The learning disabilities specialist Jean A. Ayres states that "Praxis, or the ability to program a motor act, shows a close relation to reading skills, even though reading would appear to be only distantly related to goal-directed movement of the body." Citing the research of Strauss and Werner, she notes that "Children with finger agnosia (awkwardness and lack of control) made more errors on a test of arithmetical ability than did children without finger agnosia."¹¹³ New research conducted by neuroscientists on brain activity while crafting shows that handwork activities such as knitting and sewing may stimulate cellular development in the brain, activate and establish neural pathways, and strengthen the physical foundation of thinking and memory.¹¹⁴ Additionally, the chance for quiet contemplation and mindfulness provides a wonderful respite for students, especially those who might experience sensory overload in other parts of the school day. Teachers in a handwork class will have a special opportunity to connect the work the students will be doing with culturally appropriate stories about handwork from other cultures. There will be service-learning

¹¹¹ Gardiner, A.F., Knowles, F., and Jeffrey, N. (1996). "Learning improved by arts training." *Nature* 381, 284.

¹¹² 1.Benson, H (2001). "Mind Body Pioneer," *Psychology Today*, 34, pp. 56-60.

¹¹³ Jean A. Ayres, *Development of Sensory Integrative Theory and Practice*, cited in Pedersen, Ibid.

¹¹⁴ <https://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/01/25/the-health-benefits-of-knitting/>

opportunities, for example, in making scarves and hats for the homeless, the elderly, and other populations in the community. There will also be an opportunity for increased environmental awareness in learning about natural materials and the evolution from raw material to finished product. Last but not least, they will be gaining a new skill that they can take with them into the world, and a sense that if they can make their own knitting needles, and with them, knit a pair of socks, is there anything that they can't do?

The program will be integrated with the rest of the curriculum, meaning, for example, that a student studying the agricultural history of California in third grade will have an opportunity to meet the sheep and watch them graze, then experience shearing, washing and carding wool, and watch the wool being spun. Students will grow and gather dye plants, make plant-based dyes and dye wool that they then knit. This will bring to life for students the origins of the clothing they wear, and the importance of these activities for our economy. A child who might not be strong in other areas will be able to gain self-confidence in mastering knitting. This can also offer therapeutic benefits to children going through emotional upheaval;¹¹⁵ the rules and methods for handwork can offer safety and stability,¹¹⁶ whereas the choice of colors and design provide opportunities for self-expression.

Meanwhile, eighth graders studying the Industrial Revolution will learn how to use a sewing machine, following patterns to make their own clothing. This activity will integrate CCSS social science/history, math, and other content skills. There is recent neurological research supporting the idea that as hand muscles develop mobility and dexterity, cellular development in the brain is stimulated, and strengthens the physical foundation for thinking.¹¹⁷ In addition, brain research has found that handwork like knitting opens up neurological pathways that would otherwise atrophy.¹¹⁸

Woodwork: The woodworking program at El Rio will begin in fifth grade and continue through the eighth grade. The woodworking program will help to connect children to the natural world through the use of wood and natural materials that they will turn into everyday objects such as spoons and stools. This connection helps foster an understanding of our natural resources and the importance of conservancy. The primary goal of the woodworking program will be to translate a design drawn in two dimensions into three dimensions. Manual dexterity and hand-eye coordination will be key. Manual dexterity and the ability to translate a design drawn in two dimensions into three dimensions are just a few of the skills that will be learned through woodworking, where students will progress from making handles for their own knives, which they in turn will use to create other projects, including spoons, bowls, and eventually, three-legged stools in the eighth grade. Additionally, woodworking expands and gives practical application to mathematics study and carpentry gives students a toolkit of skills that can be applied to a variety of professions later in life.

Music (Strings, Recorder, Chorus, etc.): The making of music is an essential part of what it means to be human, and has been shown to stimulate brain development.¹¹⁹ Students at El Rio will experience music from around the world, first through choral music and singing games, then with interval and pentatonic flutes, and then the recorder, which will be continued through eighth grade, along with singing as part of the Main Lesson. Pending funds availability, violin will be taught to all students in fourth and fifth grade, and students will be able to choose to continue

¹¹⁵ Benson, H. (2001). "Mind-Body Pioneer." *Psychology Today*, 34, pp. 56-60.

¹¹⁶ Friedlaender, D., Beckham, K., Zheng, X., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2015). *Growing a Waldorf-Inspired Approach in a Public School District*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education pp.51

¹¹⁷ Gardiner, A.F., Knowles, F., and Jeffrey, N. (1996). "Learning improved by arts training." *Nature* 381, 284.

¹¹⁸ Schwartz, E. (2009). *Discover Waldorf Education: Knitting and Intellectual Development*.

¹¹⁹ (2006). "First Evidence That Musical Training Affects Brain Development in Young Children." *Science News*. September 20, 2006.

this study, or take up another stringed or orchestral instrument and join the orchestra in middle school, or become part of the chorus or recorder ensemble.

Movement/Games: The selection of movement activities and games will be done with a deep understanding of child development and alignment with California Physical Education and Health content standards. Games and Movement Education are another key component of the Waldorf pedagogy, which uses a deep understanding of child development in the selection of activities and emphasis, such as whether to focus on cooperation or following rules, for example. Each class will begin with a spoken verse to focus the group and its intention for the class, and will follow a predictable structure. There will be a focus on the balance of “breathing” in the class, alternating between inbreath or focused attention with quieter games, and the outbreath, or more highly active portion. There will always be aspects of the class that involve working together as a group, and parts for reflection, with each individual student focused on one’s own body and movement. In first and second grade, games will be less structured and will be played in a circle, focusing on the class community as a whole. Progressing through the grades, students will become aware of their own individuality, and the classes will be tailored to reflect this through the evolving curriculum, adding games played in lines beginning in the third grade, for instance. In fifth grade, in conjunction with studying the ancient civilizations and particularly, the Olympics in Ancient Greece, students will learn classical sports and gather with other schools studying the same curriculum from across the region to participate in the Greek Pentathlon, where students will compete in teams alongside others from different schools. In the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades, more conventional team and individual sports will become a part of the curriculum, when students will be ready to focus on the rules that one needs to abide by, and how to work together as a team while at the same time developing their own individuality, and seeing where their own work ethic, self-discipline, and dedication affect the outcome. At the same time, they will also learn circus arts such as juggling, tightrope walking, and unicycling to bring fun, joy, and self-confidence at what can be a difficult point in adolescence and provide opportunities for students who might not excel in traditional sports to find opportunities for success. In the sixth grade, students will participate in the Medieval Games with other schools from the region in conjunction with their studies of the Middle Ages, and participate in events such as obstacle courses, jousting, and archery. In the seventh and eighth grade, students will learn track and field events and have their opportunity to learn the techniques for all of them before selecting several to participate in at an area track meet that they will train for throughout the school year.

They will also experience the competitive aspect of sports at school for the first time, and learn about sportsmanship and grace in the face of disappointing outcomes. Through learning technique and precision in sports, they will gain awareness of the world and themselves. The coordination and movement skills they will learn through this program will serve them for life, and they will gain skills in unexpected ways, such as hand-eye coordination through traditional string games, footwork and cardiovascular strength through jumping rope. Aside from physical fitness and related athletic skills, these classes will also work on a social-emotional level by teaching students to learn to work with one another to achieve a goal before they play competitively against one another, how to play safely, and to gain an appreciation for all kinds of movement and physical activity.

Gardening: Students in all grades will participate in the gardening program, which will include growing food and plants used throughout the curriculum, from plants used for natural plant dyes in the kindergarten and handwork program, to produce for a school farmer’s market. As many schools have demonstrated, gardening activities are readily aligned with core content standards across all subjects: ELA/ELD, Math, Science and Social Science at each grade level.¹²⁰ Since

¹²⁰ <https://www.lifelab.org/about/>

1979, Life Lab has been a leader in demonstrating the benefits of living classrooms on K-8 learning. Their work has been recognized by numerous groups including the California School Board Association, National Science Teachers Association, National Science Foundation, National Science Resources Center/Smithsonian Institute, and the U.S. Department of Education.

Following the state-wide adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), Life Lab released a document outlining the K-8 NGSS standards best contextualized through garden-based learning experiences. For grades K-2, living classrooms give students the opportunity to observe patterns in the natural and human designed world. Through the process of collecting and sharing their observations of patterns in the natural world, students also develop Common Core literacy and mathematical reasoning skills. For grades 3-5, students dive deeper into their observations of the structure, function, growth, and development of living organisms. These scientific practices support mathematical development through the collection, organization, and sense-making of measurement data. As students summarize and formulate claims from the data, they develop literacy skills through evidence-based reasoning. For grades 6-8, garden-based learning transitions from focus on organism-based research to larger systems-based thinking as students explore the interconnectedness of ecosystems and the cycling of matter and energy transfer within those ecosystems. These scientific practices necessitate an increasing level of rigor in both literacy and mathematics as students articulate their understanding of systems-level processes, model interrelationships, and analyze data as evidence for cause and effect relationships. Through El Rio's living classroom, as demonstrated through Life Lab's work, students in grades K-8 will have a cross-disciplinary learning experience that will deepen their conceptual understanding of Earth's living systems while developing rigorous science, literacy, and mathematical skills in alignment with Common Core and the Next Generation Science Standards.

Where feasible based on our facilities and assuming funding is available, we hope to incorporate cooking into the curriculum as well, such as preparing a feast to culminate the study of Ancient India, or prepping the daily snacks that are an essential part of the kindergarten curriculum. Additionally, a Fall Harvest market created from the seasonal harvest from the school garden will give students in upper grades opportunity to hone their entrepreneurship skills, participate meaningfully in the growing the health of their community, and raise money for class trips and other school projects.

Class Plays: Each year, each grade level will put on a play that is connected to the curriculum. The play will be both selected and cast by the Class Teachers, and often adapted to create opportunities for each child to step forward into the assigned role and stretch their abilities. The dynamic and artistic tension of preparing a creative endeavor for the school community and their families creates a sense of interdependence among the students, who must band together and rise to the occasion for the sake of the looming performance. This builds camaraderie among the students and offers a wonderful gift to the community as well. Play production offers opportunities for speech formation and development of dramatic skills, set design and visual arts practice from materials such as paper mache, paint, and hand-sewn fabric, as well as choral and instrumental music and dance performances, which are often incorporated. The end goal will not be about the product of the performance itself but rather the inner experience for the children throughout the entire experience.

When the children have the opportunity to embody a character totally unlike their own as a role in a play, they can actually change as people, and create themselves anew.¹²¹ Similarly, they can see

¹²¹ Catterall, J. (2009). *Doing Well and Doing Good by Doing Art: The effects of education in the visual and performing arts on the achievements and values of young adults*. Los Angeles/London: Imagination Group/I-Group Books.

their peers in a new light, and develop new relationships out of this as well. Also, the unpredictability of a live show, where anything can happen and often does, teaches students how to face the uncertainties of life and to learn that no matter what happens, to keep calm, improvise, and stay in character. This life lesson is an immeasurable gift that makes it worth the time, energy and hard work. To echo Hamlet, "The play's the thing!"

Community Building

El Rio will also be squarely focused on several instructional strategies and models to build a supportive community around our students, teachers, parents and staff. In addition to strategies already discussed that also will foster community (e.g., studying world languages and cultures, class plays) we will employ the following strategies to effectively build community within our school:

- Looping
- Council
- Parent Education

Looping with the Class Teacher/Relationship-Based Education: The Main Lesson will be taught by the Class Teacher, who will stay with the same group of students for multiple years (1st-4th grades, and 5th-8th grades), teaching all core academic subjects in a self-contained classroom. In the mixed age transitional kindergarten/kindergarten, children will have the same teacher for up to two years, which will allow children to have an experience of stability and nurturing in the early childhood program as well. As students and their Class Teacher move through the grades, the camaraderie and sense of being a group among both the teacher and students will gain in strength with each year. This will provide consistency and a sense of security for students to feel safe to take risks as learners. For the teacher, it will be a chance to demonstrate lifelong learning and ongoing personal development, as they often will take up the learning of new subjects in advance of teaching their students, not teaching the same content year after year. Class Teachers will also serve as an anchor for students who might be in crisis or experiencing trauma outside the classroom, or who might not have a consistent adult presence in their lives outside of school. Teachers will help create ideal conditions through learning, which the constructivist Vygotsky called the "zone of proximal development," ability to scaffold, or providing just the right level of support to allow for learning in a way that is supportive and low-stress.

Council: As part of the Ojai Foundation's Council in Schools program, teachers will act as facilitators to guide students in sharing stories and learning to truly listen, stay present, and not just wait for their turn to speak. An LAUSD best practice, Council is a mindfulness practice that builds self-awareness and awareness in relationships, along with valuable conflict resolution skills¹²². Council can also be a way to build leadership capacities in children as they take on assigned roles, and they can learn to become facilitators themselves. Teachers and students can learn from the collective wisdom of the group, and take action based on the knowledge gained in council circles. The practice of participating in Council creates a common social emotional language for the school and addresses the five core competencies listed above. Stemming from the indigenous practice of speaking and listening from the heart, all grades classes will participate in this powerful social-emotional learning strategy and community building activity that promotes an environment of trust, respect, and understanding both in the classroom and at school.

Parent Engagement: As their children learn through knitting, outdoor education, woodworking, and music, parents will be given opportunities to experience and learn what their children are learning, along with the educational research and rationale behind what is being taught, through

¹²² Zimmerman, J & Coyle, G. The Way of Council, 2nd Ed. Bramble Books, Las Vegas, 2009.

weekend and evening workshops that will allow for working parents to fully participate. Another opportunity for parents to connect with the school will be through our year-round cultural festivals. Celebrating festivals with the school community of parents, children, relatives, and teachers will bring a sense of rhythm and anticipation, and honoring these seasonal celebrations each and every year will be a way of keeping time, interweaving life and cycles of nature. The festival life of the school will be an important way of building community, beginning with a Back to School Hoedown square dance and potluck, then followed by the Rose Ceremony, welcoming the new first graders and introducing them to their Class Teacher. There also will be a Festival of Courage, a Harvest Festival, Dia de Los Muertos celebration, a Festival of Light, a Winter Spiral, Lunar New Year, and a May Day celebration to welcome the spring. Honoring and celebrating the cultures represented by the school's families will enhance engagement and sense of belonging. Additionally, families will be invited to bring and share activities, demonstrations, and stories from their culture and heritage to enliven and enrich the school experience for everyone. Finally, parents will be invited to help facilitate service projects in the school and broader community, along with Living Classroom activities (acting as chaperones),¹²³ further developing a strong sense of school community.

Outdoor Education

As noted above, outdoor education is a priority in Waldorf education, especially for an urban environment. In addition to a comprehensive school garden program, El Rio will focus on implementing the Living Classroom and taking a phenomenological approach to science.

The Living Classroom: Each Friday afternoon, (and for TK and kindergarten students, daily) students will engage in outdoor learning as part of a "Living Classroom." For kindergarteners, that might mean working in the school garden, or taking a neighborhood walk to identify trees and other flora in the area immediately surrounding the campus. In grades 1-8, students will integrate science, math, history/social science lessons aligned to their Main Lessons via engagement with the surrounding neighborhood, parks, the nearby Los Angeles National Forest, and even subway rides to visit other areas of Los Angeles. Language arts opportunities such as journaling and reflection, social-emotional learning via Council, and foraging, orienteering, map-making, and other life skills, will all be incorporated into Living Classroom activities. Where possible and pending funding, students will take overnight field trips to California wilderness areas to complement academic studies in botany, geology, astronomy and more. In the process of this experiential learning, children will take on team-building challenges such as setting up tents, cooking in the great outdoors, and gain a personal connection to the environment to learn what being a steward really means. They will also learn to take personal responsibility in a way that they cannot do at home with their parents waiting in the wings to help out.

Phenomenological Approach to Science: Based on Goethe's phenomenology of nature, a phenomenological approach to science is one that uses careful observation as its foundation and takes a qualitative approach to research and experimentation as a starting point.¹²⁴ Students at El Rio will study the world around them through the lens of what they can actually observe and experience, with Living Classroom activities and projects an integral part of this experience. Students will be given an opportunity to experience a phenomenon, and then to try and connect their experience to laws or relationships. Whereas in a traditional science setting, students are given the laws and relationships, then guided through a proof of why they hold true, in a phenomenological approach thinking becomes active and there is room to question deeply and make room for new insights. In this way, science at El Rio will take a phenomenological approach, encouraging students to experience the world beginning from sense impressions that

¹²³ El Rio will comply with all District policies and procedures for parent volunteers engaged in activities with children.

¹²⁴ Skafnesmo, T. (2009, May). Goethe's Phenomenology of Nature: A Juvenilization of Science. In *Biology Forum/Rivista di Biologia* (Vol. 102, No. 2).

come from careful observation. Inquiry is the starting point, and from it, looking and discovery. In this way, students will be free to come to their own conclusions, to create connections and look for relationships between perceptions, and finally form concepts, unlike in traditional science education, which begins with assumptions and deductions. We will incorporate the NGSS standards which guide all scientific teaching and learning, and our overarching goal will be to continually provide opportunities for students to explore the world with wonder and foster lifelong scientific curiosity for all learners.

Area of Study	TK/Kindergarten	Grades 1 and 2	Grade 3	Grade 4
Study of the natural world Listen to and reenact stories with ecological themes	Observation and exploration of “Outdoor Classroom” and of local surroundings during weekly nature walks	On-going Nature Studies class: observation and exploration of local surroundings, nature activities and seasonal crafts	Geography of local surroundings Farming and gardening Shelters, clothing, and fibers 2 day organic farm trip	Geography of our state and region Zoology Trip to zoo or animal park
Study of human beings and their relationship to the environment	Listen to and reenact stories with ecological themes	Listen to and reenact stories with ecological themes Trips to pumpkin farm, ocean, local open spaces, etc.	Cultural history of dwelling, food, clothing, measurement, and farming methods around the world Weekly gardening and cooking classes Host or trips to local artisans and craftspeople Local trip, survival skills	Cultural history of local region and state Biographies of famous environmental figures Emphasis on importance of human being’s responsibility for animals in zoology studies
Promoting healthy living habits	Help teachers with daily environmentally conscious responsibilities such as sorting trash and caring for indoor/outdoor plants	Daily environmentally conscious responsibilities Composting, gardening, cleaning Local walks	Daily environmentally conscious responsibilities Development of self-sufficiency through building, textiles, cooking, and gardening Local walks	Daily environmentally conscious responsibilities Native garden tending

Area of Study	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Study of the natural world	Geography of our continent Botany Study of insects Trips to study botany	World geography through earth science: biomes, geology, physics, and astronomy Hiking trip to the mountains Astronomy overnight	World geography and history Physics Anatomy and nutrition Inorganic chemistry Wilderness experience	World geography: peoples of the earth, meteorology, physics, anatomy and physiology, organic chemistry Class trip
Study of human being's relationship to the environment	Cultural histories and biographies of environmental stewards in relation to regions of the United States Cultural histories/technological developments of ancient India and Middle East to the Age of ancient Greece Trips to a wastewater treatment center, beekeeper, and plant nursery	Cultural histories/technological developments of ancient Rome to the Middle Ages and in relation to geography of Europe, Asia, Africa, and Arabian Peninsula Biographies of Environmental stewards Developing an eco-friendly business in Business Math Trip to landfill	Cultural histories/technological developments of the Renaissance and Reformations around the world Study of human being as synthesis through anatomy and physiology studies Tall ship sailing experience	Cultural histories/technological developments of Revolutions to present day Biographies of environmental stewards Visit environmental high school and/or sustainable community Application of scientific principles in industry Trips to factory and museums
Promoting healthy habits	Daily environmentally conscious responsibilities Gardening	Daily environmentally conscious responsibilities Leadership in school's recycling and composting	Daily environmentally conscious responsibilities Nutrition and hygiene addressed in human anatomy and physiology, and chemistry	Daily environmentally conscious responsibilities Nutrition and hygiene addressed in human anatomy and physiology, and chemistry

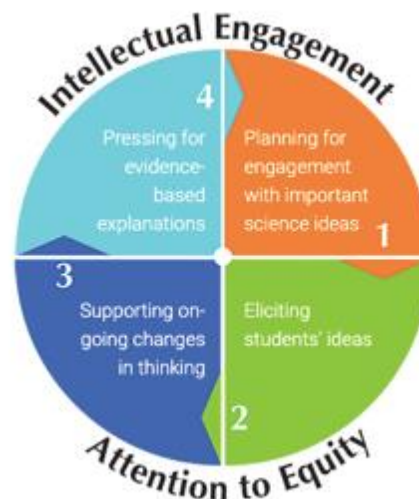
El Rio will use the Ambitious Science Teaching Framework to ensure its phenomenological approach to science is aligned with the Universal Design for Learning strategies and the seven core principles in public Waldorf education.

Ambitious Science Teaching Framework

The Ambitious Science Teaching Framework will provide teachers with a clear learning cycle for science education that contextualizes and deepens the strategies outlined in the schoolwide UDL Framework. In practice, Ambitious Science Teaching (AST) looks like:

- Teachers anchoring their instruction in complex and puzzling natural events¹
- Students engaging in multiple rounds of creating and revising scientific models, explanations and evidence-based arguments¹
- Teachers using a variety of discourse strategies with students to get them to think deeply and to respond to each other's thinking¹
- Students prompting each other to engage in sense-making talk during investigations and other activities¹
- Students' ideas being represented publicly and worked on by the class¹
- Teachers using specialized tools and routines to support students who are not willing or able to participate without help¹
- Students speaking up about what information or experiences they need to move their thinking forward¹

These practices align with the strategies outlined in the UDL Framework as well as the 7 principles of public Waldorf education. AST is supported by four sets of core practices that work together throughout every unit of study. These practices start with designing units of instruction (*Planning for engagement with important science ideas*); they then focus on making visible what students currently know about the science being taught (*Eliciting students' ideas*); they help the teacher guide sense-making talk around investigations and other kinds of lab activities or readings (*Supporting on-going changes in thinking*); and finally they help the teacher scaffold students' efforts to put everything together near the end of a unit (*Pressing for evidence-based explanations*).



¹<https://ambitiousscienceteaching.org/get-started/>

Curriculum and Instruction

Key Features and Components of the El Rio Curriculum

El Rio Community School's curricular and instructional design will be based on CCSS/NGSS and the Frameworks for Instructional Design, integrated and taught within the context of a Waldorf-based, developmentally attuned curriculum, along with innovative elements that might be considered

“Waldorf 2.0” for the 21st century, the public sector, and that are responsive to the particular needs of the children of this community. While we practically treat aspects of the curriculum as “core,” because we consider the development of the whole child being in balance and healthy to be essential, we note that the traditional “core” subjects of ELA, Math, Science and Social Science will be taught by appropriately credentialed teachers. El Rio’s educational team will be made up of highly qualified teachers who meet federal and state requirements for credentials as well as meeting the qualifications for or working toward Waldorf certification. Qualified teachers who meet field-specific requirements will run our specialty programs.

Curriculum

English Language Art (Core)

The ELA curriculum is based on California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, along with the *Reading / Language Arts Framework*; as well as the *California English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking*.¹²⁵ El Rio’s developmental approach to ELA and ELD mirrors human history: literacy is introduced first through stories and pictures followed by letter forms in order to deeply learn the rudiments of writing and then reading. This process is accompanied by phonetic work in songs, poems, and games, helping to establish a joyful and living experience of language. As teachers loop with their classes, they will engage in vertical articulation, and collaborate with their peers to integrate ELA strands into other core classroom learning. All faculty will emphasize close reading and informational text, aligned with grade level expectations in the standards.

The curriculum will be based on leveled readers and books from CDE-recommended grade level reading lists, publisher texts and teacher-created curricula using a variety of resources to enhance student learning. English Learners and students who are struggling are provided access to reading materials through use of leveled libraries with high-interest books at all levels, one-on-one reading tutoring; and partner reading. Since students develop more quickly as fluent readers and writers if they have had numerous opportunities to listen to fluent readers, students will listen to fluent readers frequently through shared reading, read-alouds, books on tape, and listening centers.

On a daily basis, all students will engage in reading, writing, speaking and listening activities to become fluent readers who comprehend and value literature, and are competent writers, articulate speakers and thoughtful listeners who can communicate effectively. In all grades, letter and word study will include spelling instruction and targeted vocabulary development. Letter and Word Study in the primary grades (TK/K-2) will focus primarily on phonics instruction in which sounds/spellings are introduced systematically and sequentially, taught in isolation, blended into whole words, and practiced in decodable texts. Spelling instruction and word-work activities allow students to practice sound/spelling patterns by building, manipulating, and sorting words to reinforce decoding and word attack skills. Classroom word walls will contribute to a print-rich environment, and word wall games and activities will reinforce learning. Spelling instruction will be based on a student’s developmental stage, as determined by administration of Words Their Way Qualitative Spelling Inventory. Targeted vocabulary development at all levels will be aimed at making sure students acquire new word knowledge and increase their depth of knowledge over time. Instruction in specific words and concepts will occur through explicit teaching and modeling when words are conceptually difficult. For example, teachers pre-teach vocabulary that is important to student understanding of the content or due to its usefulness or general utility.

Beginning in kindergarten, teachers in every grade will guide students through the writing process so that students become independent writers who can write on demand for a variety of audiences and purposes, namely opinion/argument pieces, informative/ explanatory texts, and narratives. Students

¹²⁵ <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/rl/cf/elaeldfrmwrksbeadopted.asp>

will write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence; informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content; and narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

In all classrooms, teachers will provide students with multiple opportunities to explore oral communication and master speaking and listening skills. For example, students will develop active and responsive listening skills through class and small group discussions, oral presentations and reports. Each teacher will use scaffolding strategies to help English Learners build confidence in communicating information and ideas. Teachers will develop specific rubrics based on ELA and ELD standards that they share with students in order to communicate expectations. These rubrics will provide students with an understanding of the components of effective speaking and listening.

TK/Kindergarten: Literacy skills will be developed indirectly through a language-rich environment of complex storytelling and other imaginative oral speech and literature such as rhythmic poetry, nursery rhymes, songs, and puppetry.

First Grade: Speech exercises, oral retelling and recapitulation of lesson content; formal introduction to letters, writing and reading through story, images and phonics; fairytales from around the world; poetry recitation, speech, spelling, simple sentences.

Second Grade: Speech exercises, oral retelling and recapitulation of lesson content; elements of grammar including adjectives; spelling, reading: using context, word recognition, reading out loud; animal fables and legends from around the world, with particular attention to stories from students' ancestries and from foreign languages being studied; writing teacher generated paragraphs and writing student generated paragraphs.

Third Grade: Speech exercises, oral retelling and recapitulation of lesson content; elements of grammar: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs; beginning cursive handwriting; punctuation; composition; spelling; recitation; reading for different purposes; world creation myths.

Fourth Grade: Speech exercises, oral retelling and recapitulation of lesson content; elements of grammar; continuing cursive; punctuation; book reports and creative writing; summaries of lesson content; Norse mythology; oral presentations; play reading; reading fluency with class readers; spelling, using a dictionary.

Fifth Grade: Speech exercises, oral retelling and recapitulation of lesson content; elements of grammar; continuing cursive; punctuation; mechanics: continued work on capitalization and punctuation; dictionary skills; reading comprehension; introducing the three-part composition; Greek myths; report writing.

Sixth Grade: Speech exercises, oral retelling and recapitulation of lesson content; biographies; oral reports; business letters; spelling; essay writing: narrative, descriptive, and expository; distinguishing between fact and opinion; the Ramayana; grammar work will continue including the study of syntax; assigned reading.

Seventh Grade: Speech exercises, oral retelling and recapitulation of lesson content; creative writing; grammar: phrases; distinction between formal and informal expression; fragments and run-on sentences; spelling and punctuation; assigned reading; classical literature; lyric poetry; play writing; letter writing; three-part essay writing; Shakespeare.

Eighth Grade: Speech exercises, oral retelling and recapitulation of lesson content; epic poetry; non-fiction; short story as a genre; literary elements of plot, characterization, setting, mood, and theme; grammar: complex sentences and dependent clauses; essential and non-essential clauses and their punctuation; sentence combining using these devices; consistency of verb tense; composition; assigned reading; business and practical writing; writing process; continued work on three part essay: developing cogent expository writing and thesis statements; research skills and note-taking, outlining, bibliography, MLA standards; 8th grade project and presentation.

English Language Development

The ELD program will implement both the California ELD Standards and the English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework for California Public Schools (ELA/ELD Framework). ELD will be integrated into the Main Lesson and all other learning, along with 30 minutes of daily Designated ELD, differentiated for individual learners as determined by their fluency levels. Designated ELD will be based on DataWork's Launch to Literacy and Link to Literacy curriculum, a standards-aligned program that is structured in a way that the message of how to read, write, and use language is consistent with how English is taught to native speakers. This systematic, synthetic phonics approach begins with simple skills and concepts and advances in complexity as students advance from starting to developing English learners. For older students (grades 3 and up), Intensive Explicit Direct Instruction lessons cover a range of topics such as: using simple verb tenses, determining the meaning of words using context clues, and determining the main purpose of a text. Flashcards are also incorporated throughout the curriculum to address topics like antonyms, homophones, and multiple-meaning words.

English Learners at El Rio will have many opportunities to engage in meaningful language practices at an appropriate level of challenge and complexity. As described more fully in the section on English Learners below, at El Rio, ELD instruction:

- Will emphasize listening and speaking, although it can incorporate reading and writing
- Will explicitly teach elements of English (e.g., vocabulary, syntax, grammar, functions and conventions)
- Will be planned and delivered with specific language objectives for each lesson
- Will integrate meaning and communication to support explicit teaching of language
- Will Include carefully planned interactive activities among students
- Will provide students with corrective feedback on form
- Will emphasize academic language as well as conversational language
- Will continue until students meet reclassification criteria
- Will be offered in designated and integrated structures – designated will feature differentiated curricula by level

The overall structure of the approach for English Learners will be primarily based on the Sheltered Instructional Observation Protocol (SIOP). The SIOP model is a research proven framework for meeting the needs of English Learners in ways that are in alignment with Waldorf educational methodologies. El Rio teachers will become adept at using best practices from the SIOP model as part of their professional development. Explicit support strategies for English Learners will include:

- Collaborative, engaging and purposeful teaching strategies
- Connecting content with students' prior knowledge to build context and meaning
- Authentic learning experiences, including project-based approaches
- Increased focus on conceptual understanding and learning
- Arts infused learning as well movement activities

- Scaffolding techniques to temporarily support students as they develop proficiency
- Predictable rhythms, routines and schedules
- Safe learning environments that build community and reward risk-taking
- Use of manipulatives, graphic organizers, and other hands-on tools
- Reading and writing workshops
- Building phonological awareness and explicitly teaching academic vocabulary

Mathematics (Core)

Math curriculum will be based on California's Common Core Content and Practice Standards and Frameworks for instructional design. El Rio's math curriculum will be built to hone students' logical and critical thinking, as well as develop an appreciation for the clarity and beauty of the laws of mathematics. Math concepts will be introduced not only conceptually but also kinesthetically and artistically to ensure access and understanding for all types of learners. The curriculum imparts the standard components of mathematical knowledge necessary for success in high school and beyond: arithmetic, fractions and decimals, percentages, measurement, algebra, ratios, geometry, number bases, and more. The goals of the math curriculum are for students to gain fluency with numbers, build mathematical reasoning skills, develop a strong math vocabulary, and apply algebraic concepts to problem solving. Ultimately, El Rio aims to equip all students with the skills and knowledge necessary to complete Algebra I successfully by the end of eighth grade.

Jo Boaler's *Mindset Mathematics* series will serve as the primary base for our mathematics curriculum. The *Mindset* program utilizes visualization, play and investigation, along with current brain research, to promote active student engagement. It features open, creative and visual math tasks that improve student test scores and ensure a positive relationship to mathematics. Teachers will also utilize various instructional resources and hands-on activities (e.g., manipulatives, games, measuring, patterning, cooking and art projects) that enable students to learn by doing and relate math concepts and skills to their lives. Students will be supported through small group and one-on-one intervention, consistent practice towards mastery and speed in basic computations, increased time for problem-solving activities, and other strategies. El Rio teachers also will adopt Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI), a methodology for problem solving in which students are sense-makers who actively participate in the learning process. CGI has three major components: number sense routines (warm ups or mental math to engage students at the start of a lesson), problem solving (using real-world problems for students to devise solutions and communicate their strategies), and counting collections (used in lower grades as students count by 1s, and then larger sets).

TK/Kindergarten: The qualities of numbers; sorting and ordering; rhythm counting with movement and song; measuring in baking and cooking; woodworking.

First Grade: Qualities of numbers; counting to at least to 100; written numerals, both Arabic and Roman; introduction to the four operations of arithmetic: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division; mental arithmetic; times tables of 2, 3, 5, 10; addition and subtraction facts to 20.

Second Grade: Review of all work so far; continue with four operations of arithmetic; addition and subtraction into multiple digits; multiplication into multiple-digit multiplicands; culturally diverse story problems; counting by 2, 3, 5, and 10; beginning multiplication tables; graphs and tables; place value to 1,000; mental math, including word problems; odd and even numbers; introduction and practice with place value; read calendar and other beginning story elements related to time; regrouping, estimation.

Third Grade: Review of all work so far; Higher multiplication tables through 12; culturally diverse word problems, verbally and in print; mental arithmetic; standardized measures of length, distance, weight, volume, money, time; ability to convert in denominations of those measures, i.e. hours to days to weeks, dollars to dimes, gallons to quarts, feet to miles, place value to 10,000; estimation and rounding off; increasingly difficult whole number operations: addition and subtraction, multiple-digit long multiplication, introduction of multiple-digit long division.

Fourth Grade: Review of all work so far; mastery of multiplication tables 1 - 12; addition, subtraction, and division facts to 25; four digit multiplication; long division; fractions; equivalent fractions; converting improper fractions to mixed numbers and vice versa; factoring; four processes with fractions; rules of divisibility, prime numbers, and composite numbers; least common multiple and greatest common factor; mental math; measurement, conversion, freehand drawing and identification of lines and angles, classification of shapes by properties of their lines and angles.

Fifth Grade: Review of all work so far; mental arithmetic, including mental arithmetic with fractions; decimals; place value with decimals; all operations with decimals, including rounding off; decimal/fraction conversion; comparative values of decimals and fractions, and operations that involve both simultaneously, i.e. $5.2 - 7\frac{2}{3}$; fractions; metric system; activities exploring the wonder of number, patterns in multiplication tables, etc.

Sixth Grade: Review of all work so far; mental math; whole numbers, fractions, and decimals; ratios; percent; percent as conversions of and equal values to fractions and decimals; applications of percent to various practical situations; proportions; geometric drawing with instruments; use of protractor to measure and construct angles; construction of basic angles; geometry of quadrilaterals, areas and perimeters; business math: history of money; simple interest; commissions, rates, unit pricing, discount, mark-up, tips; algebra; graphing (bar, circle, line); mean, median, and mode; geometric formulas with plane and solid shapes; positive and negative numbers; strategies for problem-solving, puzzles, logic exercises.

Seventh Grade: Review of all work so far; mental math; unit pricing, rates of increase and decrease, multi-step applications; Algebra/equations; geometry: review of quadrilaterals, extend to trapezoids and irregular quadrilaterals; circles: deriving formulae for circumference and area; geometry of line and angle; Fibonacci numbers, Golden Ratio, Golden Rectangle, etc.; Pythagorean theorem; area/perimeter/volume; linear graphing; powers and roots; finding approximate square root of any number; problem-solving.

Eighth Grade: Review all work so far; mental math; Algebra; quadratic equations; number bases; decimal system in expanded notation and scientific notation; binary system, including four operations in it; solid geometry; problem solving: situation problems, puzzles, challenges, and logic, figuring out how to solve problems in various ways without obvious algorithms.

History-Social Science (Core)

The California Common Core State Standards and the recently adopted California State Framework for Social Studies and History (2016) will provide a foundation for students' learning in history/social science. At El Rio, the study of history and social science begins with folk and fairy tales and continues to mythology and legends; stories from the Bible, Qur'an, Ramayana; and other cultural texts from around the world. In middle and upper grades students study original source documents, biographies and autobiographies. By living in these cultures through their legends, literature, and stories of important individuals, students gain flexibility and an appreciation for humankind's diversity. By the end of 8th grade, students have journeyed from origin myths and ancient civilizations to the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Age of Exploration, through the various revolutions to the present day.

Students will be encouraged to ask questions and make decisions that will impact the future, learning how to be active and engaged citizens in a global society. The history-social science curriculum will:

- Focus on mastery of California Common Core State Standards
- Emphasize scientific inquiry to ask and answer questions about events that shaped history, and to pursue answers to events currently taking place
- Encourage participation as local, national and global citizens
- Make connections between past and present people, places and events in history
- Identify geographical, historical, and environmental components of California

Broad social studies themes and content will include topics such as family life, culture, community, the environment, economics, and state/national/world history. All content will be integrated across disciplines with connections to mathematics, science, and art. Multimedia resources, hands-on experiences (e.g., cultural artifacts) and field trips will be utilized as much as possible to enhance the curriculum. Online resources may be used for supplemental research and information in upper grades. Teachers will focus on reinforcing and employing reading comprehension, writing, and listening/speaking standards as they teach social science content. Students will have access to primary and secondary historical sources, maps, charts, and timelines from which to draw information about the time periods and cultures being studied. Teachers will use graphic organizers, charts, visual aids and other similar resources to support development of analytic skills and to assist English Learners.

TK/Kindergarten: Multicultural stories, rhymes and songs; archetypal stories about human relationships, challenges and quests are presented from culturally diverse sources; through anticipation of and preparation for seasonal festivals, students gain a sense of the cycles of the seasons and the passing of time. Geography: home surroundings of the school - land, plants, and animals at and near our school; the water cycle.

First Grade: Multicultural stories, myths and legends; archetypal stories about human relationships, challenges, and quests are presented from culturally diverse sources; through anticipation of and preparation for seasonal festivals, students gain a sense of the cycles of the seasons and the passing of time. Geography: home surroundings of the school - land, plants, and animals at and near our school; the water cycle.

Second Grade: Multicultural stories, myths and legends focused on world heroes/heroines, particularly changemakers such as Buddha, Gandhi, Cesar Chavez, Eleanor Roosevelt, Martin Luther King, and Mother Teresa; Jataka tales. Geography: home surroundings of where students live - land, plants, and animals; the water cycle; seasonal stories relating human beings to a living earth.

Third Grade: History: students will be brought into a sense of linear time through the teaching of time as it relates to the day, month, year, and seasons. Geography: The curriculum will provide the student with the opportunity to learn about three essential, practical requirements for all of humankind—how we work with nature to provide ourselves with food, clothing, and shelter. “Bird’s eye view” of the farm as an introduction to elementary map-making. Seasonal activities relating to man’s responsibility as a steward of the earth.

Fourth Grade: Local and California history, with a particular focus on the indigenous people of the local area; family histories of the students. Geography: Local and California geography; map making.

Fifth Grade: Ancient civilizations: Mayan, Indian, Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Persian, Greek. Geography: American geography as related to states study; vegetation; agriculture; culture and economics; geography of ancient civilizations; mapping.

Sixth Grade: Roman and Medieval History; Ancient Chinese History. Geography: European geography; Asian geography; map making.

Seventh Grade: The Renaissance; Age of Exploration; beginnings of modern science. African Histories and the slave trade. Geography: Africa, Central and South America; ocean currents, world wind and weather patterns; latitude and longitude; map making.

Eighth Grade: Study of revolutions: French, Russian, Haitian, Industrial, American, and technological; American history; current events. Geography: world geography; map making.

Science (Core)

El Rio will use the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), which emphasize and align to our goals through inquiry-oriented investigations, real-life application, and interdisciplinary thinking about scientific concepts (www.nextgenscience.org). At El Rio, science will be taught experientially, which develops independent thinking and sound judgement. Through this process, the teacher will set up an experiment, then invite students to carefully observe, ponder and discuss, allowing them to discover the resulting law, formula, or scientific principle on their own. Students will be expected to demonstrate in course projects: how to apply the scientific method to design controlled experiments; the ability to analyze and interpret qualitative and quantitative data; how to apply scientific writing skills to communicate conclusions from scientific data; and the ability to apply scientific knowledge and research to current social and world issues.

Additionally, through our Friday afternoon Living Classroom time, students will learn about nature through direct experience of the natural world, advancing to the study of Zoology, Botany, Mineralogy, Astronomy, Physics (including Optics, Thermal Physics, Acoustics, Static and Current Electricity, Magnetism, Mechanics), and Physiology. The science program will:

- Focus on mastery of Next Generation Science Standards
- Emphasize science as a process of formulating and answering questions about the physical world and encourage students to pursue answers to their own scientific queries
- Promote appreciation of the natural world and develop skills such as hypothesis formulation, identification, experimentation, evaluation, documentation and presentation
- Provide meaningful scientific experiments that enable for students to make real-life connections.

TK/Kindergarten: Cooking, baking; nature stories; nature walks and observations; gardening.

First Grade: Imaginative nature stories of land, plant, the water cycle, and animal life; nature walks; observations; gardening; observing seasonal changes.

Second Grade: Imaginative nature stories of land, plant, the water cycle, and animal life, garden and nature studies; observation and inquiry.

Third Grade: Farming - life of land, crops, and animals that provide food and clothing to people; and gardening: planting and maintaining an organic garden; ecosystems; shelters - house building past and present, here and in other world cultures.

Fourth Grade: Zoology; habitats; the web of life/food chain; in connection to local geography - mining, desert formation, coastal landscapes, and mountain building.

Fifth Grade: Botany; plant reproductive systems; continuation of garden and nature studies; lab work; field work; biomes. Integrated in geography studies - continental water drainage systems, mountain building and aging, weather and climate.

Sixth Grade: Mineralogy; physics - acoustics, electricity, magnetism, optics, and heat; beginning astronomy; continuation of garden and nature studies.

Seventh Grade: Physics: optics; acoustics; mechanics; human physiology and sexuality; astronomy continued; inorganic chemistry; nutrition.

Eighth Grade: Physics; organic chemistry; human anatomy - skeletal system; meteorology, climate and environmental studies integrated into geography blocks.

Visual and Performing Arts (Non-Core)

TK/Kindergarten: Art: Wet-on-wet watercolor painting focused on color experiences that are unconnected to form, using color stories to guide the children, crayon illustrations. Performing Arts: Reenacting fairy tales and stories from the curriculum for classmates. Music: Singing in morning circle and throughout the day

First Grade: Art: form drawing - straight and curved lines and variations thereof; wet-on-wet watercolor painting, emphasizing an experience of working with color, rather than creating formed pictures; beeswax modeling; crayon illustrations; handwriting: printing of upper and lowercase letters; clay modeling, Performing Arts: class play that originates from the curriculum. Music: singing; pentatonic flute: develops finger coordination, concentration, and breath control.

Second Grade: Art: form drawing; wet-on-wet watercolor painting with complementary colors; beeswax modeling; handwriting: printing of upper and lowercase letters: crayon illustrations. Performing Arts: class play that originates from the curriculum. Music: singing up to an octave; pentatonic flute, singing in rounds by end of year

Third Grade: Art: form drawing; beeswax modeling; clay modeling; handwriting: cursive; drawing. Performing Arts: class play that originates from the curriculum; strings concert. Music: singing in rounds and parts; recorder; beginning to read music. Introduction to stringed instrument playing.

Fourth Grade: Art: clay modeling; form drawing; wet-on-wet watercolor representational painting; drawing. Performing Arts: class play that originates from the curriculum; strings concert. Music: singing; recorder; Stringed instruments; continuing to read music

Fifth Grade: Art: calligraphy; form drawing; wet-on-wet watercolor painting; object drawing; clay modeling; woodworking; drawing. Performing Art: class play that originates from the curriculum; strings concert. Music: singing; stringed instruments; introduction of wind instrument playing; reading music.

Sixth Grade: Form drawing; tissue paper stained glass; designing crests, watercolor painting, charcoal drawing; woodworking. Performing Arts: class play that originates from the curriculum; strings, winds, and choral concert. Art electives: photography, animation, jewelry making. Music electives: ukulele, percussion, chorus, string or wind instruments.

Seventh Grade: Art: perspective drawing; Platonic solids; Chiaroscuro technique; veil painting; clay modeling; pastel drawing. Performing Arts: class play that originates from the curriculum; strings, winds and choral concert. Art electives: photography, animation, jewelry making. Music electives: ukulele, percussion, chorus, string or wind instruments.

Eighth Grade: Black and white drawing; clay modeling; watercolor painting. Performing Arts: class play that originates from the curriculum; strings concert. Art electives: photography, animation, jewelry making. Music electives: ukulele, percussion, chorus, string or wind instruments.

Practical Arts (Non-Core)

TK/Kindergarten: Handwork: finger knitting, hand sewing pouches and small seasonal crafts, wet felting

First Grade: Handwork: making wooden knitting needles; knitting will be practiced to develop concentration, fine motor skills, visual tracking, and sequencing.

Second Grade: Handwork: knitting patterns to knit and purl developing pattern recognition and perpetuation, concentration, fine motor skill development, resulting in specific projects such as rabbits, balls, and hats.

Third Grade: Handwork: crocheting will be practiced to develop pattern and placement recognition, and finger dexterity; knitting will be continued, with the class making hats for the homeless for community service.

Fourth Grade: Handwork: cross-stitch, elements of design: symmetry, lightness, heaviness, and color intensity; embroidery; simple sewing.

Fifth Grade: Handwork: 4 needle knitting; knitting in the round; making socks, mittens, or hats. Woodwork: improve visual motor skills and two hands coordination by making woodworking projects such as eggs or spinning tops; sequencing in a project; will also learn the to follow directions and work safely.

Sixth Grade: Handwork: embroidery; hand-sewing stuffed animals. Woodwork: promoting creativity and ability to self-correct work by making serving spoons, or bowls.

Seventh Grade: Handwork: design and construct hand-made doll and clothes. Woodwork: Encourage diligent work and self-motivation; acknowledge the beauty of their work by designing and making a toy with movable parts.

Eighth Grade: Handwork: machine sewing designing and making bags and clothes. Woodwork: Improve time management; enjoy work by making a 3-legged stool.

Movement/Games (P.E./Health) (Non-Core)

Students will be exposed to a variety of physical movement activities and health lessons that will suit diverse learning styles and skills, based on the *Physical Education Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve*. Through focused instruction on campus during Movement/Games (akin to P.E.) class periods as well as through our “Living Classroom” sessions on Fridays that will include hiking, climbing, physically active games and myriad outdoor activities, students will all receive at least 200 minutes of P.E. instruction every two weeks.

TK/Kindergarten: Daily walks around campus, weekly walks around the neighborhood, frequent hikes in Debs Park and other local natural areas led by faculty and parents.

First Grade: Gross motor movement such as skipping, hopping, galloping, starting and stopping are practiced and combined with pace and rhythm; singing, hand clapping, circle, and imitation games.

Second Grade: Gross motor movement such as skipping, hopping, galloping, jumping and sliding, and matching these movements to pace and rhythm; singing, hand clapping, circle, and imitation games; chasing, dodging, jumping rope, and striking a ball.

Third Grade: Continuity and change in movement; hand clapping, circle, and imitation games; Order and sequence of movement through a variety of gross motor control skills such as running, dribbling a ball, skipping, jumping to match rhythm, speed and motion.

Fourth Grade: Manipulating objects in and through space. Throwing, kicking, catching, striking, dribbling, passing, transferring weight from feet to hands, jumping and landing for height and distance, practicing balance with various objects. Development of endurance and cardiovascular capacity.

Fifth Grade: Manipulating objects with accuracy and speed. Usage of fundamental strategies, practice, and coordination. Skill games with and without balls. Balancing food intake with activity. Responsible personal behavior, distinguishing between unsafe/safe and following/ignoring rules. Olympic sports: running, jumping, discus, javelin, wrestling, culminating in a multi-school Pentathlon; preparation and practice for the Fitness Test.

Sixth Grade: Working cooperatively to achieve a common goal. Throwing, dribbling; dance; identifying the five components of fitness; participation in vigorous activity for 20 minutes. Knowing warm-up and cool-down activities and how to measure heart rate. Being able to offer rule changes that improve a game. Team cooperation and effective practice. Introduction to team sports, such as volleyball, basketball, and flag football; keeping score; learning to outwit an opponent during activities like jousting, tug of war and "steplechase"/obstacle course in preparation for an inter-school Medieval Games event.

Seventh Grade: Meeting challenges and making decisions; performing a variety of dances; offering basic offensive / defensive strategies; participation in vigorous activity for 20 minutes; knowing warm-up and cool-down activities and how to measure heart rate; offering rule changes to improve a game; team cooperation. Track & Field events: running, sprinting, long jump, shot put, hammer, hurdles; participation in annual multi-school Track and Field Meet, push-ups, team sports.

Eighth Grade: Working as a team to solve problems; basic offense/defense strategies; participation in vigorous activity for 20 minutes; knowing warm-up and cool-down activities and how to measure heart rate; offering rule changes to improve game; team cooperation; team sports and fitness; participation in annual multi-school Track and Field Meet.

World Languages (Non-Core)

El Rio's foreign language program will incorporate the California World Language Standards and the California Framework for Foreign Language, K-12. In Grades 1-5 students will take both Spanish and Mandarin classes for 45 minutes two times per week. In Grades 6-8 students will choose to continue their studies in either Spanish or Mandarin and will have 45 minutes of language instruction four times per week.

TK/Kindergarten: Seasonal Spanish and Mandarin songs and poems as part of morning circle

First Grade: Mandarin and Spanish will be taught through plays, songs, rhythms, and games, and through connecting to global pen pals/other classrooms in Spanish and Mandarin speaking countries.

Second Grade: Mandarin and Spanish will continue: songs, plays, poetry, stories counting, games, and simple conversations.

Third Grade: Mandarin and Spanish continued with songs, plays, and conversations; absorption of the languages is accomplished through the use of imitation, repetition, and rhythm.

Fourth Grade: Mandarin and Spanish immersion will continue with writing, reading, and poetry.

Fifth Grade: Mandarin and Spanish immersion will continue; verb tenses; simple reading and conversation.

Sixth Grade: Mandarin and Spanish will continue with speaking, reading and writing.

Seventh Grade: Mandarin and Spanish will continue with speaking, reading, and writing.

Eighth Grade: Reading, writing and speaking in Mandarin and Spanish.

Environmental Stewardship (Non-Core)

Incorporating interdisciplinary standards from ELA, Math, Science and Social Science, El Rio's environmental stewardship curriculum will bring students into nature and emphasize hands-on experiences.

TK/Kindergarten: Stories told about the cycles of life and death in nature. Instilling eco-literacy through nature walks and hikes. Gardening, recycling and composting.

First Grade: Stories told about the cycles of life and death in nature. Stories about nature that teach students about their place in the ecosystem and their personal ability to effect change. Instilling eco-literacy through nature walks and hikes. Gardening, recycling and composting.

Second Grade: Stories with themes of transformation teach the concept of evolution in an imaginative way, laying a metaphorical foundation for the forces of nature that will be studied scientifically later. Stories of heroic individuals, such as the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Henry David Thoreau, or Jane Goodall teach students about their unique place in the ecosystem and their personal ability to affect change. Instilling eco-literacy through nature walks and hikes. Gardening, recycling and composting.

Third Grade: Creation myths from different cultures about the origins of the earth and human beings will lead to the idea that the whole world is a single holistic environment. Gardening and farming curriculum reinforce lessons about nature and the seasons. Instilling eco-literacy through nature walks and hikes. Gardening, recycling and composting.

Fourth Grade: Students will learn and describe the many unique aspects of their local environment with a special focus on the human interaction with the animal kingdom. Instilling eco-literacy through nature walks and hikes. Gardening, recycling and composting.

Fifth Grade: American regional and physical geography related to vegetation, animals, and agriculture will be studied to develop a greater understanding of the interconnectedness of life and environment, particularly through the study of botany and zoology. Instilling eco-literacy through nature walks and hikes. Gardening, recycling and composting.

Sixth Grade: Global geography will provide studies in different peoples and cultures in reference to their natural environments. Continued gardening, recycling and composting.

Seventh Grade: Focus will be on food choices and nutrition by investigating the effects of food production, diet, and nutrition on human health and the environment. Continued gardening, composting and recycling.



Eighth Grade: Focus on sources, production, uses, and environmental effects of energy in the study of the historical birth of the industrial age and the economic globalization of today. Field trips and field study are a large part of learning. Continued gardening, composting and recycling.

Digital Literacy (Non-Core)

Cyber Civics was first developed for the Journey School, a Waldorf charter school in Orange County, California. The three-year program focuses on critical thinking, problem solving, and ethical discussions that address digital media issues.

Third Grade: Typing and keyboarding in preparation for standardized testing.

Fourth Grade: Typing and keyboarding in preparation for standardized testing.

Fifth Grade: Cyber Civics

Sixth Grade: Cyber Civics

Seventh Grade: Cyber Civics; robotics

Eighth Grade: Cyber Civics; coding

INNOVATIVE CURRICULAR COMPONENTS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

As detailed throughout the previous sections, El Rio is being carefully designed to incorporate an innovative, Waldorf-based holistic approach to education that includes the arts, world languages, environmental stewardship and technology in thoughtful ways tied to students' development. Through engaging the whole child on an academic, social-emotional and kinesthetic level, our approach offers multiple pathways to success and meets the needs of all students. Multi-disciplinary, project-based study, led by teachers that loop with classes for multiple years, ensures differentiated, specialized instruction tailored to each student's needs in an environment of trust and respect. Outdoor education and expeditionary learning opportunities take instruction beyond the classroom and grow students' capacities for wonder and curiosity about the natural world and their fellow human beings,

INTERVENTION AND ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

As detailed more fully below, El Rio will implement a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), beginning with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all children in the general education classroom. Struggling learners may participate in interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. These services may be offered by a variety of personnel, including general education teachers, special educators, and specialists. Each student's progress will be closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual students.

As detailed in the previous sections, enrichments at El Rio are integrated in all aspects of learning and are all-encompassing across the arts, multi-cultural and world language experiences, outdoor learning, PE/Health, and technology.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

El Rio teachers will choose from a diverse assortment of resources and materials to deliver the innovative and personalized curriculum, which will be standards-based and aligned with Waldorf principles. In designing each unit block for a particular class of students, class teachers will utilize materials available in our Teachers Resource Library, which will include both textbooks and primary source material, along with a wide variety of resources on child development and educational theory. Teachers also will rely on El Rio's Instructional Resources Bibliography (available upon request) which includes myriad standards-aligned resources across all grades and subjects. In addition to these resources, teachers at El Rio will draw upon a broad range of instructional resources to successfully bring standards-based Waldorf Education to their students and will continually update the bibliography to reflect current best practices, diversity, and the ever-growing canon of high-quality print materials.

Each class teacher will carefully tailor their presentations to feature stories and imagery that will engage the imaginations of their particular students, whom they will know well because of El Rio's looping practices. Recognizing that each student will need to see him or herself represented in story and image, and as part of El Rio's culturally responsive curriculum, class teachers will select source materials for stories and narratives that reflect and honor their students' cultural heritage. Each special subject teacher will also tailor their projects to suit the strengths and interests of that particular class.

Through dedicated summer training and planning time, ongoing professional development, and daily planning periods for class teachers, teachers will be given the freedom to thoughtfully create lessons for the children in their own classes, with access to a compendium of block outlines, lesson plans, rubrics, and authentic assessments El Rio will build over time that can serve as models and resources for teachers. Waldorf methods demonstration lessons, assistance from experienced colleagues, plus support and close supervision from the Educational Director will ensure that all teachers are structuring their lessons appropriately and integrating CCSS-aligned Waldorf methods in delivering the content. Teachers will also have a Public Waldorf CCSS-aligned scope and sequence for reference, as well as outlines for the key components and considerations for each block, along with suggested and example stories, artistic activities, and music. Through all of these supports, teachers will be given the scaffolding, along with the space and autonomy to create culturally responsive, differentiated lessons that are personalized for their particular group of children.

Standard textbooks will be used as a basis for lesson plans in math especially, and may be adopted at the middle school level. Teachers will be able to choose from a variety of instructional materials and decide on adoption together in collaboration with the Educational Director so that instruction can be taught in a focused and coherent manner across grade levels. Textbooks are a valuable resource for both teachers (in lesson planning) and students (as research materials) but it is important to note that textbooks do not drive decisions about what students learn - rather they are seen as part of a toolkit and used as a resource to deliver standards-based lessons. As a matter of course, books such as encyclopedias, atlases, dictionaries, and other reference material will always be available in the classroom. Assignments and projects will give students opportunities to gain competence in a variety of information-retrieval skills by the time they reach middle school.

A detailed bibliography already has been developed that includes dozens of resources for teachers and specific texts for students in each subject area (available upon request). The following includes a small sampling/summary of the resources we will use to create and build our curriculum.

English Language Arts	Selected multi-cultural/national fairy tales, fables, poems; Leveled Readers; selected novels; Norton anthologies; <i>Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction</i> ; <i>Grammar Series (Words are Categorical)</i> ; <i>LANGUAGE! Live California</i>
ELD	Launch to Literacy and <i>Link to Literacy</i>
Math	CGI; Marilyn Burns' Math & Literature series; Mindset Mathematics series; Rassmussen Key to Math series; Prentice Hall Pre-Algebra and Algebra
Science	Selected stories about science and nature; gardening books and stories; Harcourt Brace Science texts
Social Science/History	Multicultural literature, folk tales; Houghton Mifflin California History series; Bonnie Shemie's history books; selected texts re: world history, revolutions, etc.
World Languages	<i>EntreCulturas 1-3</i> ; <i>Andando Caminos: Teaching Spanish in Waldorf Schools</i> ; <i>Language Teaching in Steiner Waldorf Schools</i> ; <i>Integrated Chinese</i> .
Visual and Performing Arts (including Handwork, Woodwork, etc.)	Selected instructional manuals and research on knitting, woodworking,
P.E./Health (Games & Movement)	Selected instructional manuals on Waldorf approach to Games and Movement; <i>The Well Balanced Child: Movement and Early Learning</i> ; <i>Growing an In-Sync Child</i> ; <i>Kinesthetic Learning for Adolescents</i> .

The use of high quality artistic and other resource materials for creating Main Lesson books and student work will provide students a sense that their work is valued and will promote holding oneself to a high standard and completing work that is of the highest quality. Artist-quality colored pencils, paints, and crayons create richer colors, blend more easily to show more subtle hues and variations, and allow for detailed and beautiful writing, imagery, and designs. What follows is an overview of additional, Waldorf-based instructional materials.

In Kindergarten, instructional materials will be chosen to enhance the children's imaginary play, to deliver stories and songs that are rich in language and imagery, and to support the purposeful activities the children participate in daily. In the Kindergarten and lower grades, age-appropriate play materials, and instructional support tools will be selected or handmade natural materials such as silk, wood, and wool, giving students a sense of connection to their natural environment. Maintaining an environment of beauty and simplicity and avoiding busy-ness in classroom decor and materials will allow students to focus better and feel more relaxed and nurtured. These Waldorf instructional materials will support El Rio's approach to arts-integration within the framework of the CCSS.

In grades 1-8, teachers will use a wide variety of materials and resources, such as primary source materials, realia, manipulatives, visual aids, prepared worksheets, texts, vocabulary lists, maps, diagrams, and when appropriate, multimedia. The multi-disciplinary and thematic Main Lessons which will form the core of the day will be developed from primary sources, texts, and other relevant materials, and supplemented with field trips and experiential activities such as gardening, cooking, or building. Much of the Main Lesson will be delivered orally, then written on blackboards using hand-

drawn supportive imagery. The students will replicate it into specially designed blank books, known as Main Lesson Books, creating their own thematic subject or “text” books for each unit block. As students’ written skills develop, they will start to take their own notes, transposing them into text for their books, which they will also illustrate beautifully. These books will serve as an important record of learning that will provide teachers and parents with feedback on accomplishments and progress.

The class teacher will also be able to decide that instead of (or in addition to) Main Lesson Books, students will create either individual or group projects as another mode of demonstrating learning during the unit block. For example, at the end of a three-week block on the Renaissance, student work may include model flying machines a la Leonardo Da Vinci; a block on Projective Geometry could result in a Geodesic dome structure built on campus. For these special projects, El Rio will have a variety of recycled materials on hand in the Teachers’ Resource Library.

Web Resources

WE CAN: www.waldorfearlychildhood.org

Alliance for Childhood: www.allianceforchildhood.net

www.millennialchild.com

www.waldorfhomeschoolers.com

www.whywaldorfworks.org

www.live-education.com

Instructional Methods and Strategies

As detailed above, El Rio will address the CCSS, NGSS, and other state content standards, through an arts-integrated, project-based curriculum that holds students accountable to high academic standards and mastery of content based on key aspects of Waldorf education. The thematic, project-based approach is one that will emphasize learning through experience and hands-on learning that fosters multiple intelligences. The arts, kinesthetic learning, and narrative storytelling will be infused into every Main Lesson block and specialty class lesson, whether in Mandarin or mathematics, and this will allow for learning that will be joyful, engage the intellect at a developmentally appropriate level, and nurture creativity and the imagination.

Although teachers are given a great deal of flexibility in designing the integrated Main Lesson and other instructional periods in order to differentiate instruction for all learners, there are key structures, ample supports, teacher resources, and systems/processes by which instructors will be set up for success in terms of planning and implementing instruction.

Lesson Planning and Support

Preparation for each school year will begin in summer when all class teachers will attend the “Art of Teaching” week long workshops hosted at various Waldorf teacher training centers, including Ocean Charter School and the Waldorf Institute of Southern California. There, teachers will be deeply immersed in grade-level curriculum design, instructional strategies, and classroom management tools, as well as child development and brain research study. Teachers return home armed with tools to design the approaching year’s curriculum.

At the beginning of July, each Class Teacher will provide the Educational Director with outlines of their “block rotation:” a schedule of each Main Lesson block they will teach for that year, alternating between Math/Science and ELA/Humanities focus. The Educational Director will give feedback and provide necessary instructional resources and supports as needed. Once block rotations are approved, teachers gather educational resources using the El Rio resource library of rubrics, previous year’s lesson plans, and other instructional materials.

Once school begins, teachers will submit detailed lesson plans for the next Main Lesson Block to the Educational Director two weeks in advance of beginning instruction in that Block. The Educational Director will review lesson plans to provide feedback and ensure alignment to the 7 principles of public Waldorf education, Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards, and school-wide continuity in student learning experience.

Accountability

Teacher accountability to Common Core State Standards, Waldorf principles and methodology, and grade level and schoolwide norms will be ensured through multiple systems including 1) lesson plan review, 2) informal observation and feedback cycles, 3) student achievement data, 4) collaborative planning time, and 5) community instructional rounds.

1) Lesson Plan Review

The Educational Director will be responsible for reviewing lesson plans submitted by all classroom teachers. Classroom teachers will submit their lesson plans to the Educational Director two weeks before the lesson's instruction. Teachers will use the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework to design lessons aligned with Common Core (CC) and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). UDL is a framework designed to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people based on scientific insights into how humans learn. The goal of the UDL Framework is to cultivate expert learners who are 1) Purposeful and Motivated, 2) Resourceful and Knowledgeable, and 3) Strategic and Goal-Oriented. The table below outlines the guidelines for instruction anchored in the UDL Framework:



To ensure consistency and alignment with El Rio's Educational Philosophy, key components of the UDL Framework have been mapped to each of the 7 principles of public Waldorf education. During summer professional development, El Rio teachers will have the opportunity to dive deep into the fundamental pedagogy underpinning the 7 principles of public Waldorf education. There they will have the opportunity to practice planning with the UDL Framework to create rigorous, engaging, Waldorf-aligned educational experiences. In addition, key components of the UDL Framework have been mapped to the 7 principles of public Waldorf education below to illustrate the relationship between the two:

Waldorf-Integrated Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework

7 Principles of Public Waldorf Education		Universal Design for Learning ¹²⁶
IMAGE OF THE HUMAN BEING	<p><i>Public Waldorf education is founded on a coherent image of the developing human being.</i></p> <p>Each human being is a unique individual who brings specific gifts, creative potential, and intentions to this life. Public Waldorf education addresses multiple aspects of the developing child including the physical, emotional, intellectual, social, cultural, moral, and spiritual. Through this, each child is helped to integrate into a maturing whole, able to determine a unique path through life.</p> <p>Rudolf Steiner's educational insights are seen as a primary, but not exclusive, source of guidance for an understanding of the image of the human being.</p>	<p>Recruiting Interest</p> <p>UDL seeks to increase access to learning through multiple means of engagement, referred to as Recruiting Interest. Teachers can incorporate these methods into their planning by -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Optimizing individual choice and autonomy to empower learners to take charge of their own learning. - Optimizing relevance, value, and authenticity in ways that connect learning to experiences that are meaningful and valuable. - Minimizing threats and distractions in order to foster a safe space to learn and take risks.
	<p><i>An understanding of child development guides <u>all</u> aspects of the educational program, to the greatest extent possible within established legal mandates.</i></p> <p>Human development proceeds in approximate 7-year phases. Each phase has characteristic physical, emotional, and cognitive dimensions and a primary learning orientation.</p> <p>The Public Waldorf educational program, including the curriculum, teaching methodologies, and assessment methods, work with this understanding of human development to address the needs of the individual and the class in order to support comprehensive learning and healthy, balanced development.</p> <p>Our developmental perspective informs how state and federal mandates, including curriculum sequence, standardized testing, and college and career readiness, are met.</p>	<p>Executive Functions</p> <p>The UDL Framework provides multiple supports to plan developmentally appropriate lessons for students to engage in, including an explicit focus on Executive Functions. Teachers can incorporate these methods into their planning by -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guiding students to practice setting challenging and authentic goals. - Supporting students in planning and strategy development to problem-solve and achieve goals. - Facilitating and managing information and resources to support students with organization and memory using flexible tools and processes. - Enhancing capacity for monitoring progress through analyzing growth over time and how to build from it.

¹²⁶ http://www.cast.org/our-work/about-udl.html?utm_source=udlguidelines&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=none&utm_content=homepage#.XKztuOtKhQI

<p>SOCIAL CHANGE THROUGH EDUCATION</p>	<p><i>Public Waldorf education exists to serve both the individual and society.</i></p> <p>Public Waldorf education seeks to offer the most supportive conditions possible for the development of each student's unique capacities and for engendering the following qualities to work towards positive social change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A harmonious relationship between thinking, feeling, and willing; - Self-awareness and social competence; - Developmentally appropriate, academically informed, independent thinking; - The initiative and confidence necessary to transform intentions into realities; and - An interest in the world, with active respect and a feeling of responsibility for oneself, one's community, and the environment. <p>Such individuals will be able to participate meaningfully in society.</p>	<p>Expression & Communication</p> <p>The UDL framework prioritizes alternative modalities for expression, both to the level the playing field among learners and to allow the learner to appropriately (or easily) express knowledge, ideas and concepts in the learning environment. These methods enable students to develop a diverse range of strategies to communicate and express their ideas with others. Strategies teachers can leverage in their planning to support this development include –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using multiple media for communication such that students can express their learning in flexible ways. - Using multiple tools for construction and composition enabling students to share thoughts and ideas using tools that complement the learning goal. - Building fluencies with graduated levels of support for practice and performance to apply and gradually releasing scaffolds to support independent learning.
<p>HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS</p>	<p><i>Public Waldorf Schools foster a culture of healthy relationships.</i></p> <p>Enduring relationships -- and the time needed to develop them -- are central to Public Waldorf education. The teacher works with each student and class as a whole to support relationship-based learning.</p> <p>Healthy working relationships with parents, colleagues, and all stakeholders are essential to the well-being of the student, class, and school community. Everyone benefits from a community life that includes festivals, events, adult education, study, and volunteer activities.</p> <p>Public Waldorf education encourages collaboration in schools, within the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, among all schools working out of a developmental approach, in conjunction with the broader field of education.</p>	<p>Self-Regulation</p> <p>The UDL Framework ability to self-regulate—to strategically modulate one's emotional reactions or states in order to be more effective at coping and engaging with the environment—is a critical aspect of human development and interpersonal relationships. Teachers can explicitly develop self-regulation skills among their students by –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting expectations and beliefs that optimize motivation by setting personal goals that inspire confidence and ownership of learning among students. - Facilitating personal coping skills and strategies that support students in developing and managing healthy emotional responses and interactions. - Developing self-assessment and reflection protocols for students that increase awareness around progress toward goals and how to learn from mistakes.

<p>ACCESS AND DIVERSITY</p>	<p><i>Public Waldorf Schools work to increase diversity and access to all sectors of society.</i></p> <p>Public Waldorf schools respond to unique demands and cultures in a wide range of locations in order to provide maximum access to a diverse range of students. Schools work towards ensuring that students do not experience discrimination in admission, retention, or participation.</p> <p>Public Waldorf schools and teachers have the responsibility to creatively address the developmental needs of the students with the most inclusive possible approaches for all learners.</p> <p>The Public Waldorf program and curriculum is developed by the school to reflect its student population.</p>	<p>Sustaining Effort & Persistence</p> <p>The UDL Framework enables access and diversity by building the individual skills in self-regulation and self-determination that will equalize such learning opportunities. In addition, UDL focuses on creating an external environment that equalizes accessibility by supporting learners who differ in initial motivation, self-regulation skills, and other associated influencers. Teachers can facilitate this environment through their planning by –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heightening the salience of goals and objectives, while setting a vision for the goal and why it matters. - Varying demands and resources to optimize challenge such that students can rise to high expectations using flexible tools and supports. - Fostering collaboration and community by cultivating an inclusive community of learners. - Increasing mastery-oriented feedback to guide learning by emphasizing the role of effort and process.
<p>COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP</p>	<p><i>School leadership is conducted through shared responsibilities within established legal structures.</i></p> <p>Faculty, staff, administration and boards of a Public Waldorf school collaborate to guide and lead the school with input from stakeholder groups. To the greatest extent possible, decisions related to the educational program are the responsibility of those faculty and staff with knowledge and experience of Rudolf Steiner's educational insights.</p> <p>Governance and internal administration are implemented in a manner that cultivates active collaboration, supportive relationships, effective leadership, consequential action, and accountability. A Public Waldorf school is committed to studying and deepening its understanding of best practices of governance appropriate to its stage of organizational development.</p>	<p>Common Language for Collaborative Planning</p> <p>By norming on the UDL Framework as our approach to curriculum planning, teachers will have a common language to utilize as they describe their approach to instructional design. Having a common language enables teachers to engage in more effective collaborative planning efforts. Research in schools using teacher teams with common planning (CP) time finds that high levels of CP are associated with higher student achievement gains as well as a more positive work climate, increased parent engagement, and higher job satisfaction among teachers (Flowers, 1999).</p> <p>Flowers, Nancy & Mertens, Steven & Mulhall, Peter. (1999). The Impact of Teaming: Five Research-Based Outcomes. Middle School Journal. 31. 10.1080/00940771.1999.11494619. LINK</p>

SCHOOLS AS LEARNING COMMUNITIES	<p><i>Public Waldorf schools cultivate a love of lifelong learning and self-knowledge.</i></p> <p>Public Waldorf education emphasizes continuous engagement in learning and self-reflective practices that support ongoing improvement. At the individual and classroom level, teachers reflect regularly on their observations of the students and of the educational process. Essential aspects of school-wide work and professional development include self-reflection, peer review, faculty and individual study, artistic activity, and research.</p> <p>Rudolf Steiner is a primary, but not exclusive, source of guidance for developing an active inner, meditative life and an understanding of the dynamics within society.</p> <p>Public Waldorf schools encourage all community members to engage in active and ongoing ways to enhance their capacities as human beings through self-reflection and conscious social engagement.</p>	<p>Leveraging Assessments to Differentiate Instruction</p> <p>By norming on the UDL Framework as our approach to curriculum planning, teachers will be able to engage in a shared reflective practice during weekly staff meetings. This will be an opportunity for teachers to learn from one another and exchange best practices that improve El Rio's collective approach to education. These experiences will be facilitated through a variety of exercises including self-reflection, peer review, faculty and individual study, artistic activities, and research.</p>
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2) Informal Observations and Feedback

The Educational Director will conduct informal observation and feedback cycles with all instructional staff to ensure instruction is aligned with CC and NGSS state standards, the 7 principles of public Waldorf education, and consistent with the school's Educational Philosophy.

3) Student Achievement Data

Teachers will utilize the principles of data-driven instruction to inform lesson planning, continually adjusting lesson plans according to results attained from benchmark and ongoing assessments. The Educational Director will leverage the observation and feedback cycles to support teachers in strategically reflecting on and responding to student achievement data. In addition, schoolwide professional development sessions will ensure consistent progress monitoring of student achievement and provide teachers will collaborative planning time to identify trends, particularly with special populations, and formulate a responsive plan.

4) Collaborative Planning Time

During collaborative planning time, teachers will work collaboratively on lesson planning to ensure grade level standards are being met across disciplines. They will also have the opportunity to engage in data dives, respond to trends in student progress, and share best practices. Collaborative Planning Time will take place both formally during designated professional development sessions and informally as facilitated through school culture building.

5) Community Instructional Rounds

In addition, El Rio will institute the use of quarterly "Instructional Rounds" with a team comprised of the Educational Director, an El Rio board member, an El Rio teacher, a community member, a parent, and if possible, a representative from another community school. Four times each school year, this team will meet to make the rounds at El Rio, choosing one category from the Dimensions of Achievement to focus on, visiting classrooms

using that category as a lens to see what extent the statements in that category are true for students and teachers, using a non-judgmental observational protocol. At the conclusion of the Instructional Rounds, the team will discuss trends, and complete a form with observation feedback, including a statement of what is true of El Rio classrooms today for that category, and what the team hopes to be true for the future, with a specific action step toward that goal. The Dimensions of Achievement are outlined below, detailing both teacher and student actions in alignment with El Rio's Educational Philosophy:

Dimension of Achievement	Students	Teachers and Leaders
Mastery of Knowledge and Skills	<p>Demonstrate proficiency and deeper understanding: show mastery in a body of knowledge and skills within each discipline.¹</p> <p>Apply their learning: transfer knowledge and skills to novel, meaningful tasks.¹</p> <p>Think critically: analyze, evaluate, and synthesize complex ideas and consider multiple perspectives.¹</p> <p>Communicate clearly: write, speak, and present ideas effectively in a variety of media within and across disciplines.¹</p>	<p>Ensure that curriculum, instruction, and assessments are rigorous, meaningful, and aligned with standards.¹</p> <p>Use assessment practices that position students as leaders of their own learning.¹</p> <p>Use meaningful data for both teachers and students to track progress toward learning goals.¹</p> <p>Engage all students in daily lessons that require critical thinking about complex, worthy ideas, texts, and problems.¹</p>
High-Quality Student Work	<p>Create complex work: demonstrate higher-order thinking, multiple perspectives and transfer of understanding.¹</p> <p>Demonstrate craftsmanship: create work that is accurate and beautiful in conception and execution.¹</p> <p>Create authentic work: demonstrate original thinking and voice, connect to real-world issues and formats, and when possible, create work that is meaningful to the community beyond the school.¹</p>	<p>Design tasks that ask students to apply, analyze, evaluate and create as part of their work.¹</p> <p>Use models of excellence, critique, and multiple drafts to support all students to produce work of exceptional quality.¹</p> <p>Connect students to the world beyond school through meaningful fieldwork, expert collaborators, research, and service learning.¹</p>

Dimension of Achievement	Students	Teachers and Leaders
Social Change through Education	<p>Students will express empathy when people are excluded or mistreated because of their identities and concern when they themselves experience bias.²</p> <p>Students will recognize their own responsibility to stand up to exclusion, prejudice and injustice.²</p> <p>Students will speak up with courage and respect when they or someone else has been hurt or wronged by bias.²</p> <p>Students will make principled decisions about when and how to take a stand against bias and injustice in their everyday lives and will do so despite negative peer or group pressure.²</p> <p>Students will plan and carry out collective action against bias and injustice in the world and will evaluate what strategies are most effective.²</p>	<p>Facilitate educational conversation with students, modeling strategies that allow for disagreement, yet honor divergent perspectives.</p> <p>Establish and maintain an inclusive classroom environment, maintaining specific focus to include historically marginalized groups.</p> <p>Create curriculum that highlights changemakers in society who have effected change on both grassroots and institutional levels.</p> <p>Mediate restorative justice practices during Council that enable community-wide restoration.</p> <p>Engage in a continuous practice of self-reflection on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in teaching practices</p> <p>Model “Brave Spaces” and conversation tools students can use to address conflict</p>
Diversity and Inclusion ²	<p>Students will express comfort with people who are both similar to and different from them and engage respectfully with all people.²</p> <p>Students will develop language and knowledge to accurately and respectfully describe how people (including themselves) are both similar to and different from each other and others in their identity groups.²</p> <p>Students will respectfully express curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others and will exchange ideas and beliefs in an open-minded way.²</p> <p>Students will respond to diversity by building empathy, respect, understanding and connection.²</p> <p>Students will examine diversity in social, cultural, political and historical contexts rather than in ways that are superficial or oversimplified.²</p>	<p>Healthy working relationships with parents, colleagues, and all stakeholders are essential to the well-being of the student, class, and school community.³</p> <p>Faculty, staff, administration and boards of a Public Waldorf school collaborate to guide and lead the school with input from stakeholder groups.³</p> <p>Governance and internal administration are implemented in a manner that cultivates active collaboration, supportive relationships, effective leadership, consequential action, and accountability. A Public Waldorf school is committed to studying and deepening its understanding of best practices of governance appropriate to its stage of organizational development.³</p> <p>The board of El Rio Community School will be reflective of the community in terms of representing the variety of stakeholders and their unique viewpoints.</p>

¹<https://eleducation.org/uploads/downloads/ELED-CorePractices-1115.pdf>

²https://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/2017-06/TT_Social_Justice_Standards_0.pdf

³http://www.allianceforpublicwaldorfeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/CORE-PRINCIPLES.final_.11.08.16-copy.pdf

Instructional Vignette

A vivid example of what the El Rio version of the Waldorf model will look like in practice, from planning to actual instruction includes the following vignette, or instructional “scene;” it is a snapshot of the instruction that will be visible in all classrooms, including **storytelling, arts-integration, interdisciplinary, project-based learning, and integrated English Language Development.** In the third grade classroom, students study “The Practical Arts” in a Main Lesson block devoted to explorations of how people from around the world approach meeting basic human needs. The block integrates language arts, math, science and social studies into learning about all of these practical arts, including cultivation and preparation of food, construction of shelters, and creation of clothing/materials to provide warmth and protection from the elements.

For the world shelters component of the block, students listen to stirring stories of people living in shelters the world over: for example, houseboat dwellers in China, the Inuit people of the Arctic region, and the reindeer-herding Dukha of Mongolia, living in birchbark yurts.

During the Main Lesson, the teacher tells the students an original story about Batu, a Mongolian child living on the tundra with a generational family of reindeer herders. They begin the story by playing a Mongolian melody on their recorder to bring calm to the classroom and evoke a sense of place. They tell the story clearly and slowly; the story is rich with sensory detail and new vocabulary words, which the teacher has written on the chalkboard, along with an explanatory illustration of Batu next to her birchbark yurt. The students then take out their Main Lesson Books and proceed to copy the new vocabulary words using their finest cursive penmanship. The teacher models the steps of the writing process on the board and assists individual students as needed.

Then students break into small groups to retell the story, jotting down key points into a teacher-created graphic organizer, while the teacher circulates providing primary language support, scaffolding language instruction by pairing students who need more assistance with native language speakers with higher levels of English fluency, and providing further explication.

After finishing the recapitulation, the teacher asks the students to, as a group, tell her the story as she writes it down on the board. Individual students raise their hands to contribute, using their graphic organizers and are provided sentence frames to practice academic language. The teacher walks around to the small groups posing math word problems that utilize multiplication, which the students are learning. Problems are differentiated according to both math skill level and language abilities.

In preparation for a reading the following day on the geography of the region, students are provided a simplified copy of the text to take home. This pre-teaching allows lowers the affective filter because students will have a basic comprehension of new material.

Then the teacher instructs the children to take out their colored pencils and draw their own version of the scene on the chalkboard. The teacher models on the chalkboard the various artistic principles being taught and leads them step by step through creating the illustration. Finally, the teacher tells the students to put away their books and stand up for some movement exercises. She leads the class through a series of movements that coordinate with the one of the times tables, then concludes by replaying the Mongolian melody to signal the end of the lesson.

In order to plan this lesson as part of a three-week block, the teacher utilizes the El Rio-created lesson plan template with the UDL framework, and through backwards design planning, identifies the desired outcomes and creates formative, authentic assessments that will provide evidence of students obtaining these outcomes.

Inspired by the story of Batu and his home, among the many tales they have heard, students begin to design shelters of their own after a trip to the library to check out books that best align with their ideas. They first create scale drawings, and then use found materials to build models of these structures which include landscape elements/features from the environment showing an understanding of the geography of the region, and the natural resources available for construction. Students study different forms of measurement and its evolution and standardization, and apply this knowledge to creating accurate scale drawings and models. Students then choose one shelter to build a full-scale replica of, and then work collaboratively for the next three weeks to build on school grounds. They also create Main Lesson books as an ongoing, authentic record of their learning, including illustrations, original essays and text, and diagrams/schematics when applicable. Cross-cultural learning experiences are supplemented with visits to area museums, such as the Natural History Museum, the Autry Museum, and the Wishtoyo Chumash Village in Malibu to have even more hands-on experience with real-life artifacts.

This example highlights how the key pedagogical features of El Rio work in tandem with lesson planning and preparation, and ensure fidelity to our educational model, as well as excellent academic outcomes for all learners.

In addition, authentic formative assessments allow for teachers to effectively assess student learning. Toward that end, El Rio teachers will use the El Rio Dimensions of Achievement Framework as an important assessment tool, informed by Expeditionary Learning and the Teaching Tolerance Anti-Bias framework.

Implementation and Mastery of State Content and Performance Standards

El Rio's instructional methods, curriculum, and instructional materials will support implementation and ensure mastery of California's content and performance standards by design. Through our Main Lesson and collaborative specialty subject instruction that will integrate the arts into each lesson, the whole-class dynamic developed through looping that will allow for a strong social structure and emotional support for all learners, and by a developmentally appropriate, responsive curriculum that will be continually building schema through a thematic, connected approach, students will be able to grow as learners and work toward mastery of CCSS core content. ELA/ELD standards will be embedded in our methodology, which will be naturally SDAIE-based (Specifically Designed Academic Instruction in English) through its emphasis on using multiple modalities and real-world objects/experiences to enhance understanding. NGSS will be incorporated into our phenomenological approach to science, which will emphasize ecology, sustainability, and careful observation of the world.

Development of Technology Related Skills and Student Use of Technology

At El Rio, tech and media literacy will occur in a specific and developmentally appropriate timeframe. Before the introduction of media and technology, it will be critical to develop students' social emotional skills and prioritize their interactions with fellow students and teachers, exploring the world of ideas and participating in the creative process.

Our approach to technology will be to first and foremost situate it as an integral part of the human project. Since man invented the wheel, he has been innovating and iterating. Students will trace the arc of technological history from its humblest beginnings through the grades by doing projects that teach them first-hand how each piece of tech was transformative in its power. Starting with making their own knitting needles in first grade, to building a house in 3rd grade, to engineering a viaduct in 6th grade, to inventing their own flying machine in 7th grade, culminating in coding their own computer in 8th grade, students will grasp first-hand the frustrations and triumphs of making

something from nothing. This multidisciplinary approach will remove tech from its narrow modern-day emphasis on computing to encompass everything they take for granted already and everything they have yet to dream up. This history-of-technology piece will be part of our holistic take on STEAM education, in which each element will be woven throughout the curriculum in a multidisciplinary, project-based way.

Once introduced, El Rio believes it is imperative for students to understand the value of technology, its many uses, and its continued importance as a tool. Beginning in 3rd grade, computers will be used as a platform to take standardized tests and will be gradually introduced as a learning tool beginning in 5th grade. In terms of media and digital literacy, in the early grades the emphasis will be on engagement via human contact with teachers and peers; the development of the imagination; hands-on, real world learning; and on mastering the use of tactile educational tools before moving on to more modern technology. Therefore, students will learn to write beautifully in print and then cursive using fountain pens before learning keyboarding. They will learn to knit, and even write their own patterns, which are a type of binary code, before learning about computer programming. They will learn to sew by hand before being introduced to sewing machines. Also beginning in the third grade, in preparation for taking computer-based state standardized assessments, students will gain proficiency in keyboard/computer use to ensure that their test scores accurately reflect their academic performance and are not in any way hindered by the lack of technology-based instruction in the classroom.

An integrated media literacy program will begin in 5th grade and continue through 8th grade. Students will study Digital Literacy and Cyber Citizenship through the award-winning Cyber Civics curriculum, as well as keyboarding, robotics and coding. Middle schoolers will learn how to use technology to research and showcase their project-based learning, learning how to evaluate sources, how to be conscientious digital citizens, and becoming aware of how technology can be both an amazing tool as well as one full of risks.

In the younger grades, students will use Chromebooks, while students in grades 4th-8th will use a combination of iPads and laptops for research, the writing process, presentations, projects, and assessments.

Transitional Kindergarten

El Rio will welcome students whose fifth birthday falls between September 1st and December 1st into our Transitional Kindergarten (TK) program, which is conducted in combined classrooms with our Kindergarten students. The TK curriculum will include the California Preschool Learning Foundations (Foundations) developed by the California Department of Education, (Senate Bill (SB) 858 (Chapter 32, Statutes of 2014) as well as the same curriculum as our Kindergarten program. All TK/Kindergarten students will participate in our play-based and standards-aligned experiential curriculum, which will offer differentiated instruction for both TK and K students that is developmentally appropriate and in which all the benefits of mixed-age classrooms can be enjoyed. The older children will be models for the younger children and will develop their capacity for patience, as well as gain leadership opportunities, and the younger children will benefit from being a part of a family of learners that will support and care for one another. Pacing will become truly individualized, self-esteem will blossom, and all learners will be seen for their strengths and what they can do in this arrangement, and they will have the gift of time to unfold developmentally before stepping up to the academic demands of the grades. Curriculum pacing and instructional delivery will be monitored through the use of data to ensure TK students are able to master content before moving on in an age-appropriate way. Throughout our TK/K classrooms – particularly in anticipation of the fact that many of our students may not have attended high-quality preschools before enrolling at El Rio – we will incorporate a variety of early childhood development practices regarding language



development, fine and gross motor development, and a foundational background in mathematics, science and social studies.

Teachers assigned to a TK classroom after July 1, 2015, must have been issued at least one credential by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), and shall, by August 1, 2020, have one of the following:

- At least 24 units in early childhood education, or childhood development, or both; or
- As determined by the LEA (El Rio) employing the teacher, professional experience in a classroom setting with preschool age children that is comparable to the 24 units of education described above
- A child development permit issued by the CTC.

Academic Calendar and Schedules

El Rio will provide 183 days of instruction each year.

Academic Calendar 2020-2021	
First Day of School	Tuesday, August 18, 2020
Labor Day	Monday, September 7, 2020
Indigenous People's Day	Monday, October 12, 2020
Thanksgiving Break	November 25-27, 2020
Winter Break	December 21, 2020-January 8, 2021
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Monday, January 18, 2021
Presidents' Day/February Break	February 15-19, 2021
Spring Break	Monday, March 29-Friday, April 2, 2021
Memorial Day	May 31, 2021
Last Day of School	June 18, 2021

2020-2021

Academic Year Calendar

July 20						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August 20						
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						1
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September 20						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October 20						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November 20						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 20						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 21						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 21						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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28						

March 21						
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April 21						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 21						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June 21						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	30					

KEY

Regular Instructional Day
Early Release (1:45pm dismissal; PD 2-4pm)
Holiday
Professional Development (no school)

Month	PD Days	Regular Days	Early Release Days	Minimum Days
July	5	0	0	0
August	11	8	2	0
September	0	17	4	0
October	1	15	5	0
November	1	14	3	0
December	0	11	3	0
January	0	11	3	0
February	4	12	3	0
March	0	16	4	0
April	1	15	4	0
May	1	15	4	0
June	0	11	3	0
Number of Days	24	145	38	0

Daily and Weekly Schedules

Circle Time/Class Meetings: In TK/Kindergarten, students begin the day as a group doing games, songs, rhymes, recitation and kinesthetic activities integrating ELA and math. In Grades 1-8, this circle time is folded into the beginning of the main lesson, when teachers “wake up” their students by a quick round of movement, recitation, or music. Additionally, in Grades 1-8, the end of each day includes a 15 minute Class Meeting in which students check in with their Class Teacher, review assignments and close with a brief reflection and verse recitation.

Main Lesson: In grades 1-8, the day will be built around the Main Lesson, alternating days with focus on Humanities and Math/Science, while still incorporating daily math and language arts practice as well as integrated English Language Development. This will be a two-hour morning period (8:30a-10:30a for grades 1-5, 10:30a-12:30p for grades 6-8) aligned with when children are developmentally most awake and eager for academic work. Using the technique of Block scheduling, the class teacher will focus on one interdisciplinary theme over several weeks, giving students time to develop an in-depth relationship with each subject.

Practice Periods and Specialty Classes: After the morning Main Lesson, the students will attend a combination of practice periods and specialty classes for the rest of the day. Practice periods will include daily, 45-minute math and language arts practice periods over the course of the week, in addition to the math and ELA the students will receive in Main Lesson. In TK/Kindergarten, specialty classes will include painting and drawing, cooking, handwork, beeswax modeling, and music. In Grades 1-5, specialty classes will include world languages (Spanish & Mandarin), handwork/woodwork, painting, games/movement, and music. In Grades 6-8 students will be offered music electives (choir, strings, or recorder ensemble) and art electives (clay modeling, form drawing), and will choose one World Language in which to specialize.

A Balanced Rhythm: Classes will be scheduled to give the students a rhythmic experience of both the day and the week, balancing focused periods of concentration with more outwardly focused activities that build interpersonal skills and capacities. This balance of inward and outward experiences is referred to as “breathing” and will be an intentional practice of each teacher’s individual lessons as well as the daily and weekly schedule of every class.

Living Classroom: Each Friday afternoon, the entire school will spend time outside – in the school garden, at a local park, walking in the neighborhood, or further afield in Angeles National Forest (a 10-15 minute drive, via volunteer parent drivers with proper insurance and completed background checks on file, from Highland Park) in a “Living Classroom.” Each class will maintain their daily rhythm, with a mix of concentrated study pertaining to the Main Lesson, physical activity such as hiking, climbing, and orienteering, and group team-building skills, trust exercises, and our Council practice. In addition, TK/Kindergarten will include a daily Living Classroom program aligned with the NGSS standards in order to offer more opportunities for play-based, experiential education appropriate to young children.

Regular Day: TK and Kindergarten

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Friday	Instructional Minutes
8:30-9:00 a.m.	Movement/Games (PE)	Movement/Games (PE)	Movement/Games (PE)	Movement/Games (PE)	30
9:00-9:30 a.m.	Circle Time	Circle Time	Circle Time	Circle Time	30
9:30-10:30 a.m.	Specialty Classes/Designated ELD	Specialty Classes/Designated ELD	Specialty Classes/Designated ELD	Specialty Classes/Designated ELD	60
10:30-11:00 a.m.	Clean-up/Snack	Clean-up/Snack	Clean-up/Snack	Clean-up/Snack	
11a.m.-12:15 p.m.	Living Classroom	Living Classroom	Living Classroom	Living Classroom (Lunch outside 12:15-12:40)	140
12:15-12:40 p.m.	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		
12:40-1:15 p.m.	ELA: Storytelling	ELA: Storytelling	ELA: Storytelling		
1:15-1:45 p.m.	Specialty Classes	Specialty Classes	Specialty Classes		
1:45 p.m.	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	TOTAL 260

Early Dismissal: TK/Kindergarten

Time	Thursday	Instructional Minutes
8:30-9:00 a.m.	Movement/Games (PE)	30
9:00-9:30 a.m.	Circle Time	30
9:30-10:30 a.m.	Specialty Classes/Designated ELD	60
10:30-11:00 a.m.	Clean-up/Snack	
11a.m.-12:15 p.m.	ELA/Storytelling (35 minutes) Living Classroom	75
12:15-12:40 p.m.	Lunch/Early Dismissal	TOTAL 195

Regular Days: 1st-3rd Grades

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Friday	Instructional Minutes
8:30-10:30 a.m.	Main Lesson: Humanities	Main Lesson: Math & Science	Main Lesson: Humanities	Main Lesson: Math & Science	120
10:30-11:00 a.m.	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	
11:00-11:45 a.m.	Practice Period: ELA/Designated ELD	Practice Period: ELA/Designated ELD	Practice Period: ELA/Designated ELD	Practice Period: ELA/Designated ELD	45
11:45-12:30	Spanish	Mandarin	Spanish	Practice Period: Math	45
12:30-1:00	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	Lunch Outside	
1:00-1:45	Practice Period: Math	Practice Period: Math	Practice Period: Math	Living Classroom	135
1:45-2:30	Handwork	Painting	Music		
2:30-3:15	Music	PE	Handwork		
3:15-3:30	Class Meeting/Dismissal	Class Meeting/Dismissal	Class Meeting/Dismissal	Class Meeting/Dismissal	15 TOTAL 360

Early Dismissal: 1st-3rd Grades

Thursday Schedule	Thursday	Instructional Minutes
8:30-10:30 a.m.	Main Lesson: Math & Science/Integrated ELD	120
10:30-10:40 a.m.	Snack	
10:40-11:20 a.m.	Practice Period: ELA/Designated ELD	40
11:20-12:00	Practice Period: Math	40
12:00-12:45	Mandarin	45
12:45-1:00	Lunch	
1:00	Dismissal	TOTAL 245

Regular Days: 4th-5th Grades

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Friday	Instructional Minutes
8:30-10:30	Main Lesson: Math/Science	Main Lesson: Humanities	Main Lesson: Math/Science	Main Lesson: Math/Science	120
10:30-11:00	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	
11:00-11:45	Practice Period: Math	Practice Period: Math	Practice Period: Math	Practice Period: Math	45
11:45-12:30	Mandarin	Spanish	Mandarin	Practice Period: Designated ELD	45
12:30-1:00	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	Lunch/Recess	Lunch Outside	
1:00-1:45	Woodworking	Painting	Handwork	Living Classroom	135
1:45-2:30	Practice Period: ELA/Designated ELD	Practice Period: ELA/Designated ELD	Practice Period: ELA/Designated ELD		
2:30-3:15	Games/Movement (PE)	Music	Games/Movement (PE)		
3:15-3:30	Class Meeting/Dismissal	Class Meeting/Dismissal	Class Meeting/Dismissal	Class Meeting/Dismissal	15
					TOTAL 360

Early Dismissal: 4th-5th Grades

Thursday Schedule	Thursday	Instructional Minutes
8:30-10:30 a.m.	Main Lesson: Humanities	120
10:30-10:40 a.m.	Snack	
10:40-11:20 a.m.	Practice Period: ELA/Designated ELD	40

Thursday Schedule	Thursday	Instructional Minutes
11:20-12:00	Practice Period: Math	40
12:00-12:45	Spanish	45
12:45-1:00	Lunch	TOTAL 245

Regular Days: 6th-8th Grades

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Friday	Instructional Minutes
8:30-9:15 a.m.	Movement/Games (PE)	Woodwork/Handwork	Art Elective	Music Elective	45
9:15-10:00 a.m.	Mandarin/Spanish	Mandarin/Spanish	Mandarin/Spanish	Math	45
10:00-10:30 a.m.	Nutrition	Nutrition	Nutrition	Nutrition	
10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	Main Lesson: Humanities	Main Lesson: Math/Science	Main Lesson: Humanities	Main Lesson: Humanities	120
12:30-1:00 p.m.	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch (Outside)	
1:00-1:45 p.m.	Math	Math	Math	Living Classroom	135
1:45-2:30 p.m.	Language Arts/Designated ELD	Language Arts/Designated ELD	Language Arts/Designated ELD		
2:30-3:15 p.m.	Music Elective	Painting	Music Elective		
3:15-3:30 p.m.	Class Meeting/Dissal	Class Meeting/Dissal	Class Meeting/Dissal	Class Meeting/Dissal	15 TOTAL 360

Early Dismissal Days: 6th-8th Grades

Thursday Schedule	Thursday	Instructional Minutes
8:30-9:15 a.m.	Movement/Games (PE)	45
9:15-10:00 a.m.	Mandarin/ Spanish	45
10:00-12:00 a.m.	Main Lesson: Math/Science	120
12:00-12:45pm	Language Arts/Designated ELD	45
12:45-1:00	Lunch	
1:00	Early Dismissal at 1:00	TOTAL 255

Instructional Minutes and Days Calculator

Grades	Grades Offered	Number of Regular Days	Number of Instr. Minutes Per Regular Day	Number of Early Dismissal Days	Number of Instr. Minutes Per Early Dismissal Day	Number of Minimum Days	Number of Instr. Minutes Per Minimum Day	Number of [Other] Days	Number of Instr. Minutes Per [Other] Day	Total Number of Instr. Days	Minutes Req'd Per State Law	Total Number of Instr. Minutes	Number of Instr. Minutes Above/Below State Req't.
TK/K	Yes	145	260	38	195	0	0	0	0	183	36000	45110	9110
1	Yes	145	360	38	245	0	0	0	0	183	50400	61510	11110
2	Yes	145	360	38	245	0	0	0	0	183	50400	61510	11110
3	Yes	145	360	38	245	0	0	0	0	183	50400	61510	11110
4	Yes	145	360	38	245	0	0	0	0	183	54000	61510	7510
5	Yes	145	360	38	245	0	0	0	0	183	54000	61510	7510
6	Yes	145	360	38	255	0	0	0	0	183	54000	61890	7890
7	Yes	145	360	38	255	0	0	0	0	183	54000	61890	7890
8	Yes	145	360	38	255	0	0	0	0	183	54000	61890	7890
9	No									0	64800	0	-64800
10	No									0	64800	0	-64800
11	No									0	64800	0	-64800
12	No									0	64800	0	-64800

Recruiting and Staffing the School with Qualified Teachers

Among independent Waldorf schools throughout the country and even worldwide, there is an established culture of resource-sharing that extends to educators. Many Waldorf class teachers teach for a period of time at one school, and after they've completed a loop with their class, move to a different city or state to teach at another school after completing loops with their classes. For public school teachers who are new to Waldorf, we will offer ongoing training in Waldorf methods through WISC (Waldorf Institute of Southern California), as well as through a Public School Institute in-house training program offered in conjunction with Ocean Charter School (starting in summer 2019 at

OCS's brand new facility) and other developing Waldorf public schools in the region. We will actively recruit qualified teachers who meet the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act and the State of California, and seek teachers on websites specifically for Waldorf employment, such as Waldorf Today, plus post our job listings with Waldorf training centers, California charter school employment websites, and other relevant job boards such as EdJoin.

Our Co-Directors will review all submissions for superior professional references, well-written cover letters, an interest in/experience teaching in an arts-integrated way, and of course, current and valid teaching credentials. Our vetting process will include offering the opportunity to prospective teachers to spend part of a day in observation (once the Charter School is open), then undergoing a preliminary phone or Skype interview with the Educational Director. If selected, candidates will then be invited to teach demonstration lessons in either grade 1-5 or 6-8 levels while being observed by a panel of teachers and the Educational Director. Final hiring decisions will depend on a variety of criteria, which, assuming credentialing requirements are met, will include candidate's performance during demonstration lessons, rapport with the students in the class/grade level being hired for, previous teaching experience, interviews and references, and possibilities for contributions to the teaching team and school at large.

In addition to class teachers, El Rio will rely on a cohort of part-time instructors for specialty classes including world languages, handwork, woodworking, and the arts. We will seek practitioners who are experts in their fields - working artists, musicians, and artisans who are eager to share their passion for their chosen profession. In order to maximize our budget, we will actively recruit individuals who can teach two special subjects - Spanish and handwork, for example, or stringed instruments and woodworking. Highland Park, and the Northeast of Los Angeles in general, is an artists' haven with a rich creative culture, and we hope to capitalize on having this local talent in our community. In addition to recruiting creatives to teaching, we plan to tap into the community and partner with local studios for field trips, artists' residencies, and apprenticeships for older students.

Professional Development

Ongoing professional development is essential in ensuring all teachers are competent, confident practitioners of the art of teaching in a standard based, arts-integrated, interdisciplinary program.

Prior to the start of the new school year, teachers will participate in a three-week-long series of professional development trainings to make sure all teachers begin the school year with confidence, in alignment with the school's curricular and instructional goals. Students will be dismissed early on Thursdays to allow for two-hour, weekly teacher meetings which will offer ongoing professional development. In addition, in February and in the summer, all teachers attend weeklong trainings offered in-house and in collaboration with the public Waldorf training program at Ocean Charter School (starting summer of 2019) for grade-level and content-level specific experiential learning trainings to refresh their knowledge and renew their enthusiasm in preparation for the rest of the school year and the next school year as they loop with their students.

2020-2021 School Year Professional Development Plan	
<i>Type of Training</i>	<i>Dates</i>
<p>2 Week-long “Art of Teaching” grade level/specialty subject trainings at the Public School Institute hosted by Ocean Charter School as well as in-house training. Topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Classroom management strategies ✓ Backwards Design Lesson Planning ✓ Teacher Evaluation & Collaboration ✓ Waldorf methods to support student engagement and learning through integrating arts, crafts, music, and movement into all lessons 	2 weeks in July and August TBD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review of charter, school mission & vision ✓ ELD strategies ✓ Assessment strategies: CAASPP, ELPAC, interim assessments, and data driven instruction ✓ UCLA Lab School Training on Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) in Mathematics, a research based program, which supports the development of mathematical thinking and Literacy Development ✓ Council Training by the Ojai Foundation ✓ Implicit Bias training ✓ Mandated Reporting/Child Abuse ✓ SpEd--Meeting the Needs of All Learners: Compliance, policies & procedures, MTSS & SST process ✓ Administrative policies & Procedures ✓ Health & Safety Policies & Procedures ✓ Parent Meeting Preparation: How to Engage with Parents Meaningfully and Respectfully ✓ Singing and Movement ✓ Preparing grade-based Parent Education offerings for the year (in conjunction with Educational Director) 	Week of August 10-14 & August 17; 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
<p>Chalkboard Drawing</p> <p>Diversity and Equity: Cultural Responsiveness in the Curriculum</p>	Thursday faculty meeting on August 20
<p>Lucy Calkins: Reading and Writing Workshop Framework</p>	Thursday faculty meeting on August 27

2020-2021 School Year Professional Development Plan	
<i>Type of Training</i>	<i>Dates</i>
Meeting the Needs of English Learners: Strategies for Math, Language Arts, Integrated ELD Wet-on-Wet Watercolor Painting	September Thursday faculty meetings
Phenomenological Science and the Living Classroom	Friday October 9, 9am-3pm
Festival Life: Festival of Lights, Winter Spiral Needle Felting	October Thursday faculty meetings
Jamie York: Making Math Meaningful	Monday November 2 nd , 9am-3pm
Preparing and Participating in IEP Meetings Speech work	November Thursday faculty meetings
Storytelling Winter Concert Planning	December Thursday faculty meetings
Incorporating Movement Throughout the School Day and Curriculum	January Thursday faculty meetings
Designing Formative Assessments Project GLAD/SIOP Training	February 16-19, 9am-3pm
Building Community: Grandparents Day Singing Games	February Thursday faculty meetings
Sustainability: Composting, Worm Bins, Recycling, Reducing Waste on Campus at Festivals, etc. Beeswax Modeling	March Thursday faculty meetings
Project GLAD/SIOP Training	Monday April 5, 9am-3pm
Movement: May Faire dances CAASP Preparation and Training Spring Concert Planning	April Thursday faculty meetings
Teacher-led PD: El Rio EdCamp	Friday May 28, 9am-3pm
End of Year Narrative Report Writing End of Year Assessments Close of the Year ceremonies: Rose Ceremony, Graduation Clay Modeling	May Thursday faculty meetings
Report writing Support: Administration office hours to support teachers in narrative report preparation	June Thursday faculty meeting time is offered to teachers for report-writing

Meeting the Needs of All Students

Through differentiated and personalized learning, our special needs populations will automatically receive focused attention to their needs and strengths as teachers implement individualized instruction based on data-driven assessments. In addition, the following will assist in meeting students' individual needs:

- 1) Smaller class sizes which allow the teachers to truly know their students
- 2) Ample instructional planning time so that teachers can modify and create lessons and curriculum to meet the needs of individual students
- 3) A culture among teachers of openness and collaboration, including team planning sessions and weekly professional development activities, allowing teachers to learn from each other's varying expertise in handling learning differences
- 4) Ongoing communication between teachers and parents and a commitment to work together for the education of their children
- 5) Various forms of assessment that are used to guide instruction
- 6) Learning goals and objectives that are clearly articulated
- 7) High expectations for all students

El Rio will carefully establish both procedures and sufficient staffing resources to ensure the needs of all students are met, including those who need additional support beyond the classroom to meet grade level standards. El Rio's Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) with integrated systems of leveled support will be designed to ensure that the school and community will do everything possible to make students successful at school. The MTSS process will be used to provide multi-tiered systems of support for academic and behavioral instruction; where these supports and interventions are not successful in achieving desired results, a team will convene and determine appropriate next steps, up to and including a special education referral. The MTSS system of support will construct interventions, programs, and services based on student data and student outcomes. In order to support these efforts, there will be a committee at our school to regularly review student data and determine which students will need tiered support in academics, behavior or basic needs, as well as measuring progress towards desired outcomes. Our MTSS model will have three tiers. The example below outlines an academic focused intervention, though this framework will be adapted for whatever need a student experiences including behavioral, executive function and attendance:

Tier 1: Our MTSS model is designed around the idea that the best intervention is quality first exposure instruction. In-class Tier 1 intervention strategies will include differentiation such as small group reading and flexible grouping. A total of six instructional support staff for 10 classes will be roughly one per grade level. Support staff will work with students needing additional time understanding new learnings. Teachers will work with parents to develop either behavior or academic contracts for those students needing additional support.

Tier 2: For students not meeting grade level standards, intervention will include the Educational Director using data (DiBELS, DRA, Easy CBMs, classroom data, etc.) to identify students who are not meeting grade level standards. Small groups will be created that work with support staff at least three times weekly for twenty minutes during Math and/or Language Arts periods, over a period of eight weeks. Support staff in turn will meet with the Educational Director weekly to help plan and guide instructional time and interventions. During each session with support staff, students will follow the same structure of 1) basic skills – such as reviewing sight words or practicing fast facts in mathematics 2) process skills – such as practicing fluency passages (grades 1-5) or practice solving algorithms 3) application skills - oral and written comprehension or mathematical problem solving. The curriculum for these interventions will be created by the instructional staff engaging with the students in order to ensure personalization. The majority of student experiences within intervention

will be adapted from Six-minute Fluency and Rewards. After eight weeks, students will be reassessed to determine next steps.

Tier 3: For students not making desired progress, after six to eight consecutive weeks of targeted intervention, student success team meetings will be held (see below). With parent consent, students will receive intervention support from specialists: occupational therapist, speech therapist, resource specialist and counselor if needed.

Student Success Team (SST)

Despite the many strengths of the Charter School's programs, methods, and organizational design, additional support may be necessary in instances when students are not making satisfactory academic progress or when an additional circumstance, such as their behaviors, attendance or executive skills, are impeding their own progress or the progress of others. On those occasions, a referral to the Student Success Team (SST) will open a new pathway of support to students. Upon enrollment at the school, parents will receive information about what to do when they know or suspect their child may need additional supports or when parents are puzzled about their child's development.

The purpose of the SST will be to ensure that the school and community are doing everything possible to make students successful at school. The SST will mobilize and coordinate the school's resources, and a request for assistance from the SST will be able to be made by a teacher, administrator, parent or guardian. The SST process will be coordinated by the Educational Director, who will organize the SST process by managing the necessary paperwork, scheduling meetings, and inviting members (including parents/guardians) to SST meetings. All teachers will receive professional development regarding identification of student needs, modifications and interventions, and the SST process. (See also, Professional Development, above.)

On a biweekly basis, the Educational Director will meet with teachers whose students are being discussed, along with any additional staff or consultants whose expertise may be needed (e.g., special education consultants) to review all referrals by parents, teachers and other staff for potential evaluation and appropriate responses for individual students, including, as needed, referral for evaluation and assessment of a suspected disability. These meetings will also include regularly reviewing sub-group assessment data to identify areas of need in our curriculum and ensure that all students and sub-groups are meeting or exceeding state content standard and school goals.

When a student is referred to the SST, the Team will initiate a meeting that will include the student's parents/guardians, the Educational Director, the student's teacher, and if appropriate, any consultants(s) to discuss the concerns in an organized, systematic, problem-solving manner and develop specific action steps to address them.¹²⁷

The SST process will begin by reviewing the student's work portfolio and clarifying the student's strengths and other known background information, and will continue with a discussion of the concerns and the modifications and/or interventions that have been tried. The meeting will conclude after an action plan has been prepared and agreed upon which will include modifications and supports to be provided by the teacher as well as other intervention strategies for the family to implement at home and outside of school, along with a timeline for successful intervention. Following is an outline of the SST process:

¹²⁷ In the event this process would constitute an inappropriate delay in ensuring a child receives special education services pursuant to a formal evaluation and assessment of a suspected disability, the SST meeting will not be required to take place prior to referral for evaluation/assessment.

Prior to the SST Meeting

- Teacher, parent or other staff member will complete a referral form
- The Educational Director will receive the referral, and determine at the weekly meeting which individuals need to be present at the SST Meeting regarding the student (including the child's teacher, parents/guardians, and possible outside consultants, etc.) and complete a preparation checklist for the SST meeting
- The Educational Director will schedule the SST Meeting with all identified parties

During the SST Meeting

- All necessary team members will be present, including parents or guardians
- A translator will be provided if needed or requested by the parent
- The SST facilitator will introduce all members of the team
- The purpose of the meeting will be clearly stated
- A timekeeper will be appointed
- Team members, including the parents or guardians, will share their knowledge of the student, beginning with the student's strengths and other known background information and referring to the student's ILP and additional information
- Members will have access to student achievement data and work samples at the meeting
- Concerns will be presented and synthesized to focus on the primary concerns
- The team will brainstorm a broad range of strategies for intervention or modifications to address the identified concerns
- The team will select the best strategies and an action plan for next steps will be developed collaboratively
- Responsibilities and timelines will be assigned
- A follow up meeting will be scheduled to discuss progress and outcomes

Post SST Meeting

- Meeting notes will be copied and distributed to team members
- Action items will be monitored for follow through
- SST members and parents or guardians will be reminded of scheduled follow up meeting(s)

Following the implementation of an SST plan and follow up, if concerns continue a second follow up meeting may be set where revisions to the original SST plan will be discussed.

English Learners

El Rio will be a place of inclusion for all learners. In the Highland Park area District schools, approximately 23% of students are classified as EL, and El Rio intends to enroll a similar percentage of EL students through targeted outreach strategies and recruitment in the local community surrounding the school (see Element 7). We anticipate this will be a numerically significant subgroup as defined by the Local Control Funding Formula.

To address the significant academic needs of EL students, all of the major components of El Rio's instructional program will be carefully designed to promote the academic and social success of EL students. El Rio will adopt the LAUSD English Learner Master Plan, though we will reserve the option of establishing our own EL Master Plan in later years, subject to LAUSD requirements and approvals.

El Rio's goal will be to ensure a high-quality instructional program for all students that will enable EL students to attain English proficiency, achievement in all academic areas, and full access to the range of educational opportunities available to all students. El Rio will commit to supporting EL

students in successfully achieving English language proficiency as rapidly and effectively as possible in order to achieve parity with native speakers of English, using best practices and developmentally appropriate techniques, while at the same time honoring students' home languages. At El Rio, students' home languages will be seen as assets, and an important educational resource.

Process for identifying English learners

El Rio will adhere to all applicable state and federal laws and regulations with respect to serving students who are English learners. In order to identify students who are English learners in a timely fashion and to provide appropriate instructional support and services, all parents will be required to complete a *Home Language Survey* upon enrollment at the school. Cal. Education Code § 52164.1. Students whose primary language is not English will be assessed using the Initial English Language Proficiency for California (ELPAC) assessment aligned to the CA ELD Standards if he or she has not previously been identified as an English learner by a California public school or if there is no record of prior ELPAC test results on CALPAD. The ELPAC assessment will take place within 30 days of the start of the school year or within two (2) weeks after the date of the student's first enrollment at El Rio Community School.

The English language proficiency of all currently enrolled English learners will be assessed in accordance with the test contractor's directions and California Education Code guidelines. Students with disabilities will be permitted to take the test with the accommodations listed in the Education Code if they are specified in the student's IEP or Section 504 plan. An alternate assessment for English language proficiency will be administered to students who are unable to participate in the ELPAC, according to the guidelines set forth in the student's IEP. The school will notify parents of the school's responsibility to conduct ELPAC testing and will inform parents of ELPAC assessment results within 30 calendar days following receipt of results from the test contractor.

Students will be monitored in conjunction with the ELPAC General Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs):

Level	Description
4	English learners at this level have well developed oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) skills. They can use English to learn and communicate in meaningful ways that are appropriate to different tasks, purposes, and audiences in a variety of social and academic contexts. They may need occasional linguistic support to engage in familiar social and academic contexts; they may need light support to communicate on less familiar tasks and topics. This test performance level corresponds to the upper range of the "Bridging" proficiency level as described in the 2012 California English Language Development Standards, Kindergarten Through Grade 12 (CA ELD Standards).
3	English learners at this level have moderately developed oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) skills. They can sometimes use English to learn and communicate in meaningful ways in a range of topics and content areas. They need light-to-minimal linguistic support to engage in familiar social and academic contexts; they need moderate support to communicate on less familiar tasks and topics. This test performance level corresponds to the upper range of the "Expanding" proficiency level through the lower range of the "Bridging" proficiency level as described in the CA ELD Standards.

Level	Description
2	English learners at this level have somewhat developed oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) skills. They can use English to meet immediate communication needs but often are not able to use English to learn and communicate on topics and content areas. They need moderate-to-light linguistic support to engage in familiar social and academic contexts; they need substantial-to-moderate support to communicate on less familiar tasks and topics. This test performance level corresponds to the low- to mid-range of the “Expanding” proficiency level as described in the CA ELD Standards.
1	English learners at this level have minimally developed oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) English skills. They tend to rely on learned words and phrases to communicate meaning at a basic level. They need substantial-to-moderate linguistic support to communicate in familiar social and academic contexts; they need substantial linguistic support to communicate on less familiar tasks and topics. This test performance level corresponds to the “Emerging” proficiency level as described in the CA ELD Standards.

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ep/elpacgpld.asp>

Parents will be notified via mail of their child's ELPAC scores each year, as well as when a student is being considered for Reclassification and again when they are officially reclassified. El Rio will use annual ELPAC and other standardized test data (e.g., CAASPPs), teacher observations, and optional parent input to identify English Learners (EL), determine their English Language Development (ELD) levels, and reclassify EL students as English proficient when appropriate. Annual Assessments for students already identified as EL will be administered within the Annual Assessment window.

Educational Program for English language Acquisition

In addition to the major program design features at El Rio that will support students who are ELs, teachers at El Rio will employ SIOP strategies as detailed in the section above on ELD (within Curriculum) as well as GLAD strategies (notably, these strategies are beneficial for all students, not just English Learners):

Key Strategies for Teachers of English-Language Learners¹²⁸

1) Vocabulary and Language Development

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

2) Guided Interaction (collaborative learning)

- i) Teachers will structure lessons so students work together to understand what they read—by listening, speaking, reading, and writing collaboratively about the academic concepts in the text.
- ii) Teachers will provide students with opportunities to negotiate meaning from language and text and to work in cooperative pairs or groups to develop problem-solving and

¹²⁸ Adapted from Alliance for Excellent Education. (December 2005). Case study on the New Teacher Center, University of California at Santa Cruz; and Project GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design).

social skills.

- iii) Teachers will group students flexibly, at times working in heterogeneous groups and at times not.

3) Metacognition and Authentic Assessment

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

4) Explicit Instruction

- i) Teachers will utilize direct teaching methods to teach concepts, academic language, reading comprehension strategies, text patterns, vocabulary, writing patterns, and decoding skills needed to complete classroom tasks.

5) Meaning-Based Context and Universal Themes

- i) Teachers will incorporate meaningful references from the students’ everyday lives and use them as springboards to interest them in academic concepts.
- ii) Teachers will create classroom environments that provide authentic opportunities for use of academic language.
- iii) Teachers will provide students with opportunities to activate and focus prior knowledge via inquiry charts, brainstorming, and clustering.

6) Modeling, Graphic Organizers, and Visuals

- i) Teachers will regularly utilize a variety of visual aids, graphic organizers (such as *Thinking Maps*), pictures, diagrams, summaries, and charts to help English learners easily recognize essential information and its relationship to supporting ideas.

How the Program Will Meet the New State ELD Standards and Use the Results of the ELPAC to Support and Accelerate Student Progress

El Rio will base its English Learner support program on the new California ELD Standards. As guided by the CA ELD Standards, El Rio teachers will provide instruction grounded in the best available research on supporting ELs in an English Immersion environment. Students will be expected to advance at least one ELPAC Proficiency Level Descriptor, annually as measured by the ELPAC. Our EL Coordinator (initially the Educational Director) will partner with the classroom teachers to include ELD goals on students’ learning plans. Additionally, our EL Coordinator will assess student progress towards attainment of the standards using standards-based portfolios.

Provide Proficiency Levels with Meaningful Access for English Learners, Including Instructional Strategies and Intervention

The instructional program for English learners at El Rio will be planned according to students’ assessed level of literacy (reading and writing) in both English and their primary language and according to their proficiency (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in English. Students will begin English language arts instruction with literacy instruction augmented by concurrent daily, formal linguistic instruction in English Language Development (ELD).

As mentioned, students who are English learners will also be served within the classroom at all grade levels through daily English language development (ELD) lessons on an individual and small group basis. During these focused sessions – both within the classroom, for example during reading instruction time, and in “pull out” sessions as needed (where students will work with a teacher/specialist while the rest of the class is with another instructor, or during assigned after-school tutoring), students will be grouped homogeneously according to their ELD level. Teachers will implement the Launch/Link to Literacy curriculum as the foundation of the ELD program.

Key academic vocabulary and concepts will be introduced utilizing the strategies described above and a Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) approach. To ensure that the teaching faculty is able to work successfully with EL students, classroom teachers at El Rio will be required to possess a Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development (CLAD) certificate or equivalent as a condition of employment.

While all students who are classified as EL will receive designated ELD instruction, we know that support for ELs who are learning to read in TK/K and first grade is particularly important. Early intervention is the key to proficiency later on. To address this critical issue, students who are identified in Levels 1 and 2 will be offered a richer language experience focusing on the four domains: speaking, listening, writing and reading. In the early grades, this will include being invited to participate in the kindergarten program’s storytelling and the accompanying puppet shows, where the same story will be told daily, word for word, for an entire month. Puppet shows of the same story will be enacted weekly. This gives children a way of developing vocabulary-rich language in an experiential way aligned with Waldorf principles. Other activities will include introducing academic language, providing opportunities to perform academic tasks while speaking in English, increasing vocabulary and teaching explicitly English grammar and idioms.

In addition:

- Students will have sufficient opportunities through prior activities in phonemic awareness to hear, distinguish, and produce sounds being introduced. Phonological differences between English and the students’ primary language will be identified, and students will be provided additional exposure to and practice with the difficult sounds.
- Students will be provided with additional systematic guidance and practice if they are unable to match all consonant and short-vowel sounds to appropriate letters.
- Teachers will provide brief practice sessions for English learners who are having difficulty in learning letter-sound correspondences. Students will participate in additional review and practice of particularly difficult letter sounds.
- Teachers will ensure that students have had previous instruction or experiences (or both) with the words included in the instruction and that they understand their meaning.
- Teachers will encourage English learners to take home age-appropriate materials (e.g., flash cards, decodable text, handouts) related to the teaching objective.

Process for annual evaluation of the school’s EL program(s)

El Rio’s Board and school leaders will annually evaluate the effectiveness of the program through analysis of student achievement on the ELPAC, CAASPPs, benchmark tests and teacher feedback. If 21 or more English Learners are enrolled, El Rio will establish an English Learner Advisory Council (ELAC) comprised of parents of English Learners, who will meet quarterly with the Educational Director (or his/her designee) during the school year to review the EL program and outcomes. In response to the results achieved on these assessments and feedback, El Rio will identify program areas of needed improvement. These areas will be addressed through professional development both whole school and by grade-level, and through one to one teacher coaching. As needed, curricular resources used may be revised to best meet student needs. Additionally, individual

student needs will be identified through the analysis of these assessments and are addressed through targeted intervention.

Per California Education Code, any parent/guardian may choose a language acquisition program that best suits their child. Schools in which the parents or legal guardians of 30 pupils or more per school or the parents or legal guardians of 20 pupils or more in any grade request a language acquisition program that is designed to provide language instruction shall be required to offer such a program to the extent possible. (20 U.S.C. Section 6312[e][3][A][viii][III]); EC Section 310[a]) Parents may provide input regarding language acquisition programs during the development of the Local Control Accountability Plan. (EC Section 52062) If interested in a different program from those listed above, they contact the Educational Director to ask about the process.

Parents of English learners have a right to decline or opt their children out of the school district's language acquisition program or opt out of particular English learner service(s) within a language acquisition program. (20 U.S.C. Section 6312[e][3][A][viii]) However, LEAs remain obligated to provide the student meaningful instruction until the student exits the program, inform the parent when progress is not made, and offer the parent programs and services to consider at that time. (5 California Code of Regulations Section 11302)

Process and specific criteria for EL reclassification

EL student classification will use the 2012 California English Language Development Standards' three Proficiency Level Descriptors -- Emerging, Expanding, and Bridging -- in conjunction with the more recently approved (2016) ELPAC four Performance Level Descriptors (Levels 1-4). (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ep/elpacgpld.asp>)

The three levels represent the stages of English language development, describing expectations for how well students can understand and use the English language at each level – knowledge, skills, and abilities across a continuum -- as they continue to build on existing language skills and knowledge. (California English Language Development Standards, K-12 (Nov. 2012) <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/documents/eldstndpublication14.pdf>.)

Emerging: Students at this level typically progress very quickly, learning to use English for immediate needs as well as beginning to understand and use academic vocabulary and other features of academic language.

Expanding: Students at this level are challenged to increase their English skills in more contexts and learn a greater variety of vocabulary and linguistic structures, applying their growing language skills in more sophisticated ways that are appropriate to their age and grade level.

Bridging: Students at this level continue to learn and apply a range of high-level English language skills in a wide variety of contexts, including comprehension and production of highly technical texts. The “bridge” alluded to is the transition to full engagement in grade-level academic tasks and activities in a variety of content areas without the need for specialized ELD instruction. However, ELs at all levels of English language proficiency fully participate in grade-level tasks in all content areas with varying degrees of scaffolding in order to develop both content knowledge and English.

(<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/documents/eldstndpublication14.pdf>)

Both teachers and administration will monitor the progress and performance of each student identified as an English Learner with the goal of helping these students reclassify to Re-designated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) status. Once the school receives ELPAC results, the EL

Coordinator will begin to analyze the data and determine the eligibility for re-designation of each student within 30 days of receiving the scores. The re-designation criteria will be as follows:

- ELPAC scores: between levels 3-4
- NWEA MAP (or other comparable benchmark) scores for English (reading & language): Average or above
- CAASPP English scores of Meet or Exceeds Standards (if applicable)
- Teacher recommendation
- Parent consultation
- Analysis of writing sample

The Educational Director will monitor classroom instruction, update ELD levels in the Student Information System, review EL monitoring rosters to ensure ELs are advancing a minimum of one ELD level per year, review ELD grades to ensure that students and parents receive updated information of ELD progress at each reporting period, and check readiness for promotion, reclassification or need for intervention. The Co-Directors will share the progress and performance of ELs with the teachers and work with them to make the final decision regarding progression to the next ELD Proficiency Level.

Process for monitoring progress of ELs and reclassified (RFEP) students

El Rio will closely monitor each EL's progress and any instances in which a student is not making sufficient progress towards reclassification. As required by ESSA, RFEP students will be monitored for five years following reclassification. The Educational Director and classroom teachers will work together to identify the reasons why a student has not acquired English at an expected rate and determine the best support system for that student moving forward. El Rio will prioritize resources for students at risk of being identified as LTELs. Students and parents will be made aware of the risks associated with LTEL status, as well as specific barriers to reclassification and ways to address them.

Per education code, parents will receive annual written notification within thirty days of receipt of test results from the school. This same written notification will take place for initial assessments. In the notification letter, parents will receive overall assessment scores for ELPAC, a copy of their student's score report, the latest assurances related to language programs in California, notification of their child's LTEL or LTEL risk status, and an invitation to a reclassification meeting as appropriate.

Process for monitoring progress and supports for Long Term English Learners (LTELs) and Students At-Risk of Becoming LTELs

Under California law, Long Term English Learners (LTELs) are defined as those students who have spent seven years or more in California schools, score Far Below Basic or Below Basic on the state academic exams in English Language Arts (or presumably equivalents under the new CAASPP testing) and are failing to progress on the state's English language proficiency exam (AB 2193, Lara). When LTELs enroll at El Rio, or students are classified as LTELs after enrolling at El Rio, the Educational Director and classroom teachers will work together to identify the reasons why a student has not acquired English at an expected rate and determine the best support system for that student moving forward. El Rio will prioritize resources (e.g. curriculum for ELD instruction) for students at risk of being identified as LTELs. Students and parents will be made aware of the risks associated with LTEL status, as well as specific barriers to reclassification and ways to address them.

Gifted and Talented Students and Students Achieving Above Grade Level

The premise of Waldorf education is that education itself is an art. One need not be a master painter or sculptor to impart this artistry, though--by examining a topic thoroughly and presenting it with originality and a fresh perspective, the subject is elevated, and in turn, students have a chance to relate to it and engage on many different levels. Waldorf education is student-centered, and naturally offers differentiation of instruction in this way so that all students are challenged at the level of intellectual sophistication for which they are ready. By encouraging curiosity, all learners will have a chance to fully realize their own skills.

Gifted students will be served within the regular classroom program. Teachers at El Rio will use multiple strategies to differentiate instruction for diverse learning styles and ability levels within the school's curriculum. Our integrated approach to planning and delivering instruction will be an effective approach for all learners, including gifted students. In the case of gifted students, teachers will provide a variety of options for students to demonstrate their understanding of what they have learned.

Identification of Gifted Students

El Rio will administer the OLSAT or similar test to determine Gifted or Talented designation for students recommended by their teachers, or upon parental request. Students who achieve significantly above grade level and/or demonstrate behaviors consistent with gifted ability may be appropriately identified. In certain instances, services such as psychological testing might be used to test students for gifted ability, depending on the availability of such services. A score of 95% (90 percent if qualifying for free or reduced lunch) is the threshold El Rio will use for identification as gifted, and 99.9% is the threshold for identification as being highly gifted. Parents and guardians will be informed when their child is suspected of being gifted or identified as gifted so that they can seek appropriate challenges and opportunities for their child in collaboration with teachers.

Strategies to Support Gifted Students

The multi-disciplinary curriculum ideally will create a climate where all children succeed in some areas, while seeing their classmates excel in others. This learning atmosphere will build self-esteem, as well as a mutual respect for each other as members of a learning community. In addition to using a Waldorf-inspired approach to learning, El Rio's plan for students who are academically high achieving or gifted will include:

- Differentiated instruction in such areas as math, writing, reading, and spelling to meet different student learning levels in practice periods. Examples include the teacher challenging students with different levels of math problems or spelling words on the board or during other classroom activities. Expanded problems and projects may be given to more advanced students.
- Leveled math instructional materials using Common Core State Standards in sixth through eighth grades may also be used to provide advanced work.

Middle school students may be placed in leveled math groups within the self-contained classroom during math practice periods. This will allow students who are advanced to be provided with opportunities for enrichment and challenges, while students who need additional math support can receive personalized instruction and interventions to ensure academic success.

- Teachers will have the option to provide extra challenges to students as needed, such as more in-depth project-based learning opportunities, and the school will make available supplemental materials, such as advanced mathematics materials inspired by Waldorf education.
- Teachers will provide academic and artistic leadership opportunities for students, such as leadership of group academic projects and leadership of groups performing singing and recorder parts.

- Eighth grade student projects (required for all 8th grade students) will allow academically high achieving students to select a subject of interest for in-depth research and reporting.

Within the Waldorf classroom, the Class Teacher has a great deal of flexibility in designing instruction, and looping allows for the them to identify early on which learners might be needing a more accelerated curriculum and navigate their progress with them. In addition, the Main Lesson's project-based learning model allows individual students to tailor their projects to their own interests and, if necessary and desired, go beyond the given assignment at any point.

Once identified as gifted through the OLSAT or other means, teachers will deepen, expand and differentiate course work for GATE children. This will be done primarily through deepening and expanding the curriculum to include opportunities for: divergent thinking, analysis, and logical problem solving. Course work will also be enriched with activities such as posing open-ended questions that require higher-level thinking and modeling different problem-solving strategies such as decision-making and evaluation.

Examples of ways that learning will be deepened and expanded include: accepting ideas and suggestions from students and expanding on them; facilitating original and independent problems and solutions; helping students identify rules, principles, and relationships and taking time to explain the nature of errors. Teachers will also provide gifted and high achieving learners with opportunities for leadership and mentorship.

During the middle school years, acceleration will be available in mathematics for students who show mastery of their current grade level. Students will have the opportunity to access the curriculum at their developmental level through self-study and individualized programming.

The social-emotional development of the gifted population can appear as asynchronous¹²⁹ and gifted students can exhibit developmental over-sensitivities, specific to children identified or recognized as gifted.¹³⁰ At El Rio, teachers will have awareness and training to support the social-emotional development of the gifted population. Social-emotional competency is integral for gifted learners to express and reach their potential. Supporting students' social-emotional development is embedded into the curriculum throughout the grades. When creating educational programming and when organizing the classroom environment, teachers will give forethought in this process to support gifted learners. Specifically, for gifted learners, teachers will identify individual areas of asynchronous social-emotional development and individualize their expectations of students. Support will also provide in the Human Development curriculum and counseling services, if required. As with all other individual students and subgroups, the Educational Director and classroom teachers will monitor the progress of gifted and talented students and students achieving above grade level to ensure they are being consistently challenged.

Students Achieving Below Grade Level

El Rio is committed to ensuring that all students achieve at their maximum learning potential, including students achieving below grade level expectations. Parents will be notified of student's academic progress every six weeks through either progress reports or parent conferences. Parents / guardians may also request a meeting to review progress at any time. Students will be identified as under achieving or at-risk of low achievement based on:

- classroom performance, including scores falling below the median benchmark (70%) on formative and summative assessments
-

¹²⁹ <http://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources/social-emotional-issues/asynchronous-development>

¹³⁰ <http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/dabrowski.htm>

- CAASPP (for grades 3-8), DIBELS (TK/K-8), DRA, Easy CBM and other benchmark assessments
- Teacher observations
- Parent input
- SST recommendations

Students will be recommended to the SST, where appropriate intervention staff, Educational Director, teachers, and parent(s) will consult for additional interventions and supports and determine next steps. Targeted support for students who are academically low achieving may include:

- Early intervention in reading during ELA;
- Small group support (in or out of the classroom)
- Wrap around service interventions such as counseling, occupational therapy, referral to community partners such as Hathaway-Sycamores Child and Family Services for counseling
- Individual contract with the student detailing clear and achievable responsibilities and benchmarks for the student to achieve
- Other program modifications and supports as determined by the classroom teacher
- Behavior Support Plan
- More frequent parent-teacher communication and parent involvement

Another strategy will include explicit instruction, where the teacher will model a clear understanding of what is being taught and the desired outcome that is expected. Another explicit reading instruction program will be Targeted Reading, a research-based program that supports student mastery of all the foundational skills involved in reading. Intervention within the classroom can be addressed through small group instruction that will support students with similar academic needs.

Because the Waldorf practice of looping allows for the class teacher to move up the grades with the students for multiple years, the individual relationships built with the students and families will help support students performing below grade level. Also, because the class teacher will have this familiarity, there will be an understanding of the student's strengths as well as challenges and supports and interventions can already be in place from the first day of school. This allows for struggling students to feel supported at their individual levels of learning, and this socio-emotional safety net will allow for students to maintain their self-esteem as they progress.

Classroom modifications also may be made to support academically low-achieving students, including using different materials (visual aids, manipulatives, audio materials), using different methods (reading written material aloud to student, guided note-taking, visual cues/modeling), differentiated pacing and assignments, environment changes, testing accommodations and more. As with all other statistically significant subgroups and individual students, the Educational Director and classroom teachers will monitor the progress of all students achieving below grade level.

Progress will be monitored through benchmark, formative and summative assessments; student learning portfolios; and collected work samples from each student's Main Lesson Books. Assessment data, learning portfolios, and student work samples will be used to determine what curricular content will need to be revisited and reviewed for each student and to determine mastery of content areas. Formative assessments will be included throughout the year including: portfolios, teacher observations, quizzes, and progress reports. Summative assessments will include year-end grade level testing, end of chapter tests, and state mandated testing. Specifically, El Rio will assess with DIBELS, Developmental Reading Assessment (lower grades)/Qualitative Reading Inventory (upper grades), Easy CBM testing, and periodic informal checkpoint quizzes to monitor short-term goals. The above steps will be implemented according to our three-tiered support plan.

Socioeconomically Disadvantaged/Low Income Students

Beyond identifying SED students via enrollment forms (i.e., FRPL applications), our teachers and staff all will receive training on recognizing symptoms and behaviors indicative of a child's need for additional supports, including issues relating to hunger, extreme poverty, and individual families' challenges to meet their child's needs. Our SST will be responsible for identifying students and families who might need additional resources or supports, including referrals to community service organizations. We will offer vision and hearing screening for all students, and counseling for students on Medi-Cal. Our emphasis on a school community and the responsibility we have to one another within that community will extend to the parents and families of our students as well.

El Rio will offer a whole day program from TK/K on, and parents will be able to drop-off their children starting at 8:00 a.m. and (budget permitting) through an after-school program until 6:00p.m., both to best serve our students' needs and accommodate working families. There is a strong correlation between arts-based education and improved educational outcomes, and at El Rio, we believe that all children deserve an education that encourages discovery, curiosity, creative thinking, and the opportunity to be doers and makers and active participants in their own learning. El Rio will also offer a library full of books and resources, including technology, and will provide materials for project-based assignments so that all students are able to have access to what they need. Parent education will be a cornerstone of our program, offering parents access to the hands-on learning techniques and courses their students are enrolled in so that they can both support their children's learning at home, and also obtain new skills to support lifelong learning. Free after-school homework help will be available to support all learners.

If students that are socioeconomically disadvantaged are low achieving or struggle with learning differences or are identified as English Learners, El Rio will utilize strategies described in other sections of this petition. As with all other statistically significant subgroups and individual students, the Educational Director and classroom teachers will monitor the progress of all FRPL students through multiple measures of academic and social-emotional growth as detailed throughout this petition.

Students with Disabilities

See District Required Language at the start of Element 1.

Students in Other Subgroups

El Rio will offer a variety of support for students with extraordinary needs, such as foster youth and homeless students. Our intervention program will provide support to students and their families depending on the needs of the student, including counseling, and referrals to outside resources.

El Rio will screen for foster youth through a process that includes examining the following: possible visits from social services; non-parent enrolling student in school; home arrangements (group home). Foster youth struggling in school may receive poor grades, have difficulty understanding the content, and often do not complete assignments. These students can be referred to the SST process to determine the individual supports and interventions needed to help them succeed in their classes. El Rio will also adhere to all state and federal policies related to foster youth.

El Rio will identify homeless youth through the enrollment forms families complete when enrolling in our school. Other ways El Rio will screen for homelessness is through drop in academic performance, hunger, and fatigue. If a parent or student indicates they are living in a situation that would qualify as homeless the school will inform them of their rights under the McKinney-Vento Act.

El Rio will adhere to the McKinney-Vento Act and provide all required supports to its homeless youth.

El Rio will identify Standard English Learners through placement assessment results on Language tests, performance on benchmark assessments that include written performance tasks and reading and language comprehension, grades in classes, and teacher input. Some of the instructional strategies that El Rio will implement to support the unique needs of its Standard English Learners include providing increased collaborative opportunities in each class so students can practice the language, teaching of academic vocabulary and language in all classes, and use of visual tools and representations of information that show the structure of concepts and the relationships between ideas to support critical thinking.

Students in all subgroups will be monitored through performance on state assessments, internal benchmark exams, and grades. Continued support will be provided to students based on their performance on each indicator. As with all other statistically significant subgroups and individual students, the Co-Directors and classroom teachers will monitor the progress of all these students.

“A Typical Day”

A Day with an El Rio Community School Third Grade Class

Main Lesson 8:30-10:30

It's 8:30 and a handheld bell rings throughout the playground. Children scatter and line up behind their class teacher. The teacher leads them to the classroom threshold and leans down to shake each child's hand and welcome them in to the new day. The children enter the classroom and take their seats. The teacher then sings each child's name and each child sings back “I am here” in both Spanish and Mandarin.

Following attendance, the children recite a daily poem that talks about readiness to face the day, the world and each other, and move to the circle rug singing in rounds. The circle splits into smaller circles, and the children move and greet each other throughout the song. The children come back to their seat singing an autumn song in Mandarin, one they have been learning since the beginning of the year. Once all have gathered, still standing, they recite, with movement, a repertoire of Spanish and English tongue twisters playing with tempo and volume. Next an autumn poem is recited, and several songs are played on the recorder. The morning routine is completed by the students reciting their multiplication facts with rhythm and movement for all of the factors of 24, because it is September 24th. By now everyone is pink-cheeked and smiling.

The teacher asks the children to gather their tools and go to their pre-assigned groups, then leads them outside, where they spend the next hour working on building their version of a Tongva grass hut. They have been designing and building the hut for the last two weeks of this Main Lesson Block on the practical arts (how people provide necessities such as food, shelter, clothing) and are close to completion. One group works on tying and securing grasses to the bentwood frame, while another group works on weaving more grasses together to thatch the top. The teacher moves between the groups offering feedback and help as needed.

After 45 minutes of hard work, collaboration and problem-solving, the teacher plays a melody on the recorder to transition the children out of building and leads them to sit in circle next to the hut. Once they are seated she leads them in a quick group of calming exercises. Once they are quiet, she tells them the Tongva creation myth of Quaoar. Once the story has been told, the recorder is played again and the children get up quietly and walk back to the classroom.

When everyone is back in the classroom, the teacher asks the children to come to the rug and sit “rainbow” style. A covered table is slid into the center, and once the children are settled, the cover is pulled from the table. On the table sit all the ingredients for making bread from acorn flour, a Tongva staple. There are also many measurement instruments: scales, cups, bowls, spoons, etc. There is even a mortar and pestle with acorns to grind. The children are guided through the recipe, being challenged to choose the correct measuring tool for each ingredient. The mortar and pestle is passed around so that each child may grind the acorns. Each child gets a chance to sift flour, and then children are selected to pour and measure ingredients. The bowl is passed around so that everyone gets a turn to stir. Children are sent to wash hands, and the dough is divided into six parts.

The children go back to their seats and wax paper is placed on six desks. The children work in groups of four to knead the dough. It is then placed in bread tins to rise and will be brought home to bake by the teacher.

The children clean up, and three of the children volunteer to wash dishes at recess. A scale is played on the glockenspiel to transition the children to Main Lesson Book work. The children quietly take out their Main Lesson Books and crayons. The teacher instructs the children to head to their “farms” (planter boxes that are set next to the windows of the classroom) and journal. Each farm has four farmers. The students have planted a variety of crops based on what the Tongva and early Californians grew and are recording and graphing measurements, temperature, and weather, as well as writing detailed descriptions of what they observe. Using all senses is encouraged. They are also writing a narrative (fantasy) about what is happening on their farm. While the children are busy with their farms, there is a lot of talking, and giggling, and some debating about watering. The teacher plays a melody on the recorder and the students clean up and come back to their seats to join in on the song.

The teacher unveils a chalked drawing of a Tongva woman grinding acorns and a written recipe. She explains that they will be adding the recipe to the page tomorrow but will be illustrating today so they need to leave room for the words. The children quietly take out their Main Lesson books and crayons. The teacher does not begin until all students are prepared. The teacher directs a simple border that can be embellished later. She then gives explicit directions, and models in her own book where and how to illustrate the drawing. The children are still, quiet, and focused. After the directed portion, the students are then encouraged to embellish the border, but to continue working quietly.

After a period of independent work, the glockenspiel scale is played once more, and the children quietly put their materials away before the end of the scale. The teacher then asks a student to turn off the lights as the teacher lights a battery operated “story” candle. The children are still and quiet, and eagerly await the storytelling by their teacher. The teacher brings an episode from the life of a Tongva family. Each character is well-developed and the descriptive vocabulary is strong. The problem in today’s episode is a feast needs to be prepared for the whole tribe and a variety of animals and plants will need to be hunted and harvested to feed everyone. The start is riddled with math problems and ends with the two children working together to figure out how many people they could feed, given what they were able to gather. No answers are given today.

Snack/Recess 10:30-11:00

Once the candle is turned off the children fold their hands and sing a verse for snack. The children are excused to get snacks and return to their seats as the teacher reads aloud from *The Birchbark House*. The children are then excused to go to recess.

Language Arts 11:00-11:45

A hand held bell rings once more and the children line up and come into the classroom for a Language Arts period. The children work for a few minutes on spelling practice by doing a word sort. The word sorts are differentiated by students’ ability and the teacher provides extra assistance to

those who are struggling. Then they all take out their copies of *The Birchbark House* and turn to the page the teacher left off on. The teacher asks a few open-ended questions, eager children respond, and then she begins reading, slowly and articulately, as the children follow along. She pauses every now and then to question, relate, or predict. She explicates vocabulary and key terms, pausing and making frequent eye contact with her EL students, who are seated near the front in order to maximize interaction with the teacher. Once the chapter is finished, she asks the students to choose three sentences from the chapter to copy in their neatest cursive and underline the verbs. The children break into pre-assigned small groups to work together, with the teacher monitoring progress and giving support to students who are struggling. The students finish; their work will be shared tomorrow and added to the word bank.

Mandarin 11:45-12:30

The Mandarin teacher comes into the classroom, and a greeting is exchanged with the classroom teacher. They shake hands and the class is turned over to the Mandarin teacher. The class begins with a song and then some recitation. This is followed by a Mandarin character story. The students take out their Mandarin lesson books and follow a guided lesson on drawing the character. The teacher then unveils a chalkboard drawing showing a scene from a traditional terraced rice paddy fields on a farm in China, and shares a Chinese folk tale set on the farm. The Mandarin transition song is sung and supplies are put away and a closing song is sung. The class teacher then shakes hands with the Mandarin teacher.

Lunch/Recess 12:30-1:00

A verse for lunch is recited. The children are excused and come back to their desks with their lunch. The teacher reads *The Birchbark House* while the children listen and eat. Two children selected from a rotating roster stay back to help the teacher clean up the classroom. The children then go out to recess.

Math 1:00-1:45

The children sing a few math songs to transition. They then take a ten-minute multiplication or division fact practice period. This is differentiated according to the facts the individual students still need to practice. They are collected. The teacher is keeping a record of each student's progress. The math lesson for the day is multiplication strategies. Because many of the children have mastered the multiplication and division facts, there is an alternate assignment consisting of a few challenge problems to solve in small groups on the rug. While this group works together solving problems using their multiplication facts, the teacher directs the rest of the class in a lesson related to the house-building project they will be working on in their next Main Lesson block, using measurement and multiplication to figure out how much wood is needed for the various parts of the house so that the materials can be ordered. Children are encouraged to come to the board and show what they know. The teacher has been tracking which students have been struggling on their recent quizzes and directs special attention to those that need the extra practice at the board. Some are confident in doing so; others need a little more time. The teacher notes which students are needing more time so that she can prepare the next day's differentiated practice period. The glockenspiel scale sounds once more, and supplies are put away and children are seated and ready for the Handwork teacher. The Handwork teacher is welcomed into the room, she and a background-cleared parent volunteer greet and shake hands with the class teacher, and then the class teacher hands her class over to them.

Handwork 1:45-2:30

After an opening verse to bring a calm, reverent atmosphere and set the intention for the class, the children are eager to tell their teachers about how they took their recent three day, two night overnight class trip with their class teacher and several parents to a working farm where they camped on the land, woke at dawn in the chill to feed and water the cows, chickens, pigs, and horses, and planted seeds in the newly warmed soil. They watched sheep being sheared and helped

wash and card the wool. With their gardening teacher, they have harvested the dye plants they had grown in the garden, and now, together with their handwork teacher, they prepare dye pots to dye the wool, which they then witness being spun, and finally, they begin to knit hats for the homeless with the needles they had shaped, sanded, and polished from dowels back in first grade when they began to learn to knit. The handwork teacher and parent volunteer move between students, helping them “cast on” and reminding those who are not as proficient with their knitting about the verse for each stitch (“in through the front door/ going around the back/ peeking through the window/ and off pops Jack!”) and correcting any stitches made in error. The classroom hums with low conversation as the children work industriously. At the end of the lesson, the teacher and parent volunteer say goodbye and hand the children over to the painting teacher.

Painting 2:30-3:15

The painting teacher greets the children and asks for 2 volunteers to help pass out paper, boards, water, brushes and paints to the class. Once everyone has their materials, the teacher tells the children they will be painting a scene from *The Birchbark House*, which they have been reading with their class teacher. She takes out a beautiful painting of a girl and her mother harvesting rice in a canoe; it is the protagonist from the book, and the children ooh and ah. They are eager to get to work. The teacher takes a sheet of wet watercolor paper and smooths it onto the chalkboard, painting it carefully on with her brush. The children do the same with their paper and boards. She moves through the steps of the painting, talking through the process as the children follow her instructions, occasionally raising their hands to ask for help. The teacher progresses at the pace of the class, alternately providing individual help and instructing the group. When the painting is finished, she asks for volunteers to move the paintings to the drying rack. Their class teacher will put the dry paintings up on the walls of the classroom the next day for the students to admire.

Class Meeting and Dismissal 3:15-3:30

The students stand behind their chairs, they sing two songs in rounds, then recite a closing verse in reverence. The teacher reviews homework for the day and instructs the children to take home their Main Lesson Books and pencils if they weren't able to finish the drawing from this morning's lesson. The teacher excuses the children to get their belongings, and the children line up to shake the teacher's hand as each child leaves. The teacher takes a moment with each child, checking in and asking them how their day went. When all children have been dismissed, the teacher follows the group to see them off to their parents or the after-school program.

ELEMENT 2 – MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES & ELEMENT 3 – METHODS BY WHICH STUDENT OUTCOMES WILL BE MEASURED

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

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

MEASURABLE GOALS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Charter School shall meet all statewide content and performance standards and targets. (Ed. Code §§ 47605(c)(1), 60605.)

Charter School shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (2013) (Local Control Funding Formula) and AB 484 (2013), as they may be amended from time to time, including all requirements pertaining to pupil outcomes.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Charter School agrees to comply with state requirements for participation and administration of all state-mandated tests, including computer-based assessments. Charter School shall submit and maintain complete, accurate, and up-to-date California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) data in accordance with the requirements of California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 861. Charter School hereby grants authority to the State of California to provide a copy of all test results directly to the District as well as Charter School. Upon request, Charter School shall submit, in the requested format (e.g., CD), a copy of the results of all state-mandated tests to the District.

MEASURABLE GOALS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Please see Element 1, Section 10, *The Requirements Of California Education Code* § 47605(B)(5)(A)(ii).

MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES: SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Please see Element 1, Section 10, *The Requirements Of California Education Code* § 47605(B)(5)(A)(ii).

METHOD FOR MEASURING PUPIL PROGRESS TOWARD OUTCOMES: FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

El Rio will focus on the types of continuous formative assessment that are in line with the mission and vision of the Charter School, well integrated with what will be taught in the classroom, and developmentally and culturally appropriate. Assessments will initiate instructional decision-making and be an outgrowth of it. Assessments will be varied and designed to measure student progress in multiple ways, including tests and quizzes, performance-based assessments, authentic assessments, and teacher observation, and use a combination of publisher assessment tools with teacher-created assessments that align to our model of instruction. This combination of formative assessments will be used to track progress on specific standards-aligned goals. Assessments will be chosen and used according to the goals targeted. Assessments will reflect our commitment to recognize each child as an individual and develop a learning program that will avoid labeling and help create a non-competitive environment for our students. Assessments will also be adjusted as needed to measure specific goals so that teachers know they are getting valid assessment data.

In addition to standardized testing in spring and ongoing formative and summative assessment by teachers, our teachers will use “in house” benchmark assessments designed by El Rio three times a year to track student progress and inform instruction. For grades 2-5, El Rio will use the easyCBM system twice annually. easyCBM was developed by educational researchers at the University of Oregon and is designed to give teachers insight into which of their students may need additional instructional supports as well as to provide a means by which they can measure the effectiveness of their teaching. System reports provide information that supports evidence-based decision making. easyCBM includes a variety of curriculum-based measures in the content areas of early literacy in both English and Spanish as well as oral reading fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension; the program also offers mathematics measures with reach to both the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Focal Point Standards and the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics, with built-in read-aloud and Spanish translation accommodations. (easycbm.com) Additionally, in grades 6-8, El Rio will use the NWEA MAP assessments, a computer-adaptive educational assessment tool developed by the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), a group of educators and researchers who formed an association to use data as a transformational teaching tool. NWEA is a research-based not-for-profit organization, supports students and educators worldwide in precisely measuring growth and proficiency using the RIT scale. The MAP Growth tests in core subjects allow teachers to differentiate instruction and pinpoint individual student needs.

El Rio will use the following tools to measure student progress:

- Entrance Exams: In addition to reviewing existing student data from previous years/schools (where available), all new students at all grade levels will be given entrance exams in the first weeks of school, including the ELPAC (for English Language Learners), a diagnostic test for Math (El Rio-created) and English (DIBELS in lower grades/Qualitative Reading Inventory in upper grades). These results will better enable the teachers to set individualized intervention programs for the students at the beginning of the year and ensure proper lesson planning and differentiation for each student. **Annually**
- State-Required Tests: All state required tests for applicable grade levels including CAASPPs (ELA, Math), California Science Test (CAST), California Alternative Assessment (CAA), Physical Fitness Test (PFT) and ELPAC (for English Language Learners). **Annually**
- Traditional Classroom Assessments: Quizzes, essays, projects and presentations (publisher and teacher-designed). **Some Weekly, Some Monthly**

- Formal Interim Assessments: Common standards-based formative assessments including EasyCBM in 2-5, and NWEA MAP in 6-8, aligned to standards, for each major academic content area. ***Beginning, Mid-Year and End-of-Year.***
- First Grade Readiness Assessment: This assessment helps teachers determine students' readiness to move from Kindergarten to First Grade and measures fine and gross motor skills; visual, tactile and auditory development; speech, language, and cognitive development; social and emotional integration; and other aspects of early childhood development. ***Spring of Kindergarten year.***

Language Arts:

Easy CBM (2-5)

DIBELS

San Diego QUICK

Qualitative Reading Inventory

NWEA MAP (6-8)

Math:

El Rio-created Grade level assessments at the beginning and end of each school year, based on grade level Common Core standards

Teacher created, ongoing grade level math assessments based on Common Core standards aligned with curriculum.

In addition to the foregoing assessments focused primarily on core instruction (ELA, Math, Science and History/Social Science) and state testing, the following assessments are samples of how El Rio's performance-based assessments will be consistent with our instructional program.

Main Lesson Books: Grades 1 – 8. Used daily, periodically assessed throughout the thematic block, and summatively assessed at the end of the 3-4 week block. Main Lesson Books will be evaluated using standards-aligned specific grade level rubrics that will be particular to the block being studied. Serving as student textbooks and a useful tool for ongoing student evaluation, every student will create hand-written and illustrated books for every unit of study that will be increasingly personalized as the students go up the grades and will be deeply reflective of the individual student. Class teachers will utilize the main lesson books to evaluate students' writing, comprehension of concepts, spatial understanding, fine motor skills, drawing, mapping and copying abilities.

Class Plays: Grades 1 – 8. Performed once a year, with formative assessment throughout the rehearsal process and summative assessment in the final performances. Performance expectations will be based in part on the CCSS/NGSS and CA Visual and Performing Arts Theatre Standards, and also on specific goals set by the teacher for each child as well as the class as a whole. Originating from Main Lesson curriculum, every student will have a role and recite memorized lines. Students will work on their own individual part and also learn to develop a communal attitude toward the production. They will participate in creating the sets and costumes, and in upper grades, sometimes write the plays themselves. In understanding the context of the play (Roman History, Native American creation stories, etc.), students will be able to imbue their parts with a meaningful fervor for their message or role in history.

Oral Presentations: Grades 3 – 8. At least once a year in 3rd grade and increasing to more frequently each year until they are weekly in 8th grade. Standards-aligned rubrics will be used to evaluate student oral presentations. Beginning with the 3rd grade shelter project students will make formal, oral presentations to their class at least once per year. They will speak about the particular area they researched and what they learned. In the upper grades, the Oral Presentation Rubric will

be used to give students meaningful feedback on their presentation. These evaluations will consider students' public speaking skills, knowledge of the material being presented and ability to respond to questions. By grade 8, El Rio students will be accomplished and confident public speakers and presenters.

Art Portfolio: Grades K-8. Paintings, drawings, and other visual arts will be reviewed weekly, and in summation at the end of the year for overall growth. Every student will participate in weekly painting lessons. These portfolios will be useful for analyzing students' attention to detail, ability to follow directions, understanding and use of color, shading technique, and fine-motor skill development. They will also provide insight into a student's socio-emotional state and cognitive development.

Beeswax Modeling and Clay Sculpting: Grades K – 6. Students will work with a modeling compound and/or clay to create figures depicting elements from the curriculum. Figures will be evaluated both during the blocks in which they will be created, typically 3- 4 times per year, and all together at the end of the year to see growth. The models will be used to decorate classroom dioramas and nature tables, demonstrating both the students' ability to transform imaginary images into concrete objects, three dimensional/spatial abilities, as well as their work habits and attention to detail.

Music Performance: Grades 1 – 8. Formative assessments will occur daily in classroom singing and music activities. Expectations will be based in part on CA Music Standards, in part on Waldorf Education grade level expectations, and in part on specific goals set by the teacher for his/her particular class. Regular assemblies featuring student performances in recorder/flute, singing, and/or poetry recitation will allow students to showcase their ongoing growth in these areas. Starting in 4th grade and continuing through 8th grade, students will perform for parents and community members in Winter and Spring Music Concerts that feature our strings, percussion, chorus and dance classes, and teachers will actively seek out opportunities for students to perform as a community service for the elderly and at community events.

Physical Education Assessments: Biweekly assessment will occur in every lesson informally and at the end of curricular blocks formally. Expectations will be in the program description. In addition to Fitness Testing in grades 5 & 7, El Rio students will demonstrate their mastery of physical education standards and unique El Rio outcomes by participating in the 5th grade Pentathlon, the 6th grade Medieval Games, and the 7th and 8th grade Track and Field Meet. These events will culminate blocks of interdisciplinary study that will combine main lesson academic content with physical education content.

Culminating Assessment/8th Grade Student Project: All 8th graders will complete an in-depth research project about a student-selected and teacher-approved subject, aligned to core content learning in the grade. Students will work in conjunction with an adult advisor with an interest or expertise in the field of study who will oversee the student's project over a period of six months. The project will include three components: a research paper, a physical, hands-on creation of the student's making that showcases/is connected to the topic of research, and an oral presentation with PowerPoint. Each will be evaluated with standards-aligned rubrics.

DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

El Rio will incorporate the use of the PowerSchool online data management/student information system (SIS) to track and report student assessment data. The system will allow our teachers and Co-Directors to analyze data trends across subgroups, grade levels, classes and more in order to make revisions to the program, provide necessary interventions and focus teacher professional development and coaching.

PowerSchool will give teachers real-time access to data that will help them effectively meet the needs of all students. The student achievement database also will make it possible for the Charter School to track student demographic information, grades, attendance and behavioral data. Teacher data will be included in the system and provide a means by which the Co-Directors can track teacher impact on student outcomes and provide professional development and coaching in areas of need.

As detailed extensively throughout this charter petition, both internal assessments and standardized test results will be used to inform teaching and instruction. By disaggregating the standardized test data and looking at individual students' results, faculty and staff will utilize test results along with other assessments to determine students' specific academic needs and develop plans to address these needs. Individual performance data from each classroom will be aggregated to enable school leaders to identify trends and address specific needs.

School leaders will analyze assessment data at least monthly to determine professional development and coaching needs for faculty. El Rio teachers will participate in professional-development activities relating to assessment and data analysis, so that teachers can enhance their understanding of student performance in light of data, and modify their instructional designs accordingly. Faculty will be trained during summer professional development and early release days throughout the school year to review student achievement data, interpret standardized test data and interim benchmark data, and engage in critical analysis of all assessment data in real-time – including that created and derived from their classroom activities -- in order to determine how best to meet their students' needs.

Results from myriad assessment activities will be collected and analyzed continuously in order to drive program improvement across all facets of the Charter School. We will regularly report on and distribute information about the Charter School's progress to all stakeholders including summary data showing student progress toward the school's goals and outcomes, including dissemination of the School Accountability Report Card (SARC). Annual stakeholder survey results will be disseminated to the entire school community as well.

Parents/guardians will have real-time access to their child's grades, attendance and other metrics via the PowerSchool system. Computers will be available on campus, along with training, for parents who do not have computer access at home. Parents will be regularly informed of their child's progress as measured by assessments through both informal and formal communications. Informal communication between teachers and parents will occur throughout the year through notes, evaluated work sent home, phone calls, and meetings. Formal communication will include the following:

Fall (November) & Spring (March) Evaluation: Grades TK – 8. Teachers will meet with individual parents once in the Fall and again in the Spring to review student progress. Written feedback will be provided that will include results of benchmark assessments as well as ongoing, formative teacher assessments and observations. Student work will be shared as further evidence of student performance and growth towards meeting schoolwide and grade level expectations.

6th - 8th Grade Report Cards: Teachers will provide reports, with descriptive, standards-based grades, and comments that are assigned to all subjects taught. These reports will be utilized to keep parents apprised of student progress and students apprised of their own progress three times per year, in November, March and June.

End of Year Narrative Report: Grades TK – 8. In addition to the forms of feedback cited above, the End-of-year Report will provide an in-depth, personalized evaluation of each child's progress. The teacher will write a descriptive narrative of the child's achievements, challenges, and participation in major areas of schoolwork—such as math, reading, writing, social studies, science, specialty

subjects, social/ emotional interactions, and physical activities. These reports will be mailed to parents after the last day of school.

GRADING, PROGRESS REPORTING, AND PROMOTION/RETENTION GRADING POLICY

Students in grades TK – 5th will be evaluated using multiple assessment measures as described earlier. Students in these grades will not receive report cards or formal letter grades. They will receive frequent verbal and written feedback on their work, and parents will be informed regularly of their student's progress through formal parent-teacher conferences in Fall and Spring, through individual conferences as needed throughout the year, and through student work that will be sent home with comments. Feedback will be given based on CA academic standards, Waldorf goals, and individual student goals established by the teacher.

For students in grades 6th-8th where grades will be earned and report cards will be given, the grading policy will be as follows:

El Rio will use fully-standards-based grading in the upper grades (6th-8th grade). We believe that the developmental approach in the earlier grades will fully prepare students to meet grade level standards at the middle school level, and that each student will be fully capable of reaching the high standards set forth in our state-adopted frameworks. All progress reports will average the assessment scores for each standard included in that report. A student's final trimester Report Card score for each standard will represent their achievement at the end of the trimester. Scores for each standard will be based on proficiency scales which describe what a student knows and can do at each level.

Numerical Score and Description

4.0 = Advanced

The student demonstrates learning that goes above and beyond what was explicitly taught, such as showing precise or insightful connections to other disciplines and applications to novel situations.

3.5 = Approaching Advanced

The student has met all aspects of the standard including attempting to make connections beyond what was explicitly taught.

3.0 = Proficient

The student has met all aspects of the standard, including accurate understanding of complex concepts and application of skills. A score of 3 represents a high level of achievement of challenging grade level expectations. Students are expected to reach a 3.0 by the end of the trimester on each standard.

2.5 = Approaching Proficient

While the student has demonstrated proficiency in many aspects of the standard, they have not yet shown proficiency in all concepts and skills included in the standard. Students may show some misunderstandings of concepts or skills.

Numerical Score and Description

2.0 = Developing

The student shows some understanding of basic terms and concepts but makes major errors and omissions regarding more complex ideas or skills. Scores of 2.0 show a student's work is below grade level.

1.5 = Limited Development

The student has made some attempt to demonstrate their skills or work but is below grade level expectations. A student may be able to demonstrate some understanding of concepts or skills.

1.0 = Limited

A score of 1 shows that a student is far below grade level expectations and has shown little to no proficiency in regarding the standard.

0.0 = No evidence

The student has failed to turn in assignments, so it is not possible to score a student on this standard. A score of 0 indicates that the work habits or attendance are an area of concern for the student.

Work Habits/Citizenship Key

5 = Excellent

4 = Good

3 = Satisfactory

2 = Inconsistent

1 = Unsatisfactory

Type and Frequency of Progress Reporting

El Rio will operate on a trimester schedule with 6th-8th grade report cards mailed out at the end of each trimester and progress reports sent halfway through the trimester for students earning lower than a "3.0 = Proficient" and lower than a "3" in Work Habits or Citizenship. Interim progress reports will be sent halfway through the trimester so that parents are informed early, and students have time to make any necessary changes and get any necessary help to improve their performance in time to improve their grades on the trimester report card.

Promotion/Retention Policy

El Rio will consider retention carefully and in consultation with the full team of teachers, administrators, parents, and, when appropriate, the student. The process will involve multiple meetings, held as SST meetings to track supports and progress. In these meetings, multiple factors will be considered, including but not limited to: standardized test scores, internal assessments, teacher assessments, student work, social-emotional factors, student age, relationships with peers, behavior, indicators of child's developmental stage, and attendance. Every effort will be made to support students progressing with their class, including giving instructional support during the school day and after school when possible, collaborating with families in a community of care, and school-based counseling, when appropriate. Decisions on retention will be ultimately made in the best interest of the student as a whole human being – academically, social-emotionally, and developmentally. Decisions will be made ideally as a collaborative team with administration, teachers and parents, but may be made by administration if the team is not in agreement.

The Educational Director will have the ultimate decision-making authority on retention. Appeals of retention decisions will be able to be made to the El Rio Board of Directors by submitting a written



statement indicating disagreement with the decision to retain and the reasons for the disagreement. The parents will appear before the Board of Directors to share information, as will the Co-Directors. The El Rio Board of Directors will decide whether or not the retention decision should stand.

ELEMENT 4 – GOVERNANCE

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

GENERAL PROVISIONS

As an independent charter school, Charter School, operated as or by its nonprofit public benefit corporation, is a separate legal entity and shall be solely responsible for the debts and obligations of Charter School.

Charter School shall ensure that, at all times throughout the term of the Charter, the bylaws of its governing board and/or nonprofit corporation are and remain consistent with the provisions of this Charter. In the event that the governing board and/or nonprofit corporation operating Charter School amends the bylaws, Charter School shall provide a copy of the amended bylaws to CSD within 30 days of adoption.

Charter School shall send to the CSD copies of all governing board meeting agendas at the same time that they are posted in accordance with the Brown Act. Charter School shall also send to the CSD copies of all board meeting minutes within one week of governing board approval of the minutes. Timely posting of agendas and minutes on Charter School’s website will satisfy this requirement.

The District reserves the right to appoint a single representative to the Charter School governing board pursuant to Education Code section 47604(b).

LEGAL AND POLICY COMPLIANCE

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and District policies as it relates to charter schools adopted through Board action.¹³¹

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal and state reporting requirements, including but not limited to the requirements of CBEDS, CALPADS, the Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999, and Education Code section 47604.33.

Charter School shall comply with the Brown Act and the Public Records Act.

Charter School and all employees and representatives of Charter School, including members of Charter School’s governing board, members of Charter School or governing board committees and councils, Charter School administrators, and managers, shall comply with federal and state laws, nonprofit integrity standards, and LAUSD charter school policy, regarding ethics and conflicts of interest. Charter School shall enter into all transactions and conduct business with all persons and entities at arm’s length or, in the case of otherwise permissible related party transactions, in a manner equivalent to arm’s length.

¹³¹The District is in the process of compiling a list of LAUSD policies that apply to its authorized charter schools. The list will be finalized by April 1, 2018. Charter Schools Division staff will annually review District policies and make recommendations to the LAUSD Board of Education on continued application to charter schools.

Charter School shall notify parents, guardians, and teachers in writing within 72 hours of the issuance of a Notice of Violation, Notice of Intent to Revoke, Final Decision to Revoke, Notice of Non-Renewal, or equivalent notice, by the LAUSD Board of Education.

TITLE IX, SECTION 504, AND UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Charter School shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), including any investigation of any complaint filed with Charter School alleging its noncompliance with these laws or alleging any actions which would be prohibited by these laws. Charter School shall notify all of its students and employees of the name, office address, and telephone number of the designated employee or employees.

Charter School shall adopt and publish complaint procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited by Title IX or Section 504.

Charter School shall adopt and implement specific and continuing procedures for notifying applicants for admission and employment, students and parents of elementary and secondary school students, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with Charter School, that Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of sex or mental or physical disability in the educational programs or activities which it operates, and that it is required by Title IX and Section 504 not to discriminate on any such basis.

Charter School shall establish and provide a uniform complaint procedure in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, including but not limited to all applicable requirements of *California Code of Regulations*, title 5, section 4600 et seq.

Charter School shall adhere to all applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding pupil fees, including Education Code sections 49010 - 49013, and extend its uniform complaint procedure to complaints filed pursuant to Education Code section 49013.

Charter School shall extend its uniform complaint procedure to complaints filed pursuant to the Local Control Funding Formula legislation provisions set forth in Education Code section 52075.

RESPONDING TO INQUIRIES

Charter School, including its nonprofit corporation shall promptly respond to all reasonable inquiries, including but not limited to inquiries regarding financial records from the District, and shall cooperate with the District regarding any inquiries. Charter School acknowledges that Charter School, including but not limited to its nonprofit corporation, is subject to audit by LAUSD, including, without limitation, audit by the District Office of the Inspector General. Charter School shall provide the District with current, complete, and accurate contact information for Charter School, Charter School administrators, and Board members.

If an allegation or other evidence of waste, fraud, abuse, or other material violation of law related to Charter School's operations, or breach of the Charter, is received or discovered by the District, Charter School, including but not limited to its nonprofit corporation, employees, and representatives, shall cooperate with any resulting inquiry and/or investigation undertaken by the District and/or the Office of the Inspector General Investigations Unit.



Charter School acknowledges and agrees that persons and entities that directly exercise control over the expenditure of Charter School's public funds shall be subject to all necessary and appropriate District charter school oversight.

NOTIFICATION OF THE DISTRICT

Charter School shall notify the Charter Schools Division (CSD) in writing of any citations or notices of workplace hazards, investigations by outside governmental regulatory or investigative agencies, lawsuits, changes in corporate or legal status (e.g., loss of IRS 501(c)(3) status), or other formal complaints or notices, within one week of receipt of such notices by Charter School. Unless prohibited by law, Charter School shall notify the CSD in writing of any internal investigations within one week of commencing investigation. Charter School shall notify the CSD within 24 hours of any dire emergency or serious threat to the health and safety of students or staff.

STUDENT RECORDS

Upon receipt of a student records request from a receiving school/school district, Charter School shall transfer a copy of the student's complete cumulative record within ten (10) school days in accordance with Education Code section 49068. Charter School shall comply with the requirements of California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 3024, regarding the transfer of student special education records. In the event Charter School closes, Charter School shall comply with the student records transfer provisions in Element 15. Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code section 49060 et seq., which include provisions regarding rights to access student records and transfer of records for youth in foster care.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Charter School shall not require a parent or legal guardian of a prospective or enrolled student to perform volunteer service hours, or make payment of fees or other monies, goods, or services in lieu of performing volunteer service, as a condition of his/her child's admission, continued enrollment, attendance, or participation in the school's educational activities, or otherwise discriminate against a student in any manner because his/her parent cannot, has not, or will not provide volunteer service to Charter School.

FEDERAL PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

As a recipient of federal funds, Charter School has agreed to meet all applicable programmatic, fiscal and other regulatory requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, also known as Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)) and other applicable federal programs. Charter School understands that it is a local educational agency (LEA) for purposes of federal compliance and reporting purposes. Charter School agrees that it will keep and make available to the District any documentation necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of ESEA and other applicable federal programs. Charter School also acknowledges that, as part of its oversight of Charter School, the District may conduct program review for federal as well as state compliance.

Governance Structure

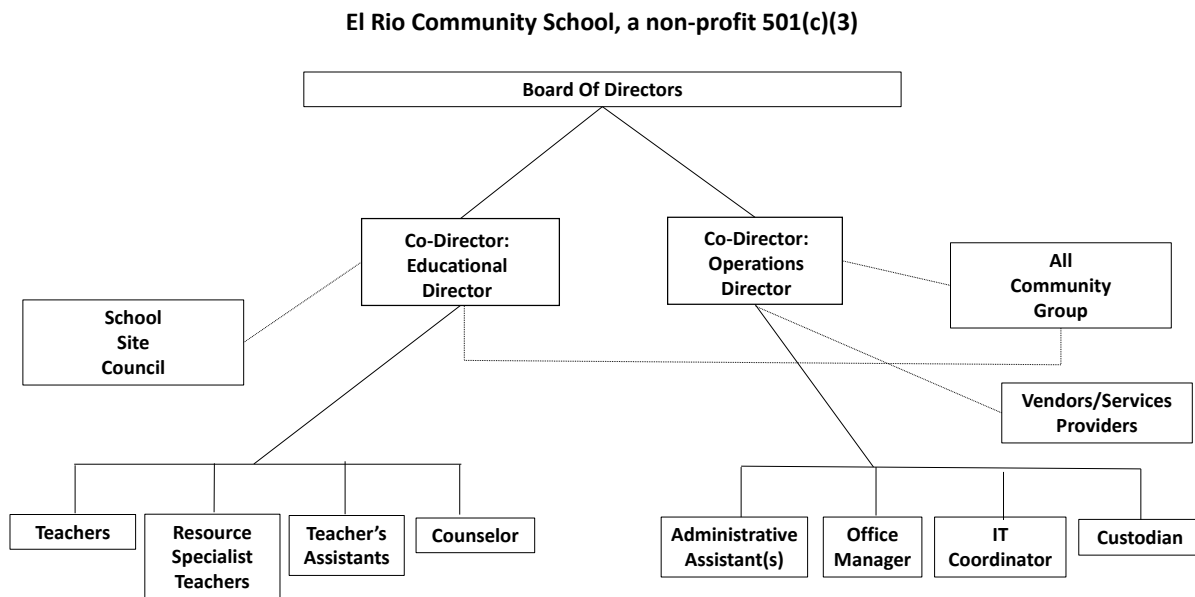
El Rio Community School will be an independent charter school, operated by El Rio Community School, (ERCS) a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation that qualifies for and is applying for 501(c)(3) tax exempt status. El Rio will be built on a consensus model involving its key stakeholders: teachers, staff, parents, and community members. Although El Rio will operate with a clear chain of

command, designated roles and responsibilities, our goal will be for collaboration and consensus-seeking to take place at every level of decision-making, and that all participants experience room to think creatively in realizing the school's vision. Involvement of the larger community will be an important facet of El Rio.

Involvement in the larger community is an important facet of El Rio. By establishing relationships with local non-profit groups and other educational institutions, and through community service projects, we will foster a strong foundation of trust and sense of stakeholder-ship within the wider community.

The Charter School will be governed by the ERCS Board of Directors (Board) in accordance with the Board's adopted corporate bylaws, which shall be consistent with the terms of this charter. The Charter School will operate autonomously from the District, with the exception of the supervisory oversight as required by statute.

Organizational Chart



Description of Roles and Responsibilities within the Governance Structure

El Rio Board of Directors

The ERCS Board will be responsible for governance of the Charter School, including oversight of operations, finances, and the educational outcomes, and ensuring the overall educational practices and quality of participation is consistent with the vision of the school.

Responsibilities

- Promote and guide the vision and mission of the school;

- Monitor student achievement to ensure progress toward fulfillment of the school's mission, vision, and goals;
- Hire, supervise, and evaluate the Education Director and Operations Director (collectively, the Co-Directors);
- Approve major contracts, to be defined in the school's fiscal policies and procedures;
- Approve and monitor the school's LCAP, annual budget, budget revisions, and interim and unaudited financial reports;
- Approve bylaws and Board policies;
- Contract with an auditor to produce the annual independent financial audit;
- Establish operational committees as needed;
- Engage in ongoing strategic planning;
- Approve the schedule of Board meetings;
- Participate in the dispute resolution procedure and complaint procedures when necessary;
- Approve requests for material revisions as necessary to the District for consideration;
- Approve annual independent financial audit report;
- Ensure compliance with all applicable laws, including but not limited to the Ralph M. Brown Act, Public Records Act, Political Reform Act, and Government Code 1090

Operations Director and Educational Director (Co-Directors)

The Board shall hire and supervise two Co-Directors, who shall serve as the school's executive-level leaders--Educational Director and Operations Director--who, subject to Board control, shall have day-to-day general supervision, direction and control of the affairs of El Rio, and such other powers and duties as the Board may prescribe. The Co-Directors shall not be Board members but will generally attend all Regular and Special Board meetings.

Operations Director: The Operations Director will be the business leader and in concert with the Educational Director, be the co-cultural leader of El Rio. He or she will be responsible for school compliance with all state requirements and ensuring that the school has adequate funding and external resources to maximize student learning experiences. The Operations Director will report directly to the Board and serve as the liaison between the Board and the authorizing school district and other outside agencies.

Educational Director: The Educational Director will be the instructional leader and in concert with the Operations Director, the co-cultural leader of El Rio. The Educational Director will ensure that the curriculum is implemented in order to maximize student-learning experiences. The Educational Director will report directly to the ERCS Board. While the Operations Director will be responsible for the orderly operation of El Rio and the supervision of employees with operational functions, the Educational Director will supervise all instructional personnel and will retain autonomy over decisions as well as all student related activities.

Governing Board Composition and Member Selection

Members of the Board may be added by election of a majority of the Board in accordance with the ERCS Bylaws. The Los Angeles Unified School District reserves the right to appoint a single representative to the charter school board pursuant to Education Code section 47604.

The goal is for the composition of the Board to be reflective of the diversity of the El Rio community. The task of effectively overseeing a public charter school will also require a team with expertise and

knowledge in legal, financial, business, and educational matters. ERCS will accordingly strive to maintain a balanced composition of Board members with diverse skills, experience, perspectives, and expertise that can contribute to effective school governance as well as El Rio's mission of providing a public Waldorf Education.

The standard term for new Board members shall be two years, with no term limits, and Board members shall serve until the expiration of their term and until their successor is elected. Initial Board members' terms shall be staggered so that the term of approximately one-third of the Board members then in office shall expire at the end of each ERCS fiscal year. To ensure this will be possible, in the event that a Board member resigns or is removed from office prior to the expiration of that Board member's term, his/her successor shall complete the rest of that term rather than for a new standard term. The Board Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining a current roster of Board members and their individual terms of service.

The number of ERCS Board members in office shall be not less than five or more than 13. If the number of Board members in office should ever fall below five, the Board shall work to promptly elect additional members so as to bring the number to five. Consistent with this charter and the Bylaws, the Board may add Board members whenever it deems the addition of another member will further the Board's ability to fulfill its responsibilities and/or the mission of the Charter School.

Governance Procedures and Operations

ERCS will comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act and the additional Board meeting requirements of SB 126 (2019), and Board members will annually receive Brown Act training. All meetings of ERCS' Board and its standing Board Committees, if any, will comply with the Brown Act and SB 126 (2019). ERCS Board members will hold regular Board meetings at the school monthly and schedule additional special meetings as needed. ERCS has adopted a conflict of interest policy and a conflict of interest code that comply with the Political Reform Act, Corporations Code, and District policy.

Board meeting notices will be posted electronically and in print as required by the Brown Act and to provide the greatest possible public access to the school community as well as to the community at large. Prior to the beginning of each school year, the El Rio administration will propose a schedule of regular Board meeting dates for approval by the Board. The Board calendar and meeting agendas will be posted on the El Rio website. Print notice will be posted at the school in an accessible location for the public to view on campus. Agendas for regular meetings will be posted at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting, and agendas for special meetings will be posted at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. The agenda and all Board packet documents will be available electronically or at the school office and will be mailed to El Rio community members upon request. Board meeting minutes will be recorded by the Board Secretary according to the following process: 1) taking minutes at Board meetings, 2) agendaizing approval of the minutes on a subsequent Board meeting agenda and including draft minutes in the Board agenda packet, and 3) final Board approval. The Secretary will then post approved minutes to the El Rio website and will provide a hard copy for viewing in the school office.

Quorum Requirements

A majority of the actual number of Board members then in office shall constitute a quorum, as set forth in the Bylaws.

Board Action Voting Requirements

The actions done and decisions made by a majority of the Board members present at a meeting duly held at which a quorum is present will be the actions and decisions of the Board, except when more than a majority vote is required for certain actions under the Bylaws or applicable law.

No Actions Without a Meeting

The Board will not take action without a meeting. All actions taken by the Board members and its deliberations will be conducted in compliance with the Brown Act.

Abstention and teleconference participation

Any Board member may abstain from a vote. Abstentions will not reduce the number of affirmative Board member votes required for the Board to take action.

Although Board members will make efforts to attend all meetings, El Rio may utilize teleconference provided that all Brown Act requirements for attendance by teleconference are satisfied.

Stakeholder Involvement

As a school founded by parents and educators, parent input and perspective will be built into the El Rio governance structure. The founding Board includes several parent-founders of the Charter School; parents will also be involved in decision-making through El Rio's All Community Group (see below). In addition, El Rio parents and community members will be invited to present their questions and comments during the Open Forum (public comment) portion of Board meetings. This open invitation to address the Board will encourage parental involvement in school decision-making processes.

At El Rio, teacher input and perspective will also be highly valued. Although they do not hold seats on the Board, teachers will be welcomed and encouraged to attend Board meetings. In accordance with the California Education Code, section 52176(b), El Rio will have an English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) if it has 21 or more EL students. All parents with students attending the Charter School in which the ELAC is established are eligible and encouraged to participate in the ELAC. The Educational Director will ensure that ELAC members receive appropriate training.

Each year, the Co-Directors also will engage students, parents, teachers and staff in formulating the Charter School's annual LCAP updates and goal setting through focus groups, surveys and open meetings in which stakeholders are invited to participate in reviewing the school's annual progress and establishing goals – and allocating resources – for the coming years. The Charter School will solicit feedback from parents, teachers and staff via annual surveys, meetings regarding the LCAP, SARC and other reports of progress. The Charter School website will be used to house all important documents (LCAP, SARC etc.) providing 24/7 access.

El Rio All-Community Group Meetings

The El Rio All Community Group (ACG) will be a collaboration of parents, teachers, and community members to fulfill the mission and vision of the school. ACG meetings will be open to anyone who has an interest in El Rio Community School. The goals of the All Community Group meetings will be to:

Inform: Facilitate open communication within the school community through updates, announcements, and curriculum education from our teachers, committees, staff members, and

guest speakers. ACG will also be a forum by which El Rio communicates with the community regarding our public Waldorf educational program.

Motivate: Encourage community participation in school activities, including festivals, celebrations, events, fundraisers, site beautification days, and gardening.

Unite: Bring together parents, faculty and staff. The collaborative efforts of the ACG will help El Rio realize its mission of offering an arts-integrated, experiential curriculum within a welcoming, beautiful, and successful environment. ACG will be the forum where El Rio will consult with all stakeholders (parents, teachers, staff, and administrators) to present its annual update.

Two individuals will be elected by a community-wide vote at the first ACG meeting of the school year to jointly direct the ACG's activities, which will involve monthly meetings open to the entire community. The Co-Directors will provide a link between the larger community input received at the ACG and the Board.

School Site Council

In the event El Rio operates a program that requires a School Plan for Student Achievement, El Rio will establish a School Site Council (SSC). The SSC will meet the composition and selection requirements of Education Code Section 65000(c)(1) and will be comprised of the Educational Director, teachers, staff members, and parents or community members. The major duty of the SSC will include development of the School Plan for Student Achievement.

El Rio Community School Website

The El Rio website will support stakeholder involvement by encouraging community participation in the All Community Group (ACG), festivals, events, activities, site beautification days, gardening, and library assistance. In addition, stakeholders will be able to access important documents such as Board Agendas and Minutes.

ELEMENT 5 - EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS

"The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the charter school." (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(E).)

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity. Charter School shall not discriminate against applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, military and veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by California or federal law. Equal employment opportunity shall be extended to all aspects of the employer-employee relationship, including but not limited to recruitment, selection, hiring, upgrading, training, promotion, transfer, discipline, layoff, recall, and dismissal from employment.

ESEA/ESSA AND CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS

Charter School shall adhere to all requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, also known as Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)) that are applicable to teachers and paraprofessional employees. Charter School shall ensure that all teachers are appropriately assigned and fully credentialed in accordance with applicable state requirements for certificated employment, including but not limited to the provisions of Education Code section 47605(l). Charter School shall maintain current copies of all teacher credentials and make them readily available for inspection.

In order to ensure the effectiveness of our programs and the success of students in meeting learning outcomes, all staff members must be committed to El Rio's mission and vision. El Rio will be committed to recruiting and retaining an excellent faculty and staff, and will place student achievement at the center of all employment decisions. Employees' job descriptions and work schedules will be reviewed and modified as necessary to meet the needs of the Charter School and its students. El Rio will also comply with all State and federal laws concerning the maintenance and disclosure of all employee records.

THE SCHOOL CO-DIRECTORS

El Rio will be led by two Co-Directors, hired by the ERCS Board. El Rio's Co-Directors will provide direct oversight for all aspects of school operations and will each take a different role in leading the school together. In the event there is a change in the allocation of duties between these positions, the ERCS Board will evaluate the needs of the Charter School and revise job descriptions as needed.

Both Co-Directors will possess the following minimum qualifications or equivalent qualifications deemed by the Board to be commensurate with the demands of their positions:

- Proven track record in designing and implementing complex, long-term projects
- Demonstrated ability to innovate, motivate, sustain and lead
- Demonstrated ability to make sound decisions, and to organize and coordinate operations efficiently
- Strong interpersonal skills, curiosity, courage, and passion for the school mission
- Demonstrated ability to analyze, interpret accurately, and respond effectively to information and data of various types as communicated in multiple forms (i.e. assessment data, qualitative data, observation)
- Personal integrity

Additional qualifications that may be considered, particularly for the Educational Co-Director, include:

- A valid teaching credential and/or an administrative credential
- Master's Degree in Education or public/charter school administration
- At least five years of successful educational experience
- Experience in a charter school setting
- Certification or expertise in Public Waldorf Education
- Interest/Knowledge of and Commitment to Public Waldorf Education

Description Of Duties

El Rio's Co-Directors will function as equal partners in leading and supporting the Charter School, the organization, and the community, with different areas of focus in their responsibilities. Together, the Co-Directors will provide leadership and support in implementing the educational vision, philosophy, goals, objectives, and course of study that is outlined in the El Rio charter. The Co-Directors will be responsible for all personnel matters. Specifically, the Educational Director will be responsible for the recruitment, hiring, supervision and evaluation of faculty and teaching staff, while the Operations Director will be responsible for the recruitment, hiring, supervision and evaluation of administrative and support staff. The Operations Director will also maintain verification of ESSA compliance for all certificated employees as well as paraprofessionals.

The Operations Director will have primary oversight of finance/budgeting (in collaboration with an experienced back-office services provider), health and safety compliance, school facility procurement and management, human resources, , including keeping records of credentialing, background checks and clearances for all teachers, staff, and applicable volunteers; payroll, employee benefits, fundraising, long-range financial planning and budget development, facility planning, compliance and reporting with state, district and county authorities, audit support, and procurement of materials, equipment, supplies and services.

- Will function as a primary liaison with Los Angeles Unified School District
- Will prepare and submit necessary reports in a timely manner and will oversee statistical analyses of El Rio programs and operations
- Will work as a team member for charter renewal, strategic planning, and problem solving
- Will be responsible, in collaboration with the back-office services provider, for the fiscal management of the budget, including annual and regular budget and financial document preparation for Board approval
- Will prepare LCAP for Board review
- Will oversee grant applications, fundraising, and donor development
- Will attend ERCS Board of Directors meetings and participate as needed.
- Will oversee maintenance of corporate records

The Educational Director will have primary oversight of academic programs, student educational progress, professional development, guidance and mentoring for instructional staff, assessments, curriculum development, special education compliance, parent education, campus life, community festivals, community outreach, public relations, student discipline and crisis intervention.

- Will plan, direct, implement, and evaluate the instructional program of the school, including overseeing EL and SpEd, with accountability to the Board
- Will be responsible for ongoing professional development for all faculty and staff
- Will provide leadership in the areas of campus life, school events, parent education, community outreach, and public relations
- Will oversee student discipline and crisis intervention, as necessary

- Will attend El Rio Board meetings and participate as needed

CLASS TEACHERS

Core subjects such as English, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science will be taught in an interconnected, thematic way by the Class Teacher(s) for each grade. Class Teachers will loop with students for grades TK-K, 1-5 and 6-8. El Rio will employ qualified teachers, both in terms of ESSA as well as formal training and experience. In addition to possessing a current California Teacher Credential, teachers will hold specialized certifications or the equivalent training toward the Bilingual Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development (BCLAD) or Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development (CLAD) to work with English learners as required by federal and state requirements monitored by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university
- Master's degree in subject matter field or Education (strongly preferred)
- Must possess a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold
- Public Waldorf Certification and/or commitment to enroll in a certification or other Waldorf-methods training program; demonstrated interest and knowledge of and commitment to public Waldorf education
- Ability to impart the Common Core Standards using an arts-integrated, Waldorf informed approach, while maintaining classroom management
- Ability and flexibility to teach mixed age TK/K, grades 1-5 or 6-8, looping with the same class for multiple years
- Deep subject matter expertise, curiosity, dedication and ongoing inquiry
- Active interest in ongoing scholarship and practice in pursuit of expanded subject knowledge, current research on cognitive development and knowledge acquisition
- Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively with students, parents and faculty
- Clear desire to work collaboratively and effectively with all members of the learning community
- Demonstrated ability to observe, assess, monitor and report on student progress
- Ability to operate and maintain current instructional technology as required for grade level/subject matter teaching
- Strong interpersonal skills, flexibility, enthusiasm, sense of humor and personal integrity
- Bilingual in Spanish preferred.

SPECIAL SUBJECTS TEACHERS

Special subject instruction will be provided by a combination of credentialed and non-credentialed ESSA-compliant specialists who provide creative enrichment opportunities and deep learning which connects with and deepens core academic learning in Main Lesson content and in all academic/core subjects.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university
- Master's degree in subject matter field or Education (strongly preferred)
-
- Public Waldorf Certification and/or commitment to enroll in a certification or other Waldorf-methods training program; demonstrated interest and knowledge of and commitment to public Waldorf education

- Ability to impart the Common Core Standards using an arts-integrated, Waldorf informed approach, while maintaining classroom management
- Deep subject matter expertise, curiosity, dedication and ongoing inquiry
- Active interest in ongoing scholarship and practice in pursuit of expanded subject knowledge, current research on cognitive development and knowledge acquisition
- Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively with students, parents and faculty
- Clear desire to work collaboratively and effectively with all members of the learning community
- Demonstrated ability to observe, assess, monitor and report on student progress
- Ability to operate and maintain current instructional technology as required for grade level/subject matter teaching
- Strong interpersonal skills, flexibility, enthusiasm, sense of humor and personal integrity
- Bilingual in Spanish preferred.

RESOURCE SPECIALIST TEACHER(S)

The Educational Director, on an application and interview basis will select the Special Education Resource Specialist Teachers. The primary responsibility of the Resource Specialist Teacher(s) will be to follow the guidelines and requirements set forth under IDEA. The Resource Teacher(s) will identify students with disabilities and will assist students who have already been identified as having disabilities and providing an Individualized Educational Program.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree; Master's degree is preferred
- California Commission on Teacher Credentialing Mild/Moderate Education Specialist
- Three or more years of teaching experience
- Solid knowledge of State and Federal guidelines for Special Education
- Knowledge and skills in education assessment, consulting, coordination, interpretation and implementation of laws and regulations, staff development, and parent education
- Effective interpersonal skills and flexibility in meeting new and/or changing conditions
- Interest/Knowledge of and Commitment to Public Waldorf Education
- Excellent written and communication skills
- Bilingual in Spanish preferred

The Resource Specialist Teacher:

- Will provide instructional support for special education students within the IEP service model
- Will plan and schedule IEP meetings with teachers, parents, and administrators in a compliant fashion with proper notice (ten day) written to all
- Will attend all IEP meetings and maintain all documentation and reports
- Will provide teachers with Present Level of Performance form prior to the meeting so they may gather appropriate work samples and provide the parents with the strengths and areas of concern
- Will ensure that all Cumulative Record folders of special education students have an inserted colored folder (coded for IEP) that contain all IEPs (past and present) and attached to the outside of said folder is a sign-out log)

- Will develop, maintain, and review assessments and IEPs in the format required by the District and enter assessment and IEP data into the District's designated data system in accordance with LAUSD policies and procedures.
- Will track services in Welligent
-
- Will develop assessment plans for students with suspected disabilities, or, in the alternative, will provide appropriate written notices to parents when a request for assessment is denied
- Will ensure that teachers are knowledgeable of the content of the student's IEP.

TEACHER'S ASSISTANTS (TAs)

The Teacher's Assistants will report to the Educational Director and will be responsible for assisting in the development and performance of the classes where they assist. The TAs will foster a collaborative and stimulating classroom environment for a diverse group of students, as well as foster a strong collaboration between parents, faculty members, and staff.

Responsibilities:

- Foster a safe and nurturing learning environment
- Assist Teachers in maintaining classroom systems/procedures and manage student behavior to ensure all students are fully engaged in learning
- Support differentiation or other instructional strategies implemented to ensure that needs of all learners are met
- Establish an environment where students are excited about learning
- Support Teachers with data tracking and progress monitoring
- Build strong relationships with students and parents and teachers
- Demonstrate support and knowledge of school's goals and mission
- Attend and participate in school-based meetings and activities, including professional development
- Develop or assist in the development of lesson plans according to the CA CCSS and CA State Content Standards
- Identify student areas for improvement and be able to work with the student and family and internal resources to suggest options for improvement
- Provide continual assessment of student progress, maintain student records and complete assigned paperwork in provided timeframes.
- Collaborate with the Resource Specialist Teachers and other staff to meet the needs of all students
- Participate, attend and plan field trips
- Participate in school events during, before and after school
- Attend and participate in school-based meetings and activities

Qualifications:

- Prior experience working with students in a learning environment
- Associate's degree preferred
- Bilingual in Spanish preferred
- Intermediate proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, and Outlook
- Must be flexible, positive, detail-oriented, a team player, patient and willing to learn
- Must be able to work in a fast-paced work environment with flexibility and dedication

SCHOOL COUNSELOR (Year 2 Start)

The School Counselor will work directly with students and staff to ensure that students' social and emotional needs are met.

Responsibilities:

- Assess home, school, personal and community factors that may affect a student's learning
- Identify and provide intervention strategies for children and their families, including counseling, case management, and crisis intervention
- Consult with teachers, administrators and other school staff regarding social and emotional needs of students
- Coordinate family, school and community resources on behalf of students
- Provide DIS counseling for students with IEPs

Qualifications:

- Valid Pupil Personnel Services credential
- Two or more years of prior counseling experience strongly preferred
- Bilingual/Spanish skills preferred
- Proficiency with technology
- Demonstrated success working with students from educationally underserved areas
- Self-aware with a strong commitment to continuous learning
- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Minimum of 1 year full-time school counseling experience

OFFICE MANAGER

The Office Manager will manage all student enrollment related communication and documentation. The qualifications include sufficient related experience and skills to fully execute the duties and responsibilities of the position.

Qualifications:

- A minimum of 3 years administrative school work experience, preferably in a charter school
- Proficiency in Word and Excel
- Excellent and effective communication skills while speaking, reading, and writing
- Excellent interpersonal and collaborative skills (can work independently and in a team setting)
- Flexibility and calmness to handle a stressful and changing daily work environment in order to accomplish short and long term assignments
- Interest/Knowledge of and commitment to Public Waldorf Education

The Office Manager:

- Will prepares bills, reimbursements, and deposits for approval from Operations Director and for submission to Back Office Provider
- Will maintain petty cash
- Will maintain files of all El Rio inventory
- Will distribute paychecks
- Will track and maintain all maintenance and service agreements
- Will coordinate Lottery Applications, lottery and enrollment process including maintaining application and enrollment database, tracking enrollment openings in all grades, maintain wait-list, and respond to enrollment inquiries
- Will serve as school registrar and process, maintain and update data for new, returning and withdrawing students
- Will complete records requests for transferring students

- Will serve as Custodian of Records for Cumulative Files: Will create and maintain cumulative file for every student
- Will maintain daily attendance and complete regular attendance reports
- Will track faculty attendance and sub coverage
- Will assist with student safety, conflict resolution, and discipline issues as needed
- Will maintain emergency preparedness plan and SERT roles
- Will create and distribute required notification of students' health conditions (medical conditions, allergies etc.) throughout the year
- Will complete ongoing reporting and updating of student, parent, teacher and school data in Federal, State, District and School systems within allotted timelines
- Will provide technological support during internal benchmark assessments (Easy CBM) and mandated state testing (CAASPP)
- Other duties as required.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT(S)

Will assist the Office Manager and Co-Directors and manage the front desk.

Qualifications:

- A minimum of 3 years administrative school experience, preferably in a charter school
- Proficiency in Word and Excel
- Excellent and effective communication skills while speaking, reading, and writing
- Excellent interpersonal and collaborative skills (can work independently and in a team setting)
- Flexibility and calmness to handle a stressful and changing daily work environment in order to accomplish short and long term assignments
- Ongoing training required for all systems including webinars, conference calls, live classes/conferences
- Interest/Knowledge of and commitment to Public Waldorf Education
- Ability to speak and understand Spanish, and translate materials for parents

The Administrative Assistant(s):

- Will manage the front desk of the main office, greet community members, disseminate information, answer questions, problem solve, relay messages, answer phone and door buzzer, assist with tardy slips
- Will provide first aid
- Will maintain and update all calendars, schedules, and flyers
- Will collect, date stamp, and distribute mail
- Will assist with preparation and organization of school events
- Will collect repair requests and schedules repairs and maintenance
- Will support Co-Directors in administrative needs

IT Coordinator (Classified, Year 2 Start)

The IT Coordinator is responsible for supervising school IT operations. They will ensure stability of networks and educational software – hosted licensed applications and on-site purchased applications as well as ensuring all IT equipment is in excellent working condition. They will address

various site issues as directed by Co-Directors and assist educational staff as needed to implement and administer software programs.

Responsibilities:

- Supervise and support site IT operations
- Ensure all Co-Directors and educational staff issues are addressed
- Ensures consistency and stability of all working IT services
- Work with community partners to create school site collaborations and partnerships
- Assist in creating parent and student classes, clubs, field trips, and educational opportunities
- Assist in school website updates
- Assist with strategic planning as it pertains to IT

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree preferred
- Working knowledge of Mac and PC operating systems
- Working knowledge of MS Office products and applications as applies to education
- Working knowledge of Google domain and all related applications
- Knowledge of internal network operations & Microsoft Windows Server Operating system
- Classroom and instructional experience beneficial
- Comfortable in educational environment
- Clear communications ability to both classified and certificated staff
- Supervisory experience preferred
- Google and Microsoft certifications beneficial

CUSTODIAN(S) (Classified)

The Custodian(s) will report to the Operations Director. Custodians are responsible for ensuring that the facility is well maintained and running appropriately to maintenance standards. Custodians will help maintain a school environment and culture by being able to communicate and work with a diverse group of students, parents, faculty members, board members and community partners.

Responsibilities:

- Maintain the quality of school facilities.
- Assist Operations Director with all school scheduling, special events, cafeteria, maintenance, playgrounds and cleaning.
- Assist in equipment maintenance and textbook and supply inventories.
- Coordinate with administration to assist in maintaining a positive, safe learning environment for students.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

Qualifications:

- Must have prior experience working with students in a learning environment
- Bilingual in Spanish preferred
- Must be flexible, positive, detail-oriented, team player, patient and willing to learn.
- Assists in maintaining standards of school safety and civility and ensuring the observance of rules and procedures by students and staff on a school campus at the direction of the school administrator.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

A pool of day-to-day substitutes will be established, and a list of qualified substitutes will be maintained.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree
- Proof of passing CBEST
- Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold; flexibility will be given with regard to noncore, noncollege preparatory courses
- Interest in Public Waldorf Education

The Substitute Teacher(s):

- Will follow the regular classroom teacher's lesson plan based on a Common Core standards-based, arts integrated, Waldorf informed curriculum
- Will maintain classroom management

El Rio also will contract with independent Substitute Teacher Providers to provide substitutes in the event that the internal substitute pool is exhausted.

ELEMENT 6 - HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

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

HEALTH, SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local requirements related to school and student health, safety, and emergency preparedness.

If Charter School occupies and/or operates on a District facility, Charter School shall comply with all District health, safety, and emergency procedures and requirements applicable to District facilities and related operations, and shall be subject to inspection by the District’s Facilities Services Division, Office of Environmental Health and Safety, and other District offices in the same manner as other LAUSD campuses.

Charter School shall adopt, implement, and maintain at all times a current, comprehensive, and site-specific Health, Safety, and Emergency Preparedness Plan (“Plan”), which must include but is not limited to provisions for building and site emergency evacuation, the acquisition and maintenance of adequate onsite emergency supplies. The Plan must include Charter School’s requirements and procedures for protecting student health and safety during off-campus school-sponsored activities, including but not limited to field trips and transportation. Charter School shall ensure that all staff members receive annual training on Charter School’s health, safety, and emergency procedures, including but not limited to training on blood borne pathogens, and shall maintain a calendar for, and conduct, emergency response drills for students and staff.

Charter School shall provide all employees, and other persons working on behalf of Charter School who are mandated reporters, with annual training on child abuse detection and reporting, which shall occur within the first six weeks of each school year, or within the first six weeks of a person’s employment if employed after the beginning of the school year, in accordance with the requirements of AB 1432 (2014).

Charter School shall stock and maintain the required number and type of emergency epinephrine auto-injectors onsite and provide training to employee volunteers in the storage and use of the epinephrine auto-injector as required by Education Code section 49414 and section 4119.2 of the Business and Professions Code, as they may be amended from time to time.

Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code section 49475, with respect to any athletic program (as defined in Education Code § 49475) offered by or on behalf of Charter School.

Charter School shall periodically review, and update and/or modify as necessary, its Health, Safety, and Emergency Preparedness Plan, and keep it readily available for on-site use. Charter School shall provide a copy of the Health, Safety, and Emergency Preparedness Plan for review upon CSD request.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Charter School, including its employees, officers, and representatives, shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Education Code section 49060 et seq. at all times.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CLEARANCES AND FINGERPRINTING

Charter School shall comply with all requirements of Education Code sections 44237 and 45125.1. Charter School shall designate and maintain at all times at least one Custodian of Records duly authorized by the California Department of Justice.

Charter School shall maintain on file and available for inspection evidence that (1) Charter School has performed criminal background checks and cleared for employment all employees prior to employment; (2) Charter School has obtained certification from each of its contracting entities/independent contractors that the entity/contractor has conducted required criminal background clearances for its employees prior to provision of school site services and/or any contact with students, and has requested subsequent arrest notification service; and (3) Charter School has performed criminal background checks and cleared for service all volunteers not directly supervised by staff and who may have contact with students. Charter School shall also ensure that it requests and receives subsequent arrest notifications from the California Department of Justice for all employees and volunteers not directly supervised by staff. Upon request, Charter School shall provide a copy of Department of Justice confirmation of Custodian of Records status for each Custodian of Records. Charter School, including its administrators and officers, shall comply with the requirements of Education Code section 44030.5.

IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

Charter School shall require all employees, and any volunteer or vendor/contracting entity employee who may have frequent or prolonged contact with students, to undergo a risk assessment and/or be examined and determined to be free of active tuberculosis (TB) within the period of 60 days prior to employment/service, or otherwise meet the requirements of Education Code section 49406. Charter School shall maintain TB clearance records and certificates on file.

Charter School shall comply with all federal and state legal requirements, including but not limited to the requirements of SB 277 (2015), related to student immunization, health examination, and health screening, including but not limited to screening for vision, hearing, and scoliosis, to the same extent as would be required if the students were attending a non-charter public school. Charter School shall maintain student immunization, health examination, and health screening records on file.

SAFE PLACE TO LEARN ACT

Charter School shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Safe Place to Learn Act, Education Code section 234 et seq.

SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

If Charter School serves students in grades 7-12, Charter School shall comply with the requirements of AB 2246 (2016), codified in Education Code section 215, including but not limited to the requirement that the school's pupil suicide prevention policy shall be developed in consultation with school and community stakeholders, school-employed mental health professionals, and suicide prevention experts. Charter School shall provide the CSD with a copy of its pupil suicide prevention policy for review upon request.

Custodian of Records

The Custodians of Records will be the Operations Director.

Health & Wellness

El Rio is committed to providing a school environment that will promote students' health, well-being and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. All students will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis through our engaging Games & Movement (P.E.) curriculum. El Rio will participate in appropriate and available school meal programs, including the School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program. The Charter School shall provide each needy student, as defined in Education Code Section 49552, with one nutritionally adequate free or reduced-price meal, as defined in Education Code Section 49553(a), during each school day. All meals served will meet or exceed the federal regulations and guidance of the Healthy and Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

El Rio will provide nutrition education and physical education that fosters lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, including an active school garden program and Living Classroom experiences in the outdoors. Health education also will include discussion about drug and alcohol abuse, sexual health and suicide prevention at appropriate grade levels pursuant to the California Healthy Youth Act (Education Code Section 51930, *et seq.*). Once serving grades 6-8, the Charter School will stock at least 50% of its restrooms with feminine hygiene products, and shall not charge students for these products, pursuant to Education Code Section 35292.6.

El Rio will adhere to Education Code Section 49423 regarding administration of medication in school.

School Safety Plan

The Charter School shall develop and adopt a School Safety Plan, to be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year, which shall include identifying appropriate strategies and programs that will provide or maintain a high level of school safety and address the Charter School's procedures for complying with applicable laws related to school safety, including the development of all of the following pursuant to Education Code Section 32282(a)(2)(A)-(H):

- child abuse reporting procedures
- routine and emergency disaster procedures, including adaptations for pupils with disabilities in accordance with the federal ADA
- policies for students who committed an act under Section 48915 and other Charter School-designated serious acts leading to suspension, expulsion, or mandatory expulsion recommendations
- procedures to notify teachers of dangerous students pursuant to Education Code Section 49079
- a discrimination and harassment policy consistent with Education Code Section 200
- provisions of any schoolwide dress code that prohibits students from wearing "gang-related apparel," if applicable
- procedures for safe ingress and egress of pupils, parents, and employees to and from the Charter School
- a safe and orderly environment conducive to learning
- procedures for conducting tactical responses to criminal incidents.

Facility Safety

The Charter School agrees to test sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms annually at its facilities to ensure that they are maintained in an operable condition at all times. The Charter School shall conduct fire drills as required under Education Code Section 32001 and in conjunction with the District (if at District facilities).

ELEMENT 7 - MEANS TO ACHIEVE RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE

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

COURT-ORDERED INTEGRATION

Charter School shall comply with all requirements of the *Crawford v. Board of Education, City of Los Angeles* court order and the LAUSD Integration Policy adopted and maintained pursuant to the Crawford court order by the District’s Student Integration Services (collectively the “Court-ordered Integration Program”). The Court-ordered Integration Program applies to all schools within or chartered through LAUSD.

Charter School has set forth below its initial plan for achieving and maintaining the LAUSD’s Racial and Ethnic Balance goal of a 70:30 or 60:40 ratio. (*Ratio represents the percentage of Predominantly Hispanic Black Asian Other (PHBAO) compared to Other White (OW)*). The written plan lists specific dates and locations of recruitment activities that Charter School will undertake in order to achieve the District’s Racial and Ethnic Balance goal. Charter School shall monitor the implementation and outcomes of the initial plan, and modify it as necessary throughout the term of the Charter to achieve the District’s goal. Upon request, Charter School shall provide the District with a copy of its current written plan.

The District receives neither average daily attendance allocations nor Court-ordered Integration Program cost reimbursements for charter school students. The District may receive the Targeted Instructional Improvement Block Grant (TIIBG) for its Court-ordered Integration Program. The District retains sole discretion over the allocation of TIIBG funding, where available, and cannot guarantee the availability of this funding.

El Rio will be committed to ensuring that the Charter School takes the steps outlined herein to achieve a racial and ethnic balance reflective of the demographics of Los Angeles and the general population residing within the community served by our school. El Rio is cognizant of LAUSD’s Racial and Ethnic Balance goal and the school’s initial plan is set forth below. Both an accurate accounting of the ethnic and racial balance of students enrolled, as well as the school’s continual efforts to achieve LAUSD’s racial and ethnic balance will be documented. On an annual basis, El Rio will evaluate its racial and ethnic balance to measure whether the applicant pool is reflective of the District, and will make adjustments to outreach efforts as appropriate.

We will be dedicated and intentional in our outreach to ensure that El Rio closely approximates the demographics of the local community. We will provide admission preference for students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch (see Element 8), enabling the school to ensure a balance of student socioeconomic status. Outreach in local neighborhood to prospective students currently includes, and will continue to include, activities taking place in both English and Spanish by way of monthly arts and music workshops at our neighborhood partner organizations, parent information sessions at the Arroyo Seco Library, house meetings hosted by interested parents and community members, and parent outreach volunteers speaking one-on-one with prospective parents at parks, family daycares, preschools, laundromats, grocery stores, farmers’ markets, and restaurants. Highland Park is a predominantly Latino neighborhood and we will be proactive in our efforts to recruit and build lasting relationships with the local community.

El Rio’s founding team – including parent volunteers – have engaged in extensive outreach in the community already, hosting events and activities to help inform the community about our new school

and a Waldorf approach to education. At each of these events, we collect parent interest forms, along with surveys to gather community input on our school design. In 2018, El Rio hosted a three-day summer camp at the Highland Park Recreation center for 47 neighborhood students, and we are running a series of monthly weekend workshops at our community partners (Hathaway Sycamores, the Arroyo Seco Library, and the Highland Park Recreation Center) to introduce children and families to El Rio and its Waldorf inspired curriculum, and to meet and build relationships within the community. We have offered monthly Spanish-language music classes at the Arroyo Seco Branch library, monthly pop-up storytelling and crafting events at York Park and the Highland Park Rec Center, and knitting at the NELA Art Walk. We have scheduled a series of workshops to occur on Saturday mornings for families at the Hathaway-Sycamores Family Services center to offer arts-based programming to children and their parents. We also have formed a community partnership with the Highland Park-based Bob Baker Marionette Theater to support our educational programming and theatrical elements.

We will continue to build and nurture relationships with established organizations in Highland Park, partnering with daycares and preschools, local organizations, and neighborhood leaders who can assist us in promoting our school to area families, particularly those who are traditionally most in need. Our target outreach list includes:

Pace Head Start
Mt. Washington Preschool and Child Care Center
Good Shepherd Lutheran School
Little Nest Learning Space
Celebration Kids
SP Kinesthetic Kids
Phoenix Global Green School
Growing Garden Wonderschool
Aunti Moo's Childcare
Jauregui's Family Day Care Inc.
La Casita Verde Child Development Center
The Journey Begins
Sycamore Park Early Education Center
Highland Park Recreation Center
South Pasadena Recreation Division Office
Garvanza Park
Tierra de la Culebra Park
Arroyo Seco Park
Los Angeles Little League
Ernest E. Debs Regional Park
Arroyo Seco Regional Library
South Pasadena Public Library
Braun Research Library
Mary Norton Clapp Library
Optimist Youth Homes and Family Services
Holy Family Community Services
Esperanza Services
St. James Youth Center
Camp Laurel Foundation Inc.



Ramona Hall Community Center
Pacific Park Community Center
South Pasadena Community Room
Reach Our Community Kids
All Saints Episcopal Church
Freedom Church Highland Park
Church of the Angels
Christian Science Church
Church of Nazarene
Church of God
Freedom Church
Hermon Church
Christ Faith Mission
Iglesia Pentecostal Esmirna
Highland Park Baptist Church
Highland Park Lutheran Church
Calvary North East Los Angeles
Iglesia De La Comunidad PC

Informational workshops, participation at local events, presenting at community centers and local churches and libraries will continue throughout the year. Additionally, we will make information about the school accessible online.

As a Waldorf-inspired school, El Rio will aim to inform and educate the target neighborhood about Waldorf education, and also ensure that the Waldorf curriculum is adapted to the local community. We believe that a Waldorf education is meant to be responsive to the community and ecosystem of the students and families that are served by it. El Rio will be committed to having a culturally responsive curriculum, educating faculty, staff, and parents on culturally responsive teaching, and being proactive and mindful of the critical importance of diversity in education.

ELEMENT 8 - ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

“Admission requirements, if applicable.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(H).)

DOCUMENTATION OF ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT PROCESSES

Charter School shall maintain complete and accurate records of its annual admissions and enrollment processes, including but not limited to documentation of implementation of lottery and waitlist criteria and procedures in accordance with the terms of the Charter. These records shall be made available to the District upon request.

HOMELESS AND FOSTER YOUTH

Charter School shall adhere to the provisions of the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths. Charter School shall provide specific information, in its outreach materials, websites, at community meetings, open forums, and regional center meetings, that notifies parents that Charter School is open to enroll and provide services for all students, and provides a standard District contact number for access to additional information regarding enrollment.

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws regarding homeless and foster youth, including but not limited to the provisions of AB 379 (2015) and Chapter 5.5 (commencing with Section 48850) of Part 27 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education Code, as amended from time to time. Charter School shall extend its uniform complaint procedure to complaints filed pursuant to the applicable provisions of AB 379.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Charter School shall not require a parent/legal guardian/student to provide information regarding a student's disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, legal or economic status, primary language or English Learner status, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in section 422.55 of the Penal Code, or any other information that would violate federal or state law, prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment. Charter School may request, at the time of, and as part of, conducting its lottery process, the provision of information necessary to apply specific admissions preferences set forth in this Charter.

Charter School shall not request or require submission of a student's IEP, Section 504 Plan, or any other record or related information prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment.

Admissions Requirements

El Rio will be an open enrollment, tuition-free, nonsectarian public school with no specific requirements for admission (e.g., minimum grade point average, test scores, discipline records, etc.) other than minimum age requirements as dictated by federal and state laws. Enrollment to the school will be open to any resident of the State of California. Admission eligibility will not be determined by the place of residence of a pupil, except as otherwise required by law. El Rio shall not require a parent/guardian or student to provide information regarding immigration status for admission or enrollment.



El Rio will enroll all pupils who wish to attend to the extent that space allows. CA Ed. Code § 47605(d)(2)(A). If the number of students who wish to attend the school exceeds the openings available, entrance shall be determined by random public drawing (lottery, as described below) in accordance with Education Code §47605(d)(2)(B) and all federal requirements.

Student Recruitment

As detailed in Element 7, recruitment materials will be bilingual in English and Spanish to communicate the mission and educational program of El Rio to our Highland Park neighborhood. Marketing materials will be delivered to homes, businesses and service organizations, including those that serve students with a history of low academic performance, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities, in the targeted community. Materials will include school information, including the school website and phone number for additional information. Information sessions at local community centers, early education programs, and after school programs, including postings in English and Spanish, will ensure parents of school-age children residing in the targeted neighborhood are informed about the opening of El Rio. In addition, to ensure we reach a diverse group, our outreach methodology is also diverse. We are already holding storytelling and crafting workshops in local Highland Park parks and community spaces to aid in student recruitment.

Given our target community's demographics, our outreach efforts will inherently encompass socioeconomically disadvantaged students, along with those with a history of low academic performance or SpEd, EL and other students with special needs. El Rio, as a Waldorf program, is uniquely designed to meet these students' needs.

Our outreach efforts will be concentrated in El Rio's surrounding neighborhood.

Lottery Preferences and Procedures

El Rio shall adhere to the requirements related to admission preferences as set forth in Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B)(i)-(iv).

The open enrollment period will commence September 1st of the preceding school year. By mid-January each year, parents of students who are currently enrolled will be provided intent to enroll forms asking if they plan to have their children return in the following year. Unless a parent returns the form marked "no," those students are counted as returning for purposes of calculating the number of open seats.

Interested families of students who are not currently enrolled are required to submit a completed Lottery Application form in hard-copy or on the Charter School's website by 5:00 PM on a specific day in the first week of February designated each year in order to participate in the lottery. Lottery Applications will be available online and at the Charter School.

Any family submitting a Lottery Application to El Rio will be informed on the Application itself and at information sessions of the following: the school's admissions procedures as described in the Charter; the date when the Lottery Application must be returned to El Rio in order to be included in the public lottery; how to return forms (e.g. in hard-copy or on the website); information that if a lottery is required, attendance at the lottery is not required for admission to the school.

By the designated Lottery Application deadline each year, if there are more completed Lottery Applications than seats available, a lottery date, time, and location will be set for the month of

February. All Lottery Application forms completed and returned within the open application period will be entered into the lottery. Currently enrolled students will be exempt from the lottery. Lottery preference will be given to residents of LAUSD in accordance with state law and LAUSD policy as well as federal Non-Regulatory Guidance.¹³² Priority in the lottery will be given to the following categories of students in the order listed here:

- Residents of LAUSD.
- Siblings of students currently admitted or attending the Charter School, to help families and build community at the site
- Children of El Rio Founding Parents (consistent with LAUSD Founding Parent policy), teachers and staff (up to a cap of 10% of enrollment), to benefit our hard-working parent founders, teachers and staff.
- Students who reside in the attendance area of the elementary school the Charter School is relying on to meet the Charter School Facility Grant Program Free and Reduced Priced Meal requirement.
- Students who qualify for Free or Reduced Price meals, to help ensure access to our innovative, alternative model of education.

The El Rio Community School Board will adopt a policy regarding “Founding Parent” status that includes the definition of a Founding Parent, the required level of involvement to be considered a Founding Parent, the length of time that the Charter School may grant Founding Parent status, and the process for assigning Founding Parent status. The Founding Parent policy will be as follows: An individual will be considered a Founding Parent if she or he:

- Commits at least 100 volunteer hours to support the long-term success of El Rio before opening; and
- Commits those hours through the following activities: writing/developing the charter school petition, establishing/preparing the charter school facility, recruiting students and families, performing communications work for El Rio (including maintaining El Rio’s social media accounts or website), publicly supporting El Rio’s charter authorization, or developing/implementing the charter school educational program or operations; and
- Performs these activities between January 1, 2018 and the first day of instruction at El Rio.
- Founding Parent status will be open to anyone interested in contributing significant volunteer hours to opening the School;
- Founding Parents will not be required to give financially to the school and financial donations will not be taken in lieu of volunteer time;
- Being a Founding Parent will not be a guarantee of admission to the school;
- The admission preference will be applicable to all children or wards of Founding Parents, even if the children do not begin attending the charter school until after El Rio’s first year of operations;
- Founding Parents may be either parents or legal guardians;
- Founding Parent status may not be transferred or delegated to another individual;

¹³² During any period of discretionary grant funding from the U.S. Department of Education, El Rio will comply with the Charter Schools Program Non-Regulatory Guidance (CSP NRG) or other applicable federal requirements regarding lotteries. In the event any provisions included here are deemed to conflict with the CSP NRG or other applicable federal requirements, El Rio will modify its lottery procedures to ensure compliance and eligibility for federal funding.

- The Director of Operations and the Educational Director will be designated to make the determination of whether an individual qualifies as a Founding Parent, based only on the eligibility requirements set forth above. Once these determinations have been made, a list of all Founding Parents will be compiled. This list will detail how each Founding Parent was determined to qualify as a Founding Parent. This list will become final the day prior to the first day of instruction at El Rio Community School and shall be maintained at the School's main office.

To better enable interested parties to attend, the lottery, if one is required, will be held on a weekday evening on the campus of El Rio. Lottery Application forms will provide families with information about the date, time, and location of the lottery; this information also will be included on the El Rio website and other outreach materials (flyers, mailers, etc.).

During the lottery, a disinterested independent third party will draw students' names.¹³³ Once all available spaces are filled, the lottery process will continue and a waiting list will be developed from the list of students who do not receive admission and who will be considered should a vacancy occur during the year. Students will be placed on the waiting list for each grade in the order that their names were drawn during the public lottery.

Within two weeks following the lottery, students who are offered spots will be notified via email or text (depending on their choice selected on the lottery application) and will be asked by the Office Manager to complete an Enrollment Packet within two weeks to secure their spot. If the Office Manager is unable to reach a parent via email or text (depending on their choice selected on the lottery application), he or she will also reach out the parent at the phone number provided by the parent, if any, to leave a message asking the parent to contact the school. Charter School staff will be available to assist families in completing Enrollment Packet paperwork if needed. Any student who fails to complete an Enrollment Packet within two weeks of request will lose his/her place and be moved to the end of the wait list. Students who are on the wait list will be notified of their status via email or text (depending on their choice selected on the lottery application).

Those who apply after the lottery deadline will be added to the end of the lottery waitlist in the order they are received. Openings that occur during the school year will be filled according to the wait list order determined during the lottery drawing. When an opening occurs during the school year, families will be contacted by the Office Manager in the order of the wait list and are given 48 hours to decide whether or not to accept a space at the school. In the event that no such wait list exists where the space is available, the space will be made available on a first come, first served basis to the next interested family at the appropriate grade level.

Lottery Application forms, the manual record of all lottery participants and their assigned lottery numbers, and other lottery-related documents will be physically retained on campus according to a

¹³³ A disinterested independent third party will be someone who does not have a child participating in the lottery nor have a child enrolled at the school, e.g. this may be the school's Office Manager. This is not the only means that will be used to ensure a fair process. As described, we will also use the following means to ensure a fair process: Open enrollment commences September 1 and ends in the first week of February, giving all families ample time. Each family submitting a Lottery Application is provided the following information: the school's admissions procedures as described in the Charter; the date when the Lottery Application must be returned in order to be included in the public lottery; how to return forms (e.g. in hard-copy or on the website); information that if a lottery is required, attendance at the lottery is not required for admission to the school. All Lottery Application forms completed and returned within the open application period will be entered into the lottery and preferences will be provided as set forth in the Charter. The lottery will be held on a weekday evening, so as many families as possible can attend, and names are drawn randomly.



record retention schedule developed by the school, and lottery results and waiting lists for the school year (determined in the order names are drawn in the lottery) will be readily available in the school's main office for inspection upon request.

The waitlist for the current school year will remain active until the end of the school year and will not "roll over"; applicants must reapply for the lottery annually if the school is unable to offer them admission for the current year.

Parent Orientation

Upon admission to El Rio, parents will be asked to become familiar with school policies and El Rio's standards-based implementation of Waldorf Education by reading the El Rio Parent-Student Handbook. In addition, El Rio will request on a volunteer-basis only that parents actively support the school by volunteering time and/or other resources (the Parent-Student Handbook will clearly state that volunteering is not required), commit to provide a home environment that is conducive to learning by agreeing to limit children's exposure to electronic media influences (including television, movies, video games, etc.), and gain the understanding of our standards-based implementation of Waldorf Education necessary to support their child's education at home.

ELEMENT 9 - ANNUAL FINANCIAL AUDITS

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

Charter School shall provide for an annual audit that shall be conducted in compliance with applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to the requirements of Education Code sections 47605(b)(5)(I) and 41020 as they may be amended from time to time. Charter School shall ensure compliance with the requirements of section 41020(f)(2), which makes it unlawful, absent an Education Audits Appeal Panel waiver, for a public accounting firm to provide audit services to a local educational agency if the lead audit partner, or coordinating audit partner, having primary responsibility for the audit, or the audit partner responsible for reviewing the audit, has performed audit services for that local educational agency in each of the six previous years.

The following reports will be submitted to LAUSD, in the required format and within timelines to be specified by LAUSD, each year:

- a. Provisional Budget – Spring prior to operating fiscal year
 - b. Final Budget – July of the budget fiscal year
 - c. First Interim Projections – November of operating fiscal year
 - d. Second Interim Projections – February of operating fiscal year
 - e. Unaudited Actuals – July following the end of the fiscal year
 - f. Audited Actuals – December 15 following the end of the fiscal year
 - g. Classification Report – monthly according to Charter School’s Calendar
 - h. Statistical Report – monthly according to Charter School’s Calendar of Reports
- In addition:
- P1, first week of January
 - P2, first week of April
- i. Instructional Calendar – annually five weeks prior to first day of instruction
 - j. Other reports as requested by the District

As required under Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(I), each fiscal year an independent auditor will conduct an audit of the financial affairs of ERCS in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and the audit guide issued by the Controller of the State of California to verify the accuracy of the Charter School’s financial statements, attendance and enrollment accounting practices, and internal controls.

Procedures:

- The Operations Director will be responsible for providing the audit committee, made up of at least two (2) Board members, with a short list of independent auditors obtained through a request for proposals. The Operations Director shall ensure that the recommended auditor, which shall be selected by the audit committee, shall be on the State Controller’s list of approved auditors to conduct charter school audits.
- The audit will be conducted according to Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (GAAP) and the applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools, as published in the State Controller’s Guide. The Operations Director and back-office services provider will work with the audit firm to provide the information they need.
- At the conclusion of the audit, the Operations Director will be responsible for reviewing the results of the annual audit, identifying any audit exceptions or deficiencies, and reporting

them to the audit committee and ERCS Board of Directors with recommendations on how to resolve them.

- The ERCS Board will review and approve the audit.
- The Operations Director will be responsible for ensuring that the audit is submitted to all required agencies no later than December 15.

The audit committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report recommendations on resolution to the Board of Directors. The Board will report to LAUSD regarding how exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved.

It is understood that all audit exceptions and deficiencies will be resolved in conference with the independent auditor to the satisfaction of LAUSD.

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

ELEMENT 10 - SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION PROCEDURES

“The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(J).)

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Charter School shall provide due process for all students, including adequate and timely notice to parents/guardians and students of the grounds for all suspension and expulsion recommendations and decisions and their due process rights regarding suspension and expulsion, including rights of appeal.

Charter School shall ensure that its policies and procedures regarding suspension and expulsion will be periodically reviewed, and modified as necessary, in order to conform to changes in state law.

Charter School shall ensure that its staff is knowledgeable about and complies with the District's Discipline Foundation Policy and/or current equivalent policy, as required by the Modified Consent Decree. Charter School shall comply with the terms of the School Discipline Policy and School Climate Bill of Rights resolution adopted by the LAUSD Board of Education on May 6, 2013.

Charter School shall be responsible for the appropriate interim placement of students during and pending the completion of Charter School's student expulsion process and shall facilitate the post-expulsion placement of expelled students.

Charter School shall document and implement the alternatives to suspension and expulsion that Charter School utilizes in response to attendance-related concerns, e.g. truancy or excessive tardiness.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Charter School shall establish and implement policies and procedures to ensure full compliance with federal and state laws and regulations regarding the discipline of students with disabilities. If a student is recommended for expulsion and the student receives or is eligible for special education, pending the completion of the expulsion process, Charter School shall identify and provide special education programs and services at an appropriate interim educational placement determined in coordination with the LAUSD Division of Special Education.

In the case of a student who has an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”), or a student who has a Section 504 Plan, Charter School shall ensure that it follows correct disciplinary procedures to comply with the mandates of state and federal laws, including IDEA and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973. As set forth in the MOU regarding special education between the District and Charter School, an IEP team will meet to conduct a manifestation determination and to discuss alternative placement utilizing the District's Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual. Prior to recommending expulsion for a student with a Section 504 Plan, Charter School's administrator will convene a Link Determination meeting to ask the following two questions:

- A. Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student's disability?
- B. Was the misconduct a direct result of the Charter School's failure to implement Section 504?

NOTIFICATION OF THE DISTRICT

Upon expelling any student, Charter School shall notify the Charter Schools Division by submitting an expulsion packet to the CSD immediately or as soon as practicable, which shall contain:

- Completed “Notification of Charter School Expulsion” [form available from the CSD website or office], including attachments as required on the form
- Documentation of the expulsion proceeding, including statement of specific facts supporting the expulsion and documentation that Charter School’s policies and procedures were followed
- Copy of parental notice of expulsion hearing
- Copy of expulsion notice provided to parent stating reason for expulsion, term of expulsion, rehabilitation plan, reinstatement notice with eligibility date and instructions for providing proof of student’s compliance for reinstatement, appeal process, and options for enrollment
- If the student is eligible for Special Education, documentation related to expulsion in compliance with IDEA and the MCD, including the Expulsion Analysis page of the pre-expulsion IEP
- If the student is eligible for Section 504 accommodations, documentation that Charter School conducted a Link Determination meeting to address two questions:
 - A. Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student’s disability?
 - B. Was the misconduct a direct result of Charter School’s failure to implement Section 504 Plan?

Notwithstanding and apart from the documentation sent to the Charter Schools Division as indicated above, if the student is a resident of a school district other than LAUSD, Charter School must notify the superintendent of the student’s district of residence within 30 days of the expulsion. Additionally, upon request of the receiving school district, Charter School shall forward student records no later than 10 school days from the date of the request as stated in Education Code section 49068 (a) and (b).

OUTCOME DATA

Charter School shall gather and maintain all data related to placement, tracking, and monitoring of student suspensions, expulsions, and reinstatements, and make such outcome data readily available to the District upon request.

REHABILITATION PLANS

Pupils who are expelled from Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by Charter School’s governing board at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. Terms of expulsion should be reasonable and fair with the weight of the expelling offense taken into consideration when determining the length of expulsion. Therefore, the rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may apply to Charter School for readmission. Charter School shall inform parents in writing of its processes for reinstatement and applying for expungement of the expulsion record.

READMISSION

Charter School’s governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for the filing and processing of requests for readmission and the process for the required review of all expelled pupils for readmission. Upon completion of the readmission process, Charter School’s governing board shall readmit the pupil, unless Charter School’s governing board makes a finding that the pupil has not met the conditions of the rehabilitation plan or continues to pose a danger to campus safety. A description of the procedure shall be made available to the pupil and the pupil’s parent or guardian

at the time the expulsion order is entered and the decision of the governing board, including any related findings, must be provided to the pupil and the pupil's parent/guardian within a reasonable time.

REINSTATEMENT

Charter School's governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for processing reinstatements, including the review of documents regarding the rehabilitation plan. Charter School is responsible for reinstating the student upon the conclusion of the expulsion period in a timely manner.

GUN-FREE SCHOOLS ACT

Charter School shall comply with the federal Gun-Free Schools Act.

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND STUDENT DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

El Rio Community School's discipline policy will be designed to create a safe and nurturing environment where all students can thrive. This discipline policy will be tiered: it will begin with preventative measures that create a culture of safety and mutual respect. When students' behavior requires individualized intervention, the second tier of El Rio's discipline policy will engage the student, and potentially their family, in respectful and restorative conflict resolution methods. Finally, when a student repeatedly engages in behavior that seriously undermines the safety or well-being of El Rio's community, the third tier of El Rio's discipline policy will involve intensive discipline that may result in suspension or expulsion. The Educational Director will regularly monitor student behavior data and spearhead the development of new interventions and supports as needed.

El Rio's disciplinary policy and its procedures will be printed and distributed as part of the Parent/Student Handbook and will clearly describe discipline expectations. Corporal punishment shall never be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of the policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

The backbone of El Rio's discipline policy will be a Code of Conduct that sets forth the rights and responsibilities of students and their parents.

Student Code of Conduct

Student Rights

- El Rio's students will have the right to:
- Be treated respectfully
- Be treated as an individual with unique needs
- Be free from discrimination and prejudice
- Be safe, and free from physical, verbal, or psychological abuse
- Hear and be heard
- Learn; no one will distract or undermine the objectives of the teacher

Student Responsibilities

El Rio's students will be expected to:

- Cooperate with, and show respect for, all adults at school
- Treat schoolmates with respect, both in the classroom, everywhere else on campus, and during all school activities
- Arrive to class on time
- Be prepared for class
- Complete all assignments on time, and to the best of their abilities
- Participate in classroom activities to the best of their abilities
- Follow all school rules and behavior codes, including no fighting, bullying, or threatening
- Accept responsibility and consequences for their choices
- Contribute to creating a safe atmosphere where all students can learn
- Deliver all home-school communications promptly
- Treat the school environment with respect

Family Code of Conduct

El Rio parents and guardians will be expected to:

- Make meaningful efforts to participate in school activities, to the extent that work schedules allow
- Teach their child to be respectful and kind to others
- Reinforce school expectations by modeling positive, respectful, and appropriate school behavior
- Teach their child to accept the consequences of their behavior
- Take responsibility for their child's behavior as required by law, community standards, and school expectations
- Discuss feedback on progress with their child
- Communicate and share information with their child's teacher
- Work courteously and collaboratively with El Rio to help their child meet the school's academic and behavioral expectations
- Respectfully express any concerns to the school

School-wide Positive Behavior Support

In each classroom, El Rio will communicate its school-wide expectations for behavior through the teacher, with the support of staff, administrators, and parents/guardians. These school-wide expectations will be supported by a strong sense of community and a desire for harmony within each classroom.

The school will teach and manage student behavior through a program called the Compassionate Campus¹³⁴, a school-wide, immersive, participatory experience to create a healthy school environment in which social and emotional health is recognized as essential to academic success. In this program, positive interactions are modeled and reinforced, and effective communication is explicitly taught. This innovative program uses the power of student-to-student interactions and mentoring relationships to build real-life skills that cultivate empathy. Teachers provide coaching in real-life situations to hone students' empathy skills over the course of each school year. The

¹³⁴ MountainMohogany.org. (2009)The Compassionate Campus Companion. Albuquerque, New Mexico.

program provides developmentally appropriate differentiation by pairing upper grade mentors (5th-8th grade) with lower grade buddies (1st-4th grade) for bi-weekly meetings where the students connect with each other, to the campus, and to the community. Students jointly participate in activities to facilitate peer-mentor relationships, as well as in teacher-led Council circles to deepen listening and inquiry skills.

In addition, we have added a few additional and key components to this program, which originated from Capturing Kids' Hearts,¹³⁵ a program that began in Northern California and is currently used at a number of schools, including a public charter school, Journey School, in Orange County, where it has been successfully implemented since 2011. Since its implementation, there has been a 60% reduction in discipline referrals¹³⁶, as well as decreases in disruptions and distractions due to social-emotional issues.

Using the Capturing Kids Hearts rubric, the El Rio campus will display behavior expectations, with visual cues in the form of posters, and will teach the hands-on guidelines via Peace Wheels in each classroom as well as on the playground, with the four key steps for conflict resolution (CARE = Communicate, Actively listen, Review your options, End with a win-win solution), outlined visually as well as in words, which the students will use in order to resolve conflicts as they arise.

The Educational Director will conduct a beginning of the year assembly to introduce the behavior expectations and Peace Wheel conflict resolution components, and classroom teachers will review weekly, as well as facilitate how to use these components in the classroom. This will be coupled with parent education to support positive behaviors that carry over to the home as well. In the long term, these steps will work in tandem to facilitate independent, student-led skill. This program concrete skills rather than behaviors, is child-driven, and uses real life situations to provide an authentic experience.

Tiered Behavior Intervention

At its heart, El Rio's discipline policy will be designed to obviate the need for the most extreme discipline measures of suspension and expulsion. This policy will begin with prevention: by establishing healthy rhythms and habits, El Rio will foster a culture of mutual respect among students and adults. This policy will be based on the early writings of Rudolf Steiner, creator and founder of the first Waldorf School in Stuttgart. Steiner trained his teachers to develop a loving authority relationship in the classroom by providing a healthy rhythm and routine in the classroom. *"You cannot have the proper effect upon the child's will when you tell the child just once what is right, but only when you allow the child to do something today, tomorrow and the next day. The proper action does not at all lie in reprimanding the child or giving the child rules of morality, but in guiding the child to something that you believe will awaken a feeling for what is right and allowing the child to repeat this. You must raise such deeds to habit. The more things remain as unconscious habit, the better it is for the development of feeling. The more the child becomes aware of the need to do deeds out of devotion to repetition, because they should and must be done, the more you elevate these to true will impulses."* – Rudolf Steiner

El Rio will view the purpose of discipline as both facilitating learning in the classroom and teaching student's self-regulation skills that will serve them in all areas of life. The entire community of students, parents, teachers, and staff will work together to cultivate a safe and positive school environment where all students can thrive.

¹³⁵ Flip Flippen. "Solutions for Educators: Capturing Kids' Hearts 1", Flippengroup.com, College Station, TX, Web, 25 April 2019.

¹³⁶ Amy Capelle, ""Activating Empathy: Transforming Schools to Teach What Matters," Changemakers.com, Aliso Viejo, CA, Web, 25 April 2019.

El Rio staff will enforce the school's policies and procedures equitably to all students. There will be consistency in classroom and whole school discipline so that the school rules expectations are clear to students. In addition, staff and faculty will be trained in diversity and cultural sensitivity and will be able to provide a positive, welcoming classroom environment. Staff and faculty will work to establish meaningful, trusting relationships with their students, and will be trained to be sensitive to cultural differences in norms and behaviors, as well as be aware and mindful of potential biases in disciplinary action.

Notwithstanding the policies and practices detailed here, certain transgressions may be so serious in nature as to warrant suspending or expelling a student without first employing any other disciplinary alternative first.

Tier 1 – Preventative Discipline

The first tier of El Rio's tiered disciplinary policy will be the relationship between students and their teachers. Because El Rio will practice "looping," the relationship between students and their teachers will be critical. El Rio's preventive discipline will be premised on a relationship of "loving authority" between the student and teacher, and mutual respect among classmates.

El Rio teachers will employ the following measures to create a culture of respect and prevent behavioral issues that would require heightened intervention:

- Create daily, weekly, and seasonal rhythms and routines in the classroom
- Foster healthy relationships with each student
- Strive to become worthy of students' emulation and respect.
- Strive to be the primary "ego" presence of the class
- Model appropriate behavior at all times
- Admit mistakes and model prosocial methods of repairing relationships
- Create developmentally-appropriate songs, clapping games, and poems to guide the curriculum and create a sense of harmony in the classroom
- Use sounds and music (such as chimes) to help students transition comfortably from one activity to another
- Communicate non-verbally, when possible
- Listen to students and ensure that everyone in the classroom feels heard
- Model effective teaching
- Give clear directions
- Practice "looping" (ideally remain with the same class for multiple years)
- Set clear and definitive boundaries for classroom activities and enforce them consistently
- Ensure students understand what is expected of them
- Require students to follow the Student Code of Conduct
- Regularly practice the art of Council, an LAUSD best practice for fostering classroom cultures where students connect meaningfully with peers and adults
- Teach students to solve problems non-violently and proactively
- Work collaboratively as a team with parents, colleagues, and administration

Tier 2 - Responsive Discipline

The second tier of El Rio's disciplinary policy will involve individualized conflict-resolution measures. These measures will be designed to repair damaged relationships; expose underlying causes for inappropriate behavior; and, ultimately, reintegrate the student into the community and classroom.

These “responsive discipline” measures will be tailored to meet the development, age, and temperament of the individual student.

As much as possible, El Rio will use restorative justice strategies instead of punitive strategies for discipline. If a student is not a physical danger to self or others, she or he will be encouraged to talk through issues with school staff.

“Restorative Justice is a philosophy and an approach to discipline that moves away from punishment toward restoring a sense of harmony and well-being for all those affected by a harmful act. It provides families, schools, and communities a way to ensure accountability while at the same time breaking the cycle of retribution and violence. It is based on a view of resilience in children and youth and their capability to solve problems, as opposed to the youth themselves being the problems adults must fix. It focuses not on retribution but on reconnecting severed relationships and re-empowering individuals by holding them responsible. This approach acknowledges that, when a person does harm, it affects the persons they hurt, the community, and themselves. When using restorative measures, an attempt is made to repair the harm caused by one person to another and to the community so that everyone is moved toward healing.”

-- Jon Kidde & Rita Alfred

Restorative Justice: A Working Guide for our Schools, 2010

At all times, El Rio’s Co-Directors and teachers will seek feedback from the student and their family regarding specific strategies to mitigate inappropriate behavior.

Tier 2 support is designed to provide intensive or targeted interventions to support students who are not responding to Tier 1 Support efforts. A student is identified as needing Tier 2 interventions when a pattern of problem behavior arises, with all Tier 1 interventions in place, but for whom high intensity interventions are not necessary. As evidenced by PBIS, Tier 2 support allows teams to select features of the process (e.g., types of programs or interventions, data collection tools used, information gathered, and degree of monitoring) to provide more focused behavior support to students with behavior needs that do not require intensive, individualized plans.¹³⁷ These strategies will be informed by the results of the Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) which seeks to 1) identify the purpose or function of a student’s problem behavior(s), 2) develop and implement a plan to modify variables that maintain the problem behavior, and 3) teach appropriate replacement behaviors using positive interventions.¹³⁸ The FBA is completed by the student’s teacher(s), parent/guardian(s), and any relevant service providers that work with the student. The student is also able to engage in a reflection on the challenge(s) they’re facing, in a format appropriate for their developmental stage.

When a student is physically or verbally abusive, is defiant of school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties, uses profanity, lies, steals, bullies, or is unacceptably rude to students or adults at school, the following Tier 2 measures will be employed:

- Peer-to-peer mediation
- Small group sessions on social skills & positive relationship building
- One-on-one conversations between student and teacher
- Written or verbal warnings

¹³⁷ <https://www.pbis.org/school/tier2supports/tier2faqs>

¹³⁸ http://www.ideapartnership.org/documents/ASD-Collection/asd-dg_Brief_FBA.pdf

- Gifting another student with a drawing or other token as a way of recognizing and, if sincere, apologizing for what they have done
- Taking a “break” from classroom activities
- “Visiting” another classroom or, if warranted, the office
- Completing a “Self-Reflection” worksheet
- Discipline Incident report completed, and parent informed
- Phone call home to parent/guardian
- Home visit
- Loss of participation in school activities or field trips
- Parent conference
- SST referral and meeting
- Referral to El Rio school counselor
- Constructive meetings with administrator
- Loss of privileges
- Regular check-ins
- Behavior Intervention contract

Tier 3 - Intensive Discipline

When a student repeatedly engages in serious behavior and does not respond positively to the Tier 2 measures set forth above, or engages in a single act of significant misbehavior that warrants suspension or expulsion in compliance with the policies detailed below, El Rio will employ more intensive disciplinary measures. These measures will be reserved for serious transgressions, such as violence, theft, lewd or sexually inappropriate behavior, hate speech, or any dangerous or illegal activity.

El Rio will not consider suspension or expulsion an effective means of improving student behavior. In lieu of suspending or expelling a student, El Rio will typically employ the following alternatives:

- SST meetings
- Daily check-ins with Co-Director
- Referral to school counselor (after year 1) or outside counseling services
- Daily Behavior Intervention contract
- “Visiting” another classroom, or the office, for a prolonged period of time
- Detention
- Loss of privileges
- Multi-agency partnerships and intensive skills training

When a student does not respond positively to the above-listed Tier 3 alternatives, suspension or expulsion may be considered. As noted, notwithstanding the foregoing, certain transgressions may be so serious in nature as to warrant suspending or expelling a student without first employing any other disciplinary alternative first.

Professional Development

El Rio faculty and staff will participate in annual Professional Development training before each school year, including a review of the student behavior data, general discipline philosophy, policies, codes of conduct, tiered behavior intervention, and strategies. El Rio will also require its faculty and staff to participate in ongoing trainings (such as Practice of Council, Conflict Resolution, etc.) throughout the school year as needed. In addition, El Rio faculty and staff, under the direction of the

Educational Director, will monitor student behavior data, especially as it pertains to special populations and subgroups, and will conduct ongoing professional development to support positive student behavior outcomes. As part of our student information system, careful records tracking disciplinary referrals, including suspension and expulsion, will be kept and reviewed on a weekly basis, and shared with faculty on a monthly basis. Student behavior data will also be continually monitored as it pertains to the goals in EL Rio's LCFF tables, which are updated annually.

GROUND'S FOR SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

As guidance, El Rio has utilized Education Code Sections 48900 and 48915 to establish its list of offenses and procedures for suspensions and expulsions. The language that follows is similar to the language of those statutes that are applicable to school districts. El Rio is committed to annual review of policies and procedures surrounding suspensions and expulsions. If necessary and in consultation with the Charter Schools Division, following those reviews, El Rio will modify these lists of offenses for which students are subject to suspension or expulsion. Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all Charter School and Charter School-related activities unless otherwise agreed by the Charter School and the parent/guardian during the period of suspension or expulsion.

The El Rio discipline policy, including policy related to suspension and expulsion, may be applied to student actions that are related to a school activity or school attendance and that occur any time:

- on school grounds
- going to, or coming from, school
- during lunch or break periods (whether on or off school grounds)
- during, going to, or returning from school sponsored activities.

Discretionary Expulsion/Suspension Offenses

A student may be suspended or recommended for expulsion if it is determined by the Educational Director that the student committed one or more of the acts listed below. In most instances, suspension may be imposed for a first offense only when other means of discipline fail to bring about proper conduct. However, depending on the severity of the offense as determined by the Educational Director, students may be suspended for a first offense.

- Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
- Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.
- Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished a knife, or other dangerous object, unless, in the case of possession of an object of this type, the pupil had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, which is concurred in by the Co-Directors or the designee of the Co-Directors.
- Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind.
- Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind, and either sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to a person another liquid, substance, or material and represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.
- Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.

- Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
- Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
- Possessed or used tobacco, or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel. However, this section does not prohibit the use or possession by a pupil of his or her own prescription products.
- Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell drug paraphernalia, as defined in Section 11014.5 of the Health and Safety Code.
- Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- Possessed an imitation firearm. As used in this section, “imitation firearm” means a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Section 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a, or 289 of the Penal Code or committed a sexual battery as defined in Section 243.4 of the Penal Code.
- Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a pupil who is a complaining witness or a witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for purposes of either preventing that pupil from being a witness or retaliating against that pupil for being a witness, or both.
- Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing. For purposes of this subdivision, “hazing” means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, that is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this subdivision, “hazing” does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
- Engaged in an act of bullying, as defined in Education Code Section 48900(r).
- Committed sexual harassment as defined in Education Code Section 212.5.
- Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of, hate violence, as defined in Education Code Section 233(e).
- Intentionally engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation, directed against school personnel or pupils, that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting classwork, creating substantial disorder, and invading the rights of either school personnel or pupils by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment.
- Made terroristic threats, as defined in Education Code Section 48900.7(b), against school officials or school property, or both.
- A student who aids or abets, as defined in Penal Code Section 31, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion except that a student who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to expulsion.

Other Discretionary Expulsion Offenses

A student will be suspended and recommended for expulsion if it is determined by the Educational Director that the student committed one or more of the following acts, unless the Educational Director determines that expulsion should not be recommended under the circumstances or that an alternative means of correction would address the conduct:

- Causing serious physical injury to another person, except in self-defense.
- Possession of any knife or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the pupil.
- Unlawful possession of any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, except for either of the following: (i) The first offense for the possession of not more than one avoirdupois ounce of marijuana, other than concentrated cannabis; or (ii) The possession of over-the-counter medication for use by the pupil for medical purposes or medication prescribed for the pupil by a physician.
- Robbery or extortion.
- Assault or battery, as defined in Sections 240 and 242 of the Penal Code, upon any school employee.

Mandatory Expulsion/Suspension Offenses

A student shall be immediately suspended and thereafter recommended for expulsion upon a finding by the Educational Director that such student has committed any of the following acts:

- Possessing, selling, or otherwise furnishing a firearm. This does not apply to an act of possessing a firearm if the pupil had obtained prior written permission to possess the firearm from a certificated school employee, which is concurred in by the Educational Director or designee.
- Brandishing a knife at another person.
- Unlawfully selling a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code.
- Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault as defined in subdivision (n) of Section 48900 or committing a sexual battery as defined in subdivision (n) of Section 48900.
- Possession of an explosive.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION PROCEDURES

To protect its student's due process rights, El Rio will employ fair and thorough procedures, along with clear guidelines, to ensure a comprehensive and consistent process for suspension and expulsion.

Suspension Procedures

In-School Suspension

In lieu of out-of-school suspension, students will generally first participate in an in-school suspension for Tier 3 behaviors held in the Educational Director's office or other suitable location as determined by the Educational Director. During in-school suspension, students will work closely with and be supervised by the Educational Director and other staff on remediating their behavior. Teachers will assign work and meet with the student during the day to ensure the student is completing their assignments. Teachers will follow up with parents as necessary regarding assigned school work. The maximum number of days of in-school suspension will not exceed three days per incident and ten days in one academic year. Parents or guardians will receive written notice of any in-school

suspension. Such written notice will include, at least, the factual basis supporting the grounds for the in-school suspension and the terms of the suspension (including the length). In-school suspension shall not be permitted for acts of hate violence, harassment, threats, intimidation, or terroristic threats against school officials or school property. The grounds for in-school suspension will not exceed the grounds for out-of-school suspension.

Out-of-School Suspension

The Educational Director or designee shall have the discretion to suspend students in violation of the enumerated acts listed above.

- **Notice to Student:** When a situation involving a student arises that calls for suspension, an informal conference will be conducted by the Educational Director or designee and will include the student and if possible, the student's parents/guardians. During the conference, the student will be informed of the reasons for the suspension and the evidence against him or her and shall have an opportunity to present his or her side of the story. The process for investigating incidents and collecting evidence will be fair and thorough. In the case of an emergency situation, where a clear and present danger exists that threatens the health and safety of students or school personnel, the student may be suspended without a conference. Should a student be suspended without a conference, the parent/guardian will be notified of the suspension by the Educational Director or designee and a conference will be held as soon thereafter as reasonably possible.
- **Notice to Parents/Guardians:** When a suspension is issued, the Educational Director or designee will make reasonable attempts to contact the parent/guardian immediately by telephone. If the parent cannot be reached immediately by telephone, the Educational Director or designee will continue to follow up throughout the day or attempt to contact the parent in person (for example: when the parent picks the student up from school). In addition, a written notification will be sent home promptly. The written notice will detail the incident and specify the grounds for suspension, including the date(s) of suspension. The notice will request a conference with the parents/guardians, if one has not already been conducted, and will request parents/guardians to respond to this request immediately.
- **How a parent/student may appeal a suspension decision:** Students may appeal a suspension by submitting a written request to the Operations Director within three school days of the first day of the suspension that states the basis for the appeal and all facts relevant to the suspension. The Operations Director shall evaluate the request and respond in writing within two school days of receiving the request. The Operations Director may uphold the suspension, modify the suspension (e.g., reduce suspension duration, if possible), or overturn the suspension and expunge the suspension from the student's record. The Operations Director's decision shall be final. A student shall remain suspended during an appeal, but may return to school at the end of the scheduled suspension while an appeal is pending. If a student is also recommended for expulsion, any suspension appeal will be considered concurrently with the expulsion process.
- **Maximum number of days a student may be suspended for any single offense and the maximum total number of days a student may be suspended within one academic year:** The maximum number of days of out-of-school suspension for a single incident is five (5) consecutive school days, unless a Co-Director and parents/guardians agree to a longer term or under the circumstances set forth in the expulsion procedure. For suspensions exceeding five days, a second conference will be scheduled with the parent/guardian upon completion of the fifth day of suspension to discuss the progress of the suspension. For suspensions of 10 days or more, El Rio will provide the written notice and hearing required by Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(J)(ii). The total number of days for which a student may be suspended shall not exceed 20 school days in any school year unless the student transfers in from another school and already has a suspension record for the year. In that case, the total number of school days may be increased by 10 days for a total of 30

suspension days in that school year. Students to be suspended for three days or more will be given appropriate grade-level work to do while on suspension. Any tests that a student misses while on suspension will be completed within the first week of school after the suspension ends.

Students with disabilities are expected to follow the Student Code of Conduct. El Rio administration may remove a student with a disability who violates a Code of student Conduct from their current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting (IAES), another setting, or suspension, for not more than 10 school days. If school personnel recommend a change in placement (e.g., suspension, IAES, or expulsion that would exceed 10 school days), an IEP team meeting will be held as soon as possible, but no later than within 10 school days, to determine whether the behavior that gave rise to the violation of the school code was a manifestation of the child's disability. Under the IDEA a child's conduct is a manifestation of his or her disability if: (1) the conduct was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or (2) the conduct was the direct result of the school's failure to implement the student's IEP. If the IEP team determines that the behavior was not a manifestation of the child's disability, the school may discipline the child in the same manner in which it would discipline children without disabilities. If the discipline involves a change of placement, the new placement will be determined by the IEP team. If the IEP team determines that the behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability, the child will be returned to the placement prior to the disciplinary action unless El Rio, in collaboration with the district, and parents agree to a change in placement or the school/district has removed the child to an IAES due to behavior involving a weapon, illegal drugs, or infliction of serious bodily injury.

- **How and where the student will be provided with meaningful access to education during the term of the suspension:** Students to be suspended for three days or more will be given appropriate grade-level work to do while on or off campus on suspension. Any tests that a student misses while on suspension will be completed within the first week of school after the suspension ends.
- **Specific rules and procedures for suspension pending the outcome of an expulsion process and how and where students will have meaningful access to education pending the outcome of the expulsion process:** Upon a recommendation of expulsion by the Educational Director, the student and the parent/guardian will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the student should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination will be made by the Educational Director upon either of the following: 1) the student's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the student poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the student's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing. Student suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing. Student suspension may be extended for up to 30 days during the period the student is waiting to be expelled. The student will receive meaningful access to education during suspension, including, but not limited to, an opportunity to complete instructional activities missed due to his or her suspension. Suspended students will be able to communicate with designated teacher(s) or administrator(s) for any questions and for evaluation of work and shall receive homework assignments and modified instruction through classroom teacher(s) during their suspension and be provided the opportunity to make up any missed exams.

Expulsion

A student may be expelled by a single, neutral Hearing Officer after a hearing and upon a recommendation by the Educational Director. The Hearing Officer will be assigned by the Educational Director as needed, and shall be certificated and neither a teacher of the student nor a Board member. The Hearing Officer may expel any student found to have committed an expellable offense. The decision to expel a pupil shall be based on the finding of one or both of the following: (i) other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct; or (ii) due to the nature of the act, the presence of the student causes continuing danger.

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing within thirty days of an expulsion recommendation. The Hearing Officer will preside over expulsion hearings. Students and their parents will be provided written notice from the Educational Director at least ten calendar days prior to any expulsion hearing. Such notice of expulsion hearing can be delivered by certified mail or electronic mail and include the following:

1. The date, place and time of the expulsion hearing;
2. A statement of the specific facts, charge(s) and offense(s) upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
3. A copy of the school's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
4. Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the Charter School to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;
5. The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;
6. The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
7. The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
8. The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses;
9. A statement that the pupil's parent/guardian may request a postponement of the hearing for good cause;
10. A statement that the parent/guardian can request reasonable accommodations or language support if needed during the hearing.

In a hearing in which a student is alleged to have committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as specified in subdivision (n) of Education Code Section 48900 or to have committed a sexual battery as defined in subdivision (n) of Education Code Section 48900, a complaining witness shall be given five days' notice before being called to testify, and shall be entitled to have up to two adult support persons, including, but not limited to, a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, present during his or her testimony.

If the hearing is to be conducted in a public setting, and there is a charge of committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault as defined in subdivision (n) of Education Code Section 48900 or to commit a sexual battery as defined in subdivision (n) of Education Code Section 48900, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his or her testimony heard in a session closed to the public when testifying in a public setting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are no alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm, including, but not limited to, videotaped deposition or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing room by means of closed-circuit television.

In hearings that include an allegation of committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault as defined in subdivision (n) of Education Code Section 48900 or to commit a sexual battery as defined in subdivision (n) of Education Code Section 48900, evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness's prior sexual conduct is to be presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the Hearing Officer that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before the Hearing Officer makes the determination on whether extraordinary circumstances exist requiring that specific instances of a complaining witness' prior sexual conduct be heard, the complaining witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, guardian, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.

Sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony if the Hearing Officer determines that disclosure of the declarant's identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm. If, due to a written request by the student, the hearing is held in a public setting, and the charge is committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in Education Code Section 48900, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his or her testimony heard in a session closed to the public.

The Hearing Officer shall make the final decision on a student's proposed expulsion. A determination by the Hearing Officer to expel must be supported by substantial evidence that the student committed an expellable offense, and shall be in the form of written findings of fact and based on evidence presented at the hearing. If the Hearing Officer decides not to expel, the student shall immediately be returned to his/her educational program.

The Educational Director, following a decision of the Hearing Officer to expel, shall, within seven (7) calendar days of the decision, send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Hearing Officer's adopted findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian. This notice shall also include the following: (a) Notice of the specific offense(s) committed by the student; (b) Notice of appeal rights/procedures; and (c) Notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new school or district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with El Rio. The Educational Director shall send a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the authorizer. This notice shall include the following: (a) The student's name; and (b) The specific expellable offense committed by the student.

The records of the hearing will be maintained in physical and/or electronic form by El Rio Community School and a transcript will be made available to the authorizer upon request.

Parents/Guardians may appeal the expulsion decision of the Hearing Officer by making a written request and submitting it to the Educational Director within fifteen (15) school days of the expulsion decision. The student will be considered suspended until an administrative panel meeting is convened within thirty (30) calendar days at which time the parent(s)/guardian(s) must attend to present their appeal. The administrative panel will be assigned by the ERCS Board as needed, and will consist of at least one neutral member who is certified but not a teacher of the student and two other neutral members who may be Charter School employees, ERCS Board members, or other neutral individuals. Reasonable accommodations will be made, and language support offered, for students and parents/guardians who wish to appeal. The parent/guardian will be provided notice of the meeting and must present the appeal verbally and/or submit written documentation supporting the appeal. Following the appeal meeting, the administrative panel will make a final decision based on the information presented at the appeal meeting by the parent(s)/guardian(s) and information from the original expulsion hearing. The Educational Director will send written notice to the student or parent/guardian of the administrative panel's decision within seven (7) calendar days of the

appeal meeting. The administrative panel's decision to expel shall be final. In the event the administrative panel reverses the expulsion, the student shall be immediately reinstated and returned to his/her educational program.

INVOLUNTARY REMOVAL

No pupil shall be involuntarily removed by El Rio Community School for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the pupil has been provided written notice in-person and/or by mail of intent to remove the pupil no less than five (5) schooldays before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian or, if the pupil is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the pupil's educational rights holder, and shall inform him or her of the right to request a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer before the effective date of the action. If a hearing is requested, the pupil will remain enrolled at El Rio Community School until the school issues a final decision. For purposes of this charter, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions for disciplinary reasons.

REHABILITATION, READMISSIONS, AND REINSTATEMENT

Rehabilitation

Students who are expelled from El Rio Community School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Hearing Officer or at the time of the expulsion order, which order may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The length of an expulsion should be reasonable and fair with the weight of the expelling offense taken into consideration when determining the length of expulsion. Therefore, the rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may re-apply to El Rio for readmission. The rehabilitation plan may include other benchmarks, such as improved behavior, attendance, and academic performance.

Readmission and Reinstatement

An expulsion order remains in effect until the Educational Director orders the readmission and reinstatement of the student. A student may re-apply to El Rio after the date specified in the rehabilitation plan. The decision to readmit and reinstate a student, or to admit a previously expelled student from another charter school or a school district, shall be in the sole discretion of the Educational Director following a meeting with the student and the parent/guardian. El Rio shall readmit and reinstate the student unless the Educational Director finds that the student has not met the conditions of the rehabilitation plan or poses a danger to campus safety. The student's readmission and reinstatement is also contingent upon the Charter School's capacity at the time the student applies for readmission and reinstatement. If the Educational Director denies the readmission and reinstatement of an expelled student, the Charter School shall provide written notice to the expelled student and the student's parent/guardian describing the reasons for denial.

ELEMENT 11 – EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

“The manner by which staff members of the charter schools will be covered by the State Teachers’ Retirement System, the Public Employees’ Retirement System, or federal social security.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(K).)

Charter School shall comply in a timely manner with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, as they may change from time to time, including but not limited to Internal Revenue Code section 414(d) and related regulations, governing Charter School’s participation in, and/or coverage of its staff members by, the State Teachers’ Retirement System (CalSTRS), the Public Employees’ Retirement System (CalPERS), and/or federal social security.

If Charter School participates in, or otherwise covers its staff members by enrolling or continuing their enrollment in, a “government plan” governed by section 414(d) (e.g., CalPERS), upon dissolution or final liquidation of Charter School, and/or its nonprofit public benefit corporation, notwithstanding any provision in Element 15 to the contrary, Charter School shall distribute its net assets in accordance with section 414(d), related regulations, and the government plan’s requirements.

If Charter School participates in CalSTRS and/or CalPERS, Charter School shall continue such participation for the duration of Charter School’s existence under the same CDS code, if mandated by applicable legal and retirement plan requirements.

Certificated Staff Members

Full-time employees may elect to participate in a 403b retirement contribution plan. Social Security payments will be contributed for all qualifying employees. The ERCS Board of Directors will retain the option to consider any other public or private retirement plans and to coordinate such participation with existing programs, as it deems appropriate. All full-time eligible employees will be covered by the Federal Social Security program.

Classified Staff Members

Full-time employees may elect to participate in a 403b retirement contribution plan. Social Security payments will be contributed for all qualifying employees. The ERCS Board of Directors will retain the option to consider any other public or private retirement plans and to coordinate such participation with existing programs, as it deems appropriate. All full-time eligible employees will be covered by the Federal Social Security program.

Other Staff Members

Full-time employees may elect to participate in a 403b retirement contribution plan. Social Security payments will be contributed for all qualifying employees. The ERCS Board of Directors will retain the option to consider any other public or private retirement plans and to coordinate such participation with existing programs, as it deems appropriate. All full-time eligible employees will be covered by the Federal Social Security program.

The Operations Director will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements for the retirement coverage have been made, including the completion of a 403b plan.

The ERCS Board of Directors will retain the option to consider any other public or private retirement plans and to coordinate such participation with existing programs, as it deems appropriate.

The ERCS Board of Directors will retain the option to consider any other public or private retirement plans and to coordinate such participation with existing programs, as it deems appropriate. El Rio’s



Operations Manager or his/her designee will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements for the above-referenced coverage will be made.

ELEMENT 12 - PUBLIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES

“The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(L).)

Pupils of Charter School do not have or gain any right to admission in a particular school of any school district, or program of any school district, as a consequence of applying to or enrolling in Charter School, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the school district.

A pupil who chooses not to attend Charter School may attend a public school within the pupil's school district of residence in accordance with applicable law and that school district's policies and procedures. The pupil alternatively may seek to enroll in another charter school in accordance with applicable law and the terms of the school's charter. If LAUSD is the pupil's school district of residence, an eligible pupil may pursue an inter-district transfer, if available, in accordance with the admission, enrollment, and transfer policies and procedures of the District, as they may change from time to time.

El Rio Community School is a school of choice. Students who choose not to attend El Rio Community School may choose, instead, to attend other public schools in their district of residence or they may pursue inter-district transfer in accordance with the enrollment and transfer policies of the District.

El Rio Community School will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of each El Rio student by way of the enrollment materials of their public school attendance alternatives and that enrollment at El Rio Community School provides no right to enrollment at other schools within LAUSD except as provided by existing LAUSD policy.

ELEMENT 13 – RIGHTS OF DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

“The rights of an employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(M).)

Employees of the District who choose to leave the employment of the District to work at Charter School shall have no automatic rights of return to the District after employment at Charter School unless specifically granted by the District through a leave of absence or other agreement or policy of the District as aligned with the collective bargaining agreements of the District. Leave and return rights for District union-represented employees and former employees who accept employment with Charter School will be administered in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements and any applicable judicial rulings.

ELEMENT 14: MANDATORY DISPUTE RESOLUTION

“The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(N).)

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Any claim, controversy or dispute between the District and Charter School arising out of or relating to this Charter, except for any claim, controversy or dispute related to the authorization (non-renewal, revision and/or revocation) of this Charter, (“Dispute”) shall be resolved pursuant to the terms of this Element 14.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, each party shall bear and be solely responsible for all of its own attorneys’ fees, costs and expenses associated with any Dispute, including, but not limited to, any written/oral communication, meeting, Issues Conference, mediation, arbitration, administrative and/or civil action (including all levels of appeal), and no party shall be ordered to pay, or be awarded, any other party’s attorneys’ fees, costs or expenses in connection therewith, regardless of who may be deemed the prevailing party. Any fees, costs and expenses charged by a mediator or arbitrator (including all associated administration fees, costs and expenses) shall be shared equally by the parties regardless of the outcome or award. To that effect, any order or award of attorneys’ fees, costs and/or expenses, or mediator’s or arbitrator’s fees, costs or expenses (including any associated administration fees, costs and expenses), issued by a mediator, arbitrator, judicial officer (including all levels of appeal) or jury in any Dispute shall be deemed invalid as a matter of law and unenforceable by one party against the other party.

PROPOSITION 39 DISPUTES

Any Dispute related to or arising out of Education Code §47614 and/or its implementing regulations set forth in California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 11969 *et seq.* (“Proposition 39”), shall be resolved in accordance with the procedures set forth below:

- 1) Any Dispute shall be communicated in writing (“Written Notification”). The Written Notification must identify the nature of the Dispute and all supporting facts. The Written Notification shall be tendered to the other party by personal delivery, by facsimile or e-mail, or by certified mail. The Written Notification shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile or e-mail, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by certified mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.

Unless directed otherwise, all Written Notifications to the District and Charter School shall be addressed respectively as follows:

Director
Charter Schools Division
Los Angeles Unified School District
333 South Beaudry Avenue, 20th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90017

Operations Director
El Rio Community School
1338 Coronado Terrace
Los Angeles, CA 90026

- 2) A written response ("Written Response") shall be tendered to the other party within fifteen (15) business days from the date of receipt of the Written Notification or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties. The Written Response shall be tendered to the other party by personal delivery, by facsimile or e-mail, or by certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such communication if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile or e-mail, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by certified mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.
- 3) If the Dispute has not been resolved by mutual agreement from the Written Response, the parties agree to schedule a conference to discuss the Dispute identified in the Written Notice ("Issue Conference"). The Issue Conference shall take place within fifteen (15) business days from the date on which the Written Response is received by the other party or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties.
- 4) If the Dispute has not been resolved by mutual agreement at the Issue Conference, either party may then request that the Dispute be resolved by mediation. Within fifteen (15) business days of the date of the request for mediation or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties, the parties shall mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator. If the parties are unable to mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator, the mediator shall be selected from a list of mediators prepared and provided by the American Arbitration Association. Mediation proceedings shall commence within thirty (30) business days of the date of the request for mediation or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties, and conclude within forty (40) business days of the date of the request for mediation or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, mediation proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial mediation procedures of the American Arbitration Association.
- 5) If the mediation is not successful, either party may then initiate a civil action. Venue for any civil action between the parties shall be the Los Angeles County Superior Court.

NON-PROPOSITION 39 DISPUTES

Any Dispute not related to or arising out of Proposition 39 shall be resolved in accordance with the procedures set forth below:

- 1) Any Dispute shall be communicated in writing ("Written Notification"). The Written Notification must identify the nature of the Dispute and any supporting facts. The Written Notification shall be tendered to the other party by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Notification shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.
- Unless directed otherwise all Written Notifications to the District and Charter School shall be addressed respectively as follows:

Director
Charter Schools Division
Los Angeles Unified School District
333 South Beaudry Avenue, 20th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90017

Operations Director
El Rio Community School
1338 Coronado Terrace
Los Angeles, CA 90026

- 2) A written response ("Written Response") shall be tendered to the other party within twenty (20) business days from the date of receipt of the Written Notification or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties. The Written Response shall be tendered to the other party by personal delivery, by facsimile or e-mail, or by certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such communication if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile or e-mail, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by certified mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.
- 3) If the Dispute has not been otherwise resolved by mutual agreement, the parties agree to schedule a conference to discuss the Dispute identified in the Written Notice ("Issue Conference"). The Issue Conference shall take place within fifteen (15) business days from the date from the date on which the Written Response is received by the other party or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties.
- 4) If the Dispute has not been resolved by mutual agreement at the Issue Conference, either party may then request that the Dispute be resolved by mediation. Within fifteen (15) business days of the date of the request for mediation or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties, the parties shall mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator. If the parties are unable to mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator, the mediator shall be selected from a list of mediators prepared and provided by the American Arbitration Association. Mediation proceedings shall commence within thirty (30) business days of the date of the request for mediation or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, mediation proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial mediation procedures of the American Arbitration Association.
- 5) If the mediation is not successful, then the parties agree to resolve the Dispute by binding arbitration conducted by a single arbitrator. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, arbitration proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial arbitration rules of the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator must be an active member of the State Bar of California or a retired judge of the state or federal judiciary of California.

ELEMENT 15: CHARTER SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURES

“The procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the charter school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(O).)

REVOCATION OF THE CHARTER

The District may revoke the Charter pursuant to the provisions set forth in the Charter Schools Act of 1992, as they may be amended from time to time. The District may revoke the Charter of Charter School if the District finds, through a showing of substantial evidence, that Charter School did any of the following:

- Charter School committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the Charter.
- Charter School failed to meet or pursue any of the pupil outcomes identified in the Charter.
- Charter School failed to meet generally accepted accounting principles, or engaged in fiscal mismanagement.
- Charter School violated any provision of law.

Prior to revocation, and in accordance with Education Code section 47607(d) and state regulations, the LAUSD Board of Education will notify Charter School in writing of the specific violation, and give Charter School a reasonable opportunity to cure the violation, unless the LAUSD Board of Education determines, in writing, that the violation constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of the pupils. Revocation proceedings are not subject to the dispute resolution provisions set forth in this Charter.

Pursuant to AB 97, charter schools may be identified for assistance based on state evaluation rubrics and be subject to revocation pursuant to Education Code section 47607.3.

CLOSURE ACTION

The decision to close Charter School, by the governing board of Charter School must be documented in a “Closure Action”. A Closure Action shall be deemed to have been automatically taken when any of the following occur: the Charter is revoked (subject to the provisions of Education Code section 47607(i)) or non-renewed by the LAUSD Board of Education and Charter School has exhausted its revocation or non-renewal administrative appeal rights pursuant to Education Code sections 47605(j)(1) and 47607(f), or its administrative appeal rights have lapsed, or the charter school voluntarily closes at any stage of the administrative appeal process;; the governing board of Charter School votes to close Charter School; or the Charter lapses.

CLOSURE PROCEDURES

The procedures for charter school closure set forth below are guided by *Education Code* sections 47604.32, 47605, and 47607 as well as *California Code of Regulations*, title 5, sections 11962 and 11962.1, and are based on “Charter School Closure Requirements and Recommendations (Revised 08/2009)” posted on the California Department of Education website. All references to “Charter School” apply to Charter School, including its nonprofit corporation and governing board.

Designation of Responsible Person(s) and Funding of Closure

Prior to or at the time of the taking of a Closure Action by either the governing board of Charter School or the LAUSD Board of Education, the governing board of Charter School shall designate a person or persons responsible for conducting and overseeing all closure-related procedures and activities, and allocate sufficient funding for, or otherwise determine how Charter School will fund, these activities.

Notification of Closure Action

Upon the taking of a Closure Action, Charter School shall send written notice of its closure to:

1. The LAUSD Charter Schools Division (CSD). Charter School shall provide the CSD with written notice of (1) the person(s) designated to be responsible for conducting and overseeing all closure activities, and (2) the source, location, and management of the funding for such activities. If the Closure Action is an act of Charter School, Charter School shall provide the CSD with a copy of the governing board resolution or minutes that documents its Closure Action.
2. Parents/guardians of all students, and all majority age and emancipated minor students, currently enrolled in Charter School within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of the written parent notification to the CSD.
3. Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE). Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action to LACOE by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of this notification to the CSD.
4. The Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) in which Charter School participates. Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action to the SELPA in which Charter School participates by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of this notification to the CSD.
5. The retirement systems in which Charter School's employees participate. Within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Closure Action, Charter School shall notify, as applicable, the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS), Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), the Social Security Administration, and the Los Angeles County Office of Education of the Closure Action, and follow their respective procedures for dissolving contracts and reporting. Charter School shall provide a copy of these notifications and correspondence to the CSD.
6. The California Department of Education (CDE). Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action to the CDE by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this notification to the CSD.
7. Any school district that may be responsible for providing education services to the former students of Charter School. Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action within 72 hours of the Closure Action. This notice must include a list of potentially returning students and their home schools based on student residence. Charter School shall provide a copy of these notifications, if any, to the CSD.
8. All Charter School employees and vendors within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of the written employee and vendor notification, with any attachments, to the CSD.

Notification of all the parties above, with the exception of employees and vendors, must include but is not limited to the following information:

1. The effective date of the closure of Charter School
2. The name(s) and contact information for the person(s) handling inquiries regarding the closure
3. The students' school districts of residence
4. How parents/guardians of all students, and all majority age and emancipated minor students, may obtain copies of student records and transcripts, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements

In addition to the four required items above, notification of the CDE shall also include:

1. A description of the circumstances of the closure
2. The location of student and personnel records

In addition to the four required items above, notification of parents/guardians of all students, and all majority age and emancipated minor students, shall also include:

1. Information on how to enroll or transfer the student to an appropriate school
2. A certified packet of student information that includes closure notice, a copy of the student's cumulative record and other records, including but not limited to grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, completed coursework, credits that meet graduation requirements, a transcript, and state testing results
3. Information on student completion of college entrance requirements, for all high school students affected by the closure

Notification of employees and vendors shall include:

1. The effective date of the closure of Charter School
2. The name(s) and contact information for the person(s) handling inquiries regarding the closure
3. The date and manner, which shall be no later than 30 days from the effective date of the closure of Charter School, by which Charter School shall provide employees with written verification of employment

Within 30 calendar days of the effective date of closure, Charter School shall provide all employees with written verification of employment. Charter School shall send copies of all such employee verification letters to the CSD.

Records Retention and Transfer

Charter School shall comply with all applicable laws as well as District policies and procedures, as they may change from time to time, regarding the transfer and maintenance of Charter School records, including student records. These requirements include:

1. Charter School shall provide the District with all original student cumulative files and behavior records, pursuant to District policy and applicable District handbook(s) regarding cumulative records for secondary and elementary schools, for all students, both active and inactive, of Charter School. Transfer of the complete and organized original student records to the District, in accordance with District procedures applicable at the time of closure, shall occur within seven (7) calendar days of the effective date of closure.
2. Charter School's process for transferring copies of student records to receiving schools shall be in accordance with applicable law and LAUSD procedures for students moving from one school to another.
3. Charter School shall prepare and provide an electronic master list of all students to the Charter Schools Division in accordance with the District procedures applicable at the time of closure. This list shall include the student's identification number, Statewide Student Identifier (SSID), birthdate, grade, full name, address, home school/school district, enrollment date, exit code, exit date, parent/guardian name(s), and phone number(s). If the Charter School closure occurs before the end of the school year, the list also shall indicate the name of the school to which each student is transferring, if known. This electronic master list shall be delivered to the CSD in the form of a CD or otherwise in accordance with District procedures.

4. Charter School must organize the original cumulative files for delivery to the District in two categories: active students and inactive students. Charter School will coordinate with the CSD for the delivery and/or pickup of student records.
5. Charter School must update all student records in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) prior to closing.
6. Charter School must provide to the CSD a copy of student attendance records, teacher gradebooks, and Title I records (if applicable).
7. Charter School must provide to the CSD the name, title, and contact information of the person designated to maintain all Charter School personnel records after the closure. Personnel records to be transferred to and maintained by the designee must include any and all employee records, including but not limited to, records related to performance and grievance. Charter School must provide to the CSD and the designee a list of all active and inactive employees and their periods of service. Both Charter School and the designee, individually and separately, shall inform the CSD immediately upon the transfer of Charter School's employee records to the designee.
8. Charter School shall ensure that all records are boxed and clearly labeled by classification of documents and the required duration of storage in accordance with District procedures.
9. Charter School shall provide to the responsible person(s) designated by the governing board of Charter School to conduct all closure-related activities a list of students in each grade level and, for each student, a list of classes completed and the student's district of residence.

Financial Close-Out

After receiving notification of closure, the California Department of Education (CDE) will notify Charter School and the authorizing entity of any liabilities Charter School owes the state, which may include overpayment of apportionments, unpaid revolving fund loans or grants, and/or similar liabilities. The CDE may ask the county office of education to conduct an audit of the charter school if it has reason to believe that the school received state funding for which it was not eligible. Charter School shall ensure completion of an independent final audit within six months after the closure of Charter School that includes:

1. An accounting of all financial assets. These may include cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value.
2. An accounting of all liabilities. These may include accounts payable or reduction in apportionments due to loans, unpaid staff compensation, audit findings, or other investigations.
3. An assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to Charter School.

This audit may serve as Charter School's annual audit if it meets all of the requirements of the annual audit.

Charter School shall pay for the financial closeout audit of Charter School. This audit will be conducted by a neutral, independent licensed CPA who will employ generally accepted accounting principles. Any liability or debt incurred by Charter School will be the responsibility of Charter School and not LAUSD. Charter School understands and acknowledges that Charter School will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of Charter School. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source. Charter School understands and acknowledges that only unrestricted funds will be used to pay creditors. Any unused AB 602 funds will be returned to the District SELPA or the SELPA in which Charter School participates, and other categorical funds will

be returned to the source of funds.

Charter School shall ensure the completion and filing of any annual reports required. These reports include but are not necessarily limited to:

1. Preliminary budgets
2. Interim financial reports
3. Second interim financial reports
4. Final unaudited reports

These reports must be submitted to the CDE and the authorizing entity in the form required. These reports should be submitted as soon as possible after the Closure Action, but no later than the required deadline for reporting for the fiscal year.

For apportionment of categorical programs, the CDE will count the prior year average daily attendance (ADA) or enrollment data of the closed Charter School with the data of the authorizing entity. This practice will occur in the first year after the closure and will continue until CDE data collection processes reflect ADA or enrollment adjustments for all affected LEAs due to the charter closure.

Disposition of Liabilities and Assets

The closeout audit must identify the disposition of all liabilities of Charter School. Charter School closure procedures must also ensure appropriate disposal, in accordance with the District Required Language provisions in Element 11 of this Charter, Charter School's governing board bylaws, fiscal procedures, and any other applicable laws and regulations, of any net assets remaining after all liabilities of Charter School have been paid or otherwise addressed. Such disposal includes, but is not limited to:

1. Charter School, at its cost and expense, shall return to the District any and all property, furniture, equipment, supplies, and other assets provided to Charter School by or on behalf of the District. The District discloses that the California Education Code sets forth the requirements for the disposition of the District's personal property and Charter School shall bear responsibility and liability for any disposition in violation of statutory requirements.
2. The return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any terms and conditions set when the donations were accepted.
3. The return of any grant and restricted categorical funds to their sources according to the terms of the grant or state and federal law.
4. The submission of final expenditure reports for any entitlement grants and the filing of Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as appropriate.

If Charter School is operated as or by a nonprofit corporation, and if the corporation does not have any functions other than operation of Charter School, the corporation shall be dissolved according to its bylaws.

Charter School shall retain sufficient staff, as deemed appropriate by the Charter School governing board to complete all necessary tasks and procedures required to close the school and transfer records in accordance with these closure procedures.

Charter School's governing board shall adopt a plan for wind-up of Charter School and, if necessary, the corporation, in accordance with the requirements of the Corporations Code.

- Charter School shall provide LAUSD within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Closure Action with written notice of any outstanding payments due to staff and the time frame and method by which Charter School will make the payments.
- Prior to final close-out, Charter School shall complete all actions required by applicable law, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. File all final federal, state, and local employer payroll tax returns and issue final W-2s and Form 1099s by the statutory deadlines.
 - b. Make final federal tax payments (employee taxes, etc.)
 - c. Complete and submit all required federal and state filings and notices to the State of California, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Department of the Treasury, including but not limited to final tax returns and forms (e.g., Form 990 and related Schedules).

This Element 15 shall survive the revocation, expiration, termination, cancellation of this Charter, or any other act or event that would end Charter School's authorization to operate as a charter school or cause Charter School to cease operation. Charter School agrees that, due to the nature of the property and activities that are the subject of this Charter, the District and public shall suffer irreparable harm should Charter School breach any obligation under this Element 15. The District therefore reserves the right to seek equitable relief to enforce any right arising under this Element 15 or any provision of this Element 15 or to prevent or cure any breach of any obligation undertaken, without in any way prejudicing any other legal remedy available to the District. Such legal relief shall include, without limitation, the seeking of a temporary or permanent injunction, restraining order, or order for specific performance, and may be sought in any appropriate court.

In the event the school closes, El Rio's Operations Director shall serve as the school's closure agent, subject to approval by the El Rio Board of Directors.

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

FACILITIES

Charter School shall comply with all geographic and site limitations and related requirements set forth in Education Code sections 47605.1, 47602(a), and 47605(a).

District-Owned Facilities

If Charter School is using District facilities as of the date of the submission of this charter petition or takes occupancy of District facilities prior to the approval of this charter petition, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by the District for the use of the District facilities as a condition of the approval of the charter petition. If at any time after the approval of this charter petition Charter School will occupy and use any District facilities, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by the District for the use of the District facilities prior to occupancy and commencing use. Charter School shall implement and otherwise comply with the terms of any and all applicable facilities use agreements between Charter School and the District.

The circumstances of Charter School's occupancy of District facilities may change over time such as, but not limited to, enrollment, programs, and the conditions of facilities, and the District has a vested interest in having an agreement that is appropriate for the situation.

For a Sole Occupant Agreement or any other use agreement that is not a Proposition 39 Single Year Co-location Use Agreement or a lease issued through the Notice of Intent and bid process, the term may be co-terminous with the approved Charter, as permitted by law. Charter School and the District shall negotiate any modifications of the agreement with the goal of such amendment or new agreement being considered by the LAUSD Board of Education with the renewal of the charter petition. If Charter School and the District cannot execute an agreement in time for such to be considered by the Board of Education with the renewal of the charter petition, the approval of the renewal of the charter petition shall be conditioned upon Charter School and the District executing an amendment to the existing use agreement or a new agreement no later than May 1st or within nine (9) months of the date of the Board of Education's approval of the renewal of the charter petition. During such time period Charter School shall be permitted to remain in occupancy of the District facilities under the terms and conditions of the immediately preceding, executed use agreement; provided, that if Charter School and the District cannot agree upon and execute an amendment or new use agreement by said deadline, Charter School shall vacate the District facilities on or before June 30th of said school year.

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that occupancy and use of District facilities shall be in compliance with applicable laws and District policies for the operation and maintenance of District facilities and furnishings and equipment. Charter School shall comply with all District health, safety, and emergency procedures and requirements and shall be subject to inspection by the District's Facilities Services Division, OEHS, and other District offices in the same manner as other LAUSD campuses. All District facilities (i.e., schools) will remain subject to those laws applicable to public schools.

In the event of an emergency, all District facilities (i.e., schools) are available for use by the American Red Cross and public agencies as emergency locations, which may disrupt or prevent Charter School from conducting its educational programs. If Charter School will share the use of District facilities with other District user groups, Charter School agrees that it will participate in and observe all District safety policies (e.g., emergency chain of information and participation in safety drills).

The use agreements provided by the District for District facilities shall contain terms and conditions addressing issues such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Use: Charter School will be restricted to using the District facilities for the operation of a public school providing educational instruction to public school students consistent with the terms of the Charter and incidental related uses. Separate and apart from its right as authorizer to observe and inspect any part of the charter school at any time pursuant to Education Code 47607(a)(1), the District shall have and reserves the right to inspect District facilities upon reasonable notice to Charter School.
- Furnishings and Equipment: The District shall retain ownership of any furnishings and equipment, including technology, ("F&E") that it provides to Charter School for use. Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, shall provide maintenance and other services for the good and safe operation of the F&E.
- Leasing; Licensing: Use of the District facilities by any person or entity other than Charter School shall be administered by the District. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement in the use agreement.
- Programs, Services, and Activities Outside Instructional Program; Third Party Vendors
 - (i) Any program, service, or activity provided outside the instructional program shall be subject to the terms and provisions of the use agreement, and, additionally, may require a license, permit, or additional agreement issued by the District. The term "instructional program" is defined, per Education Code section 47612 and 5 CCR section 11960, as those required educational activities that generate funding based on "average daily attendance" and includes those extracurricular programs, services, and/or activities that students are required to participate in and do not require the payment of any consideration or fee.
 - (ii) Any program, service, or activity requiring the payment of any consideration or fee or provided by a third party vendor (defined as any person or entity other than Charter School), whether paid or volunteer and regardless of whether such may be within the instructional program, shall be subject to the terms and provisions of the use agreement and such third party vendor shall be required to obtain a license, permit, or additional agreement from the District.
- Minimum Payments or Charges to be Paid to District Arising From the Facilities:
 - (i) Pro Rata Share: The District shall collect and Charter School shall pay a Pro Rata Share for facilities costs as provided in the Charter Schools Act of 1992 and its regulations. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding facilities costs in the use agreement; and
 - (ii) Taxes; Assessments: Generally, Charter School shall pay any assessment or fee imposed upon or levied on the LAUSD facilities that it is occupying or Charter School's legal or equitable interest created by the use agreement.
- Maintenance & Operations Services: In the event the District agrees to allow Charter School to perform any of the operation and maintenance services, the District shall have the right to inspect the District facilities, and the costs incurred in such inspection shall be paid by Charter School.
- Co-Location: If Charter School is co-locating or sharing the District facilities with another user, the District shall provide the operations and maintenance services for

the District facilities and Charter School shall pay the Pro Rata Share. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such in the use agreement.

- (ii) **Sole Occupant:** If Charter School is a sole occupant of District facilities, the District shall allow Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, to provide some operations and maintenance services for the District facilities in accordance with applicable laws and LAUSD's policies on operations and maintenance services for facilities and F&E. NOTWITHSTANDING THE FOREGOING, the District shall provide all services for regulatory inspections which as the owner of the real property it is required to submit, and deferred maintenance, and Charter School shall pay LAUSD for the cost and expense of providing those services. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such services in the use agreement.

- **Real Property Insurance:** Prior to occupancy, Charter School shall satisfy requirements to participate in LAUSD's property insurance or, if Charter School is the sole occupant of LAUSD facilities, obtain and maintain separate property insurance for the LAUSD facilities. Charter School shall **not** have the option of obtaining and maintaining separate property insurance for the LAUSD facility IF Charter School is co-locating or sharing the LAUSD facility with another user.

Non-District-Owned Facilities

Occupancy and Use of the Site: Prior to occupancy or use of any school site or facility, Charter School shall provide the CSD with a current Certificate of Occupancy or equivalent document issued by the applicable permitting agency that allows Charter School to use and occupy the site as a charter school. Charter School shall not exceed the operating capacity of the site and shall operate within any limitations or requirements provided by the Certificate of Occupancy and any applicable permit. Charter School may not open or operate without providing a copy of an appropriate Certificate of Occupancy to the CSD. If Charter School intends to move or expand to another facility during the term of this Charter, Charter School shall adhere to any and all District policies and procedures regarding charter material revision and non-material amendment. Prior to occupancy or use of any such additional or changed school site, Charter School shall provide an appropriate Certificate of Occupancy to the CSD for such facility. Notwithstanding any language to the contrary in this Charter, the interpretation, application, and enforcement of this provision are not subject to the Dispute Resolution Process outlined in Element 14.

Facility Compliance: Prior to occupancy or use of any non-District-owned school site and/or facility, Charter School shall ensure that the site and/or facility complies with all applicable building codes, standards and regulations adopted by the city and/or county agencies responsible for building and safety standards for the city in which Charter School is to be located, federal and state accessibility requirements (including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504), and all other applicable fire, health, and structural safety and access requirements. This requirement shall also apply to the construction, reconstruction, alteration of or addition to the facility. Charter School shall resolve in a timely manner any and all corrective actions, orders to comply, and notices issued by any authorized building and safety agency. Charter School cannot exempt itself from applicable building and zoning codes, ordinances, and ADA/Section 504 requirements. Charter School shall maintain on file readily accessible records that document facilities compliance and shall promptly provide such documentation to the CSD upon request.

Pest Management: Charter School shall comply with the Healthy Schools Act, Education Code section 17608, which details pest management requirements for schools.

Asbestos Management: Charter School shall comply with the asbestos requirement as cited in the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), 40 C.F.R. part 763. AHERA requires that any building leased or acquired that is to be used as a school or administrative building shall maintain an asbestos management plan.

INSURANCE

Insurance Requirements

No coverage shall be provided to Charter School by the District under any of the District's self-insured programs or commercial insurance policies. Charter School shall secure and maintain, at a minimum, insurance as set forth below with insurance companies acceptable to the District [A.M. Best A-, VII or better] or the equivalent provided through a California Joint Powers Authority self-insurance program to protect Charter School from claims which may arise from its operations. Each Charter School location shall meet the below insurance requirements individually.

It shall be Charter School's responsibility, not the District's, to monitor its vendors, contractors, partners, and/or sponsors for compliance with the insurance requirements.

The following insurance policies are required:

1. Commercial General Liability, including Fire Legal Liability, coverage of \$5,000,000 per Occurrence and in the Aggregate. The policy shall be endorsed to name the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles as named additional insureds and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and Charter School's insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in Charter School's policy. Coverage shall be maintained with no Self-Insured Retention above \$15,000 without the prior written approval of the Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services for the LAUSD.
2. Workers' Compensation Insurance in accordance with provisions of the California Labor Code adequate to protect Charter School from claims that may arise from its operations pursuant to the Workers' Compensation Act (Statutory Coverage). The Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage must also include Employers Liability coverage with limits of \$1,000,000/\$1,000,000/\$1,000,000.
3. Commercial Auto Liability, including Owned, Leased, Hired, and Non-owned, coverage with limits of \$1,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence if Charter School does not operate a student transportation service. If Charter School provides student transportation services, the required coverage limit is \$5,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence.
4. Crime Insurance or Fidelity Bond coverage shall be maintained by Charter School to cover all Charter School employees who handle, process or otherwise have responsibility for Charter School funds, supplies, equipment, or other assets. Minimum amount of coverage shall be \$1,000,000 per occurrence/\$1,000,000 aggregate, with deductible that is acceptable to the Los Angeles Unified School District.
5. Cyber Liability insurance coverage with minimum limits of \$500,000 per occurrence and \$500,000 general aggregate.
6. Professional Educators Errors and Omissions liability coverage with minimum limits of \$5,000,000 per occurrence and \$5,000,000 general aggregate.

7. Sexual Molestation and Abuse coverage with minimum limits of \$5,000,000 per occurrence and \$5,000,000 general aggregate. Coverage may be held as a separate policy or included by endorsement in the Commercial General Liability or the Errors and Omissions Policy.
8. Employment Practices Legal Liability coverage with limits of \$5,000,000 per occurrence and \$5,000,000 general aggregate.
9. Excess/Umbrella Liability insurance with limits of not less than \$10,000,000 is required of all high schools and any other school that participates in competitive interscholastic or intramural sports programs.

Coverages and limits of insurance may be accomplished through individual primary policies or through a combination of primary and excess policies and alternative methods of coverage as approved by the District. *The policy shall be endorsed to name the Los Angeles Unified School District and its Board of Education as named additional insureds and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and Charter School's insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in Charter School's policy.*

Evidence of Insurance

Charter School shall furnish to the District's Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services located at 333 S. Beaudry Ave, 28th Floor, Los Angeles CA 90017 within 30 calendar days of all new policies, inception, renewals or changes, certificates, or such insurance signed by authorized representatives of the insurance carrier. Certificates shall be endorsed as follows:

"Charter school shall be required to provide LAUSD with 30 days prior written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, if the insurance afforded by this policy shall be suspended, cancelled, reduced in coverage limits or non-renewed."

Facsimile or reproduced signatures may be acceptable upon review by the Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services. However, the District reserves the right to require certified copies of any required insurance policies.

Should Charter School deem it prudent and/or desirable to have insurance coverage for damage or theft to Charter School, employee or student property, for student accident, or any other type of insurance coverage not listed above, such insurance shall not be provided by the District and its purchase shall be the responsibility of Charter School.

Hold Harmless/Indemnification Provision

To the fullest extent permitted by law, Charter School does hereby agree, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses including but not limited to attorneys' fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever, arising out of, or relating to, this Charter agreement. Charter School further agrees to the fullest extent permitted by law, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses including but not limited to attorneys' fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever for claims, damages, losses and expenses arising from or relating to acts or omission of acts committed by Charter School and/or its officers, directors, employees or volunteers. Moreover, Charter School agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless "the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and

volunteers, for any contractual liability resulting from third party contracts with Charter School's vendors, contractors, partners or sponsors.

FISCAL MATTERS

District Oversight Costs

The District may charge for the actual costs of oversight of Charter School not to exceed 1% of Charter School's revenue, or the District may charge for the actual costs of oversight of Charter School not to exceed 3% if Charter School is able to obtain substantially rent free facilities from the District. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District may charge the maximum oversight fee allowed under the law as it may change from time to time. The oversight fee provided herein is separate and distinct from the charges arising under charter school facilities use agreements.

Cash Reserves

Charter School acknowledges that the recommended cash reserve is 5% of expenditures, as provided in section 15450, title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

Third Party Contracts

Charter School shall ensure that all third party contracts, whether oral or written, for supplies, equipment, goods and/or services, for the direct or indirect benefit of, or otherwise related to the operation of, Charter School, require compliance with and otherwise conform to all applicable local, state, and federal policies, regulations, laws, and guidelines, including but not limited to licensing and permit requirements as well as requirements related to protection of health and safety.

Special Education Revenue Adjustment/Payment for Services

In the event that Charter School owes funds to the District for the provision of agreed upon or fee for service or special education services or as a result of the State's adjustment to allocation of special education revenues from Charter School, Charter School authorizes the District to deduct any and all of the in lieu property taxes that Charter School otherwise would be eligible to receive under section 47635 of the Education Code to cover such owed amounts. Charter School further understands and agrees that the District shall make appropriate deductions from the in lieu property tax amounts otherwise owed to Charter School. Should this revenue stream be insufficient in any fiscal year to cover any such costs, Charter School agrees that it will reimburse the District for the additional costs within forty-five (45) business days of being notified of the amounts owed.

Student Body Funds

Charter School shall supervise and manage any and all student body funds in a manner consistent with the provisions of Education Code sections 48930-48938. Charter School shall include and address student body funds in its financial reports, and ensure that such funds are included and addressed in Charter School's annual audit as a stand-alone item.

Audit and Inspection of Records

Charter School agrees to observe and abide by the following terms and conditions as a requirement for receiving and maintaining its charter authorization:

- Charter School is subject to District oversight.
- The District's statutory oversight responsibility continues throughout the life of the Charter and requires that the District, among other things, monitors the fiscal condition of Charter School.
- The District is authorized to revoke this Charter for, among other reasons, the failure of

Charter School to meet generally accepted accounting principles or if Charter School engages in fiscal mismanagement.

Accordingly, the District hereby reserves the right, pursuant to its oversight responsibility, to audit Charter School books, records, data, processes and procedures through the District Office of the Inspector General or other means. The audit may include, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Compliance with terms and conditions prescribed in the Charter agreement,
- Internal controls, both financial and operational in nature,
- The accuracy, recording and/or reporting of Charter School's financial information,
- Charter School's debt structure,
- Governance policies, procedures and history,
- The recording and reporting of attendance data,
- Charter School's enrollment process,
- Compliance with safety plans and procedures, and
- Compliance with applicable grant requirements.

Charter School shall cooperate fully with such audits and shall make available any and all records necessary for the performance of the audit upon 30 days notice to Charter School. When 30 days notice may defeat the purpose of the audit, the District may conduct the audit upon 24-hours notice.

Fiscal Policies and Procedures

Charter School shall establish, maintain, and implement sound fiscal policies and procedures, including but not limited to internal controls governing all financial and business-related activities.

Apportionment Eligibility for Students Over 19 Years of Age

Charter School acknowledges that, in order for a pupil over nineteen (19) years of age to remain eligible for generating charter school apportionment, the pupil shall be continuously enrolled in public school and make satisfactory progress toward award of a high school diploma. (Ed. Code § 47612(b).)

Local Control and Accountability Plan

In accordance with California Education Code sections 47604.33 and 47606.5, Charter School shall include in its annual update a "listing and description of the expenditures for the fiscal year implementing the specific actions included in the charter as a result of the reviews and assessment required by paragraph (1)" of section 47606.5(a). These expenditures shall be "classified using the California School Accounting Manual pursuant to Section 41010." (Ed. Code § 47606.5(b).)

ADDENDUM

Assurances, Affirmations, and Declarations

[El Rio Community School] (also referred to herein as “El Rio” and “Charter School”) shall:

- Be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. (California Education Code (hereinafter “Ed. Code”) § 47605(d)(1).)
- Not charge tuition. (Ed. Code § 47605(d)(1).)
- Not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in section 422.55 of the Penal Code. (Ed. Code § 47605(d)(1); Ed. Code § 220.)
- Except as provided in Education Code section 47605(d)(2), admission to a charter school shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the pupil, or of his or her parent or legal guardian, within this state, except that an existing public school converting partially or entirely to a charter school under this part shall adopt and maintain a policy giving admission preference to pupils who reside within the former attendance area of that school. (Ed. Code § 47605(d)(1).)
- Admit all pupils who wish to attend Charter School. (Ed. Code § 47605(d)(2)(A).)
- Except for existing pupils of Charter School, determine attendance by a public random drawing if the number of pupils who wish to attend Charter School exceeds Charter School’s capacity. Preference shall be extended to pupils currently attending Charter School and pupils who reside in the Los Angeles Unified School District (also referred to herein as “LAUSD” and “District”). (Ed. Code § 47605(d)(2)(B).)
- If a pupil is expelled or leaves Charter School without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, Charter School shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil’s last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card, and health information. (Ed. Code § 47605(d)(3).)
- Meet all statewide standards and conduct the pupil assessments required pursuant to Education Code sections 60605 and 60851 and any other statewide standards authorized in statute or pupil assessments applicable to pupils in non-charter public schools. (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(1).)
- Consult, on a regular basis, with Charter School’s parents, legal guardians, and teachers regarding the school’s educational programs. (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(2).)

Charter School hereby declares that Charter School, operated as or by its nonprofit public benefit corporation, is and shall be the exclusive public school employer of Charter School’s employees for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act (EERA), Chapter 10.7 (commencing with Section 3540) of Division 4 of Title I of the Government Code. Charter School shall comply with all

provisions of the EERA and shall act independently from LAUSD for collective bargaining purposes. In accordance with the EERA, employees may join and be represented by an organization of their choice for collective bargaining purposes.

NOTE: This Charter contains specific “District Required Language” (DRL), including the *Assurances, Affirmations, and Declarations* section above. The DRL should be highlighted in gray within each Charter element or section. The final section of the Charter provides a consolidated addendum of the DRL. This intentional redundancy facilitates efficient charter petition review while ensuring ready access to the DRL for any given section of the Charter. To the extent that any inconsistency may exist between any provision contained within the body of the Charter and the DRL contained in the addendum, the provisions of the DRL addendum shall control.

Element 1 – The Educational Program

“The educational program of the charter school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the charter school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an “educated person” in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(A)(i).)

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

“If the proposed charter school will serve high school pupils, a description of the manner in which the charter school will inform parents about the transferability of courses to other public high schools and the eligibility of courses to meet college entrance requirements. Courses offered by the charter school that are accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges may be considered transferable and courses approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the “A” to “G” admissions criteria may be considered to meet college entrance requirements.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(A)(iii).)

LOCAL CONTROL FUNDING FORMULA (LCFF) AND LOCAL CONTROL AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN (LCAP)

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that it must comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (2013) (Local Control Funding Formula), as they may be amended from time to time, which include the requirement that Charter School shall annually submit a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)/annual update to the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools and the Charter Schools Division (CSD) on or before July 1. In accordance with Education Code sections 47604.33 and 47606.5, Charter School shall annually update its goals and annual actions to achieve those goals identified in the charter pursuant to Education Code section 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii), using the Local Control and Accountability Plan template adopted by the State Board of Education, as it may be changed from time to time. Charter School shall comply with all requirements of Education Code section 47606.5, including but not limited to the requirement that Charter School “shall consult with teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, parents, and pupils in developing the local control and accountability plan and annual update to the local control and accountability plan.” (Ed. Code § 47606.5(e).)

ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND SCHEDULES

Charter School shall offer, at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction set forth in Education Code section 47612.5, and the number of school days required by *California Code of Regulations*, title 5, section 11960.

MATHEMATICS PLACEMENT

Charter School shall comply with all applicable requirements of the California Mathematics Placement Act of 2015.

TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN

Charter School shall comply with all applicable requirements regarding transitional kindergarten. For purposes of admission to Charter School, transitional kindergarten shall be considered a part of kindergarten, and therefore students enrolled in transitional kindergarten at Charter School shall be considered existing students of Charter School for purposes of Charter School's admissions, enrollment, and lottery.

HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAMINATION

Charter School shall comply with all applicable requirements of Education Code sections 60850 – 60859, including but not limited to the requirements of sections 60851.6 and 60852.3.

WASC ACCREDITATION

If Charter School serves students in grades 9-12, before Charter School graduates its first class of students, Charter School shall obtain, and thereafter maintain, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation.

ENGLISH LEARNERS

Charter School shall identify potential English Learners in a timely manner in accordance with all applicable legal requirements. Charter School must provide all English Learners with an effective English language acquisition program that also affords meaningful and equitable access to Charter School's core academic curriculum. Instructional plans for English Learners must be (1) based on sound educational theory; (2) adequately supported with trained teachers and appropriate materials and resources; and (3) periodically evaluated to make sure the program is successful and modified when the program is not successful.

On an annual basis, upon request, Charter School shall submit a certification to the LAUSD Charter Schools Division (CSD) that certifies that Charter School has adopted and is implementing either the LAUSD English Learner Master Plan *or* Charter School's own English Learner (EL) Master Plan. If Charter School chooses to implement its own EL Master Plan, the plan shall provide a detailed description of Charter School's EL program, and shall address the following:

- How Charter School's EL Master Plan provides all of its English Learners, including but not limited to Long Term English Learners (LTELs) with an effective English language acquisition program as well as meaningful and equitable access to Charter School's core academic curriculum
- How English Learners' specific needs will be identified
- What services will be offered

- How, where, and by whom the services will be provided
- How Charter School will evaluate its EL program each year, and how the results of this evaluation will be used to improve the program, including the provision of EL services

Each year, Charter School shall provide to the CSD a report on its annual evaluation of the effectiveness of its EL program. Upon request, Charter School shall provide a copy of its current EL Master Plan to the CSD.

Charter School shall administer the CELDT/ELPAC annually in accordance with federal and state requirements.

Charter School shall reclassify English Learners in accordance with federal and state requirements. Charter School shall provide parent outreach services and meaningfully inform parents with limited English proficiency of important information regarding Charter School matters to the same extent as other parents.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Federal Law Compliance

Charter School shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.

Special Education Program

Charter School shall ensure that no student otherwise eligible to enroll in Charter School shall be denied, directly or indirectly, admission due to a disability or to Charter School's inability to provide necessary services. Charter School acknowledges that policies and procedures are in place to ensure the recruitment, enrollment, service, and retention of students with disabilities at LAUSD-authorized charter schools, including Charter School.

Prior to LAUSD Board of Education approval of an initial Charter petition, and if a renewing Charter School intends to operate as a "school of the district" for special education services, Charter School shall execute a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") by and between LAUSD and Charter School regarding the provision and funding of special education services consistent with applicable state law and the LAUSD Special Education Local Plan Area ("SELPA") Local Plan for Special Education and shall be considered a "public school of the District" for purposes of Special Education pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b). However, Charter School reserves the right to make written verifiable assurances that it may become an independent local educational agency (LEA) and join a SELPA pursuant to Education Code Section 47641 (a) either on its own or with a grouping of charter school LEAs as a consortium following the requirements of Education Code section 56195.3(b).

SELPA Reorganization

The Los Angeles Unified School District is approved to operate as a single-District SELPA under the provisions of Education Code section 56195.1(a). As a single-District SELPA, the District has created two charter school sections (District-operated Programs and Charter-operated Programs) under the administration of one single Administrative Unit pursuant to a reorganization plan approved by the Board of Education on January 4, 2011 (149/10-11). Full implementation of the

reorganized LAUSD SELPA commenced in the 2013-2014 school year requiring all District-authorized charter schools to elect one of the three options available under the LAUSD SELPA. Prior to an option election, all District-authorized charter schools were required to participate as a school of the District under the District-Operated Programs Unit. Prior to the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year, all District-authorized charter schools, other than those that had previously executed an Option 3 Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”), were required to execute a new MOU setting forth the LAUSD SELPA option election for the remainder of the charter petition term. The Charter-operated Program schools do not have LEA status for the purposes of special education but will function in a similar role in that each charter school will be responsible for all special education requirements, including but not limited to services, placement, due process, related services, special education classes, and special education supports. Charter schools that have elected to participate in a District-operated programs option may apply for membership in the Charter-operated Program section of the SELPA. Charter schools accepted for participation in the Charter-operated Programs section receive support from a Special Education Director for the Charter-operated Programs.

Modified Consent Decree Requirements

All charter schools approved by the LAUSD Board of Education are bound by and must adhere to the terms, conditions and requirements of the *Chanda Smith* Modified Consent Decree (“MCD”) and other court orders imposed upon the District pertaining to special education. The MCD is a consent decree entered in a federal court class action lawsuit initially brought on behalf of students with disabilities in LAUSD. It is an agreement of the parties approved by the federal court and monitored by a court-appointed independent monitor. The MCD includes nineteen statistically measureable outcomes and facilities obligations that the District has to achieve to disengage from the MCD and federal court oversight. All charter schools are required to use the District’s Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual and Welligent, the District-wide web-based software system used for online Individualized Education Programs (“IEPs”) and tracking of related services provided to students during the course of their education.

As part of fulfilling the District’s obligations under the MCD, student level data requests from District-operated and Charter-operated charter schools are made on a regular basis. The requested data must be submitted in the Office of the Independent Monitor’s (“OIM”) required format in accordance with the OIM’s required timelines and as follows:

- End of Year Suspension

District ID, SSIS ID, last name, first name, date of birth, gender, grade, date of suspension, number of days suspended, and reason for suspension.

- Statewide Assessment Data

The standard file including District ID.

- Norm day

District ID, SSIS ID, last name, first name, date of birth, gender, grade, location code, school name and local district for all students enrolled on norm day.

- CBEDS
- All Students enrolled as of December 1 of each school year

District ID, SSIS ID, last name, first name, date of birth, gender, grade, location code, school name and local district for all students enrolled on norm day.
- Dropout
District ID, SSIS ID, last name, first name, middle name, date of birth, grade, last location, school name and local district
- Monthly SESAC and Suspension data
- Graduation roster from all charter schools with 12th grade students with disabilities

The MCD requires charter schools to implement the District’s integrated student information system, which is currently referred to as My Integrated Student Information System (MiSiS). MiSiS is a suite of applications which is designed to capture all District student data. All charter schools are required to utilize MiSiS directly or interface with MiSiS via a web based Application Programming Interface (API) in compliance with the requirements of the MCD and applicable timelines. Upon charter school full utilization of MiSiS either directly or via a web based API, the list of required data above will automatically be captured within MiSiS.

Element 2 – Measurable Pupil Outcomes and Element 3 – Method by which Pupil Progress Toward Outcomes will be Measured

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

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

MEASURABLE GOALS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Charter School shall meet all statewide content and performance standards and targets. (Ed. Code §§ 47605(c)(1), 60605.)

Charter School shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (2013) (Local Control Funding Formula) and AB 484 (2013), as they may be amended from time to time, including all requirements pertaining to pupil outcomes.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Charter School agrees to comply with state requirements for participation and administration of all state-mandated tests, including computer-based assessments. Charter School shall submit and maintain complete, accurate, and up-to-date California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) data in accordance with the requirements of California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 861. Charter School hereby grants authority to the State of California to provide a copy of all test results directly to the District as well as Charter School. Upon request, Charter School shall submit, in the requested format (e.g., CD), a copy of the results of all state-mandated tests to the District.

Element 4 – Governance

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

GENERAL PROVISIONS

As an independent charter school, Charter School, operated as or by its nonprofit public benefit corporation, is a separate legal entity and shall be solely responsible for the debts and obligations of Charter School.

Charter School shall ensure that, at all times throughout the term of the Charter, the bylaws of its governing board and/or nonprofit corporation are and remain consistent with the provisions of this Charter. In the event that the governing board and/or nonprofit corporation operating Charter School amends the bylaws, Charter School shall provide a copy of the amended bylaws to CSD within 30 days of adoption.

Charter School shall send to the CSD copies of all governing board meeting agendas at the same time that they are posted in accordance with the Brown Act. Charter School shall also send to the CSD copies of all board meeting minutes within one week of governing board approval of the minutes. Timely posting of agendas and minutes on Charter School’s website will satisfy this requirement.

The District reserves the right to appoint a single representative to the Charter School governing board pursuant to Education Code section 47604(b).

LEGAL AND POLICY COMPLIANCE

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and District policies as it relates to charter schools adopted through Board action.¹³⁹

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal and state reporting requirements, including but not limited to the requirements of CBEDS, CALPADS, the Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999, and Education Code section 47604.33.

Charter School shall comply with the Brown Act and the Public Records Act.

Charter School and all employees and representatives of Charter School, including members of Charter School’s governing board, members of Charter School or governing board committees and councils, Charter School administrators, and managers, shall comply with federal and state laws,

¹³⁹ The District is in the process of compiling a list of LAUSD policies that apply to its authorized charter schools. The list will be finalized by April 1, 2018. Charter Schools Division staff will annually review District policies and make recommendations to the LAUSD Board of Education on continued application to charter schools.

nonprofit integrity standards, and LAUSD charter school policy, regarding ethics and conflicts of interest. Charter School shall enter into all transactions and conduct business with all persons and entities at arm's length or, in the case of otherwise permissible related party transactions, in a manner equivalent to arm's length.

Charter School shall notify parents, guardians, and teachers in writing within 72 hours of the issuance of a Notice of Violation, Notice of Intent to Revoke, Final Decision to Revoke, Notice of Non-Renewal, or equivalent notice, by the LAUSD Board of Education.

TITLE IX, SECTION 504, AND UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Charter School shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), including any investigation of any complaint filed with Charter School alleging its noncompliance with these laws or alleging any actions which would be prohibited by these laws. Charter School shall notify all of its students and employees of the name, office address, and telephone number of the designated employee or employees.

Charter School shall adopt and publish complaint procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited by Title IX or Section 504.

Charter School shall adopt and implement specific and continuing procedures for notifying applicants for admission and employment, students and parents of elementary and secondary school students, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with Charter School, that Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of sex or mental or physical disability in the educational programs or activities which it operates, and that it is required by Title IX and Section 504 not to discriminate on any such basis.

Charter School shall establish and provide a uniform complaint procedure in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, including but not limited to all applicable requirements of *California Code of Regulations*, title 5, section 4600 et seq.

Charter School shall adhere to all applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding pupil fees, including Education Code sections 49010 - 49013, and extend its uniform complaint procedure to complaints filed pursuant to Education Code section 49013.

Charter School shall extend its uniform complaint procedure to complaints filed pursuant to the Local Control Funding Formula legislation provisions set forth in Education Code section 52075.

RESPONDING TO INQUIRIES

Charter School, including its nonprofit corporation shall promptly respond to all reasonable inquiries, including but not limited to inquiries regarding financial records from the District, and shall cooperate with the District regarding any inquiries. Charter School acknowledges that Charter School, including but not limited to its nonprofit corporation, is subject to audit by LAUSD, including, without limitation, audit by the District Office of the Inspector General. Charter School shall provide the District with current, complete, and accurate contact information for Charter School, Charter School administrators, and Board members.

If an allegation or other evidence of waste, fraud, abuse, or other material violation of law related to Charter School's operations, or breach of the Charter, is received or discovered by the District, Charter School, including but not limited to its nonprofit corporation, employees, and

representatives, shall cooperate with any resulting inquiry and/or investigation undertaken by the District and/or the Office of the Inspector General Investigations Unit.

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that persons and entities that directly exercise control over the expenditure of Charter School's public funds shall be subject to all necessary and appropriate District charter school oversight.

NOTIFICATION OF THE DISTRICT

Charter School shall notify the Charter Schools Division (CSD) in writing of any citations or notices of workplace hazards, investigations by outside governmental regulatory or investigative agencies, lawsuits, changes in corporate or legal status (e.g., loss of IRS 501(c)(3) status), or other formal complaints or notices, within one week of receipt of such notices by Charter School. Unless prohibited by law, Charter School shall notify the CSD in writing of any internal investigations within one week of commencing investigation. Charter School shall notify the CSD within 24 hours of any dire emergency or serious threat to the health and safety of students or staff.

STUDENT RECORDS

Upon receipt of a student records request from a receiving school/school district, Charter School shall transfer a copy of the student's complete cumulative record within ten (10) school days in accordance with Education Code section 49068. Charter School shall comply with the requirements of California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 3024, regarding the transfer of student special education records. In the event Charter School closes, Charter School shall comply with the student records transfer provisions in Element 15. Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code section 49060 et seq., which include provisions regarding rights to access student records and transfer of records for youth in foster care.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Charter School shall not require a parent or legal guardian of a prospective or enrolled student to perform volunteer service hours, or make payment of fees or other monies, goods, or services in lieu of performing volunteer service, as a condition of his/her child's admission, continued enrollment, attendance, or participation in the school's educational activities, or otherwise discriminate against a student in any manner because his/her parent cannot, has not, or will not provide volunteer service to Charter School.

FEDERAL PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

As a recipient of federal funds, Charter School has agreed to meet all applicable programmatic, fiscal and other regulatory requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, also known as Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)) and other applicable federal programs. Charter School understands that it is a local educational agency (LEA) for purposes of federal compliance and reporting purposes. Charter School agrees that it will keep and make available to the District any documentation necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of

ESEA and other applicable federal programs. Charter School also acknowledges that, as part of its oversight of Charter School, the District may conduct program review for federal as well as state compliance.

Element 5 – Employee Qualifications

“The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the charter school.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(E).)

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity. Charter School shall not discriminate against applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, military and veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by California or federal law. Equal employment opportunity shall be extended to all aspects of the employer-employee relationship, including but not limited to recruitment, selection, hiring, upgrading, training, promotion, transfer, discipline, layoff, recall, and dismissal from employment.

ESEA/ESSA AND CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS

Charter School shall adhere to all requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, also known as Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)) that are applicable to teachers and paraprofessional employees. Charter School shall ensure that all teachers are appropriately assigned and fully credentialed in accordance with applicable state requirements for certificated employment, including but not limited to the provisions of Education Code section 47605(1). Charter School shall maintain current copies of all teacher credentials and make them readily available for inspection.

Element 6 – Health and Safety Procedures

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

HEALTH, SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local requirements related to school and student health, safety, and emergency preparedness.

If Charter School occupies and/or operates on a District facility, Charter School shall comply with all District health, safety, and emergency procedures and requirements applicable to District facilities and related operations, and shall be subject to inspection by the District’s Facilities Services Division, Office of Environmental Health and Safety, and other District offices in the same manner as other LAUSD campuses.

Charter School shall adopt, implement, and maintain at all times a current, comprehensive, and site-specific Health, Safety, and Emergency Preparedness Plan (“Plan”), which must include but is not limited to provisions for building and site emergency evacuation, the acquisition and maintenance of adequate onsite emergency supplies. The Plan must include Charter School’s requirements and procedures for protecting student health and safety during off-campus school-sponsored activities, including but not limited to field trips and transportation. Charter School shall ensure that all staff members receive annual training on Charter School’s health, safety, and emergency procedures, including but not limited to training on blood borne pathogens, and shall maintain a calendar for, and conduct, emergency response drills for students and staff.

Charter School shall provide all employees, and other persons working on behalf of Charter School who are mandated reporters, with annual training on child abuse detection and reporting, which shall occur within the first six weeks of each school year, or within the first six weeks of a person’s employment if employed after the beginning of the school year, in accordance with the requirements of AB 1432 (2014).

Charter School shall stock and maintain the required number and type of emergency epinephrine auto-injectors onsite and provide training to employee volunteers in the storage and use of the epinephrine auto-injector as required by Education Code section 49414 and section 4119.2 of the Business and Professions Code, as they may be amended from time to time.

Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Education Code section 49475, with respect to any athletic program (as defined in Education Code § 49475) offered by or on behalf of Charter School.

Charter School shall periodically review, and update and/or modify as necessary, its Health, Safety, and Emergency Preparedness Plan, and keep it readily available for on-site use. Charter School shall provide a copy of the Health, Safety, and Emergency Preparedness Plan for review upon CSD request.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Charter School, including its employees, officers, and representatives, shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Education Code section 49060 et seq. at all times.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CLEARANCES AND FINGERPRINTING

Charter School shall comply with all requirements of Education Code sections 44237 and 45125.1. Charter School shall designate and maintain at all times at least one Custodian of Records duly authorized by the California Department of Justice.

Charter School shall maintain on file and available for inspection evidence that (1) Charter School has performed criminal background checks and cleared for employment all employees prior to employment; (2) Charter School has obtained certification from each of its contracting

entities/independent contractors that the entity/contractor has conducted required criminal background clearances for its employees prior to provision of school site services and/or any contact with students, and has requested subsequent arrest notification service; and (3) Charter School has performed criminal background checks and cleared for service all volunteers not directly supervised by staff and who may have contact with students. Charter School shall also ensure that it requests and receives subsequent arrest notifications from the California Department of Justice for all employees and volunteers not directly supervised by staff. Upon request, Charter School shall provide a copy of Department of Justice confirmation of Custodian of Records status for each Custodian of Records. Charter School, including its administrators and officers, shall comply with the requirements of Education Code section 44030.5.

IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

Charter School shall require all employees, and any volunteer or vendor/contracting entity employee who may have frequent or prolonged contact with students, to undergo a risk assessment and/or be examined and determined to be free of active tuberculosis (TB) within the period of 60 days prior to employment/service, or otherwise meet the requirements of Education Code section 49406. Charter School shall maintain TB clearance records and certificates on file.

Charter School shall comply with all federal and state legal requirements, including but not limited to the requirements of SB 277 (2015), related to student immunization, health examination, and health screening, including but not limited to screening for vision, hearing, and scoliosis, to the same extent as would be required if the students were attending a non-charter public school. Charter School shall maintain student immunization, health examination, and health screening records on file.

SAFE PLACE TO LEARN ACT

Charter School shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Safe Place to Learn Act, Education Code section 234 et seq.

SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

If Charter School serves students in grades 7-12, Charter School shall comply with the requirements of AB 2246 (2016), codified in Education Code section 215, including but not limited to the requirement that the school's pupil suicide prevention policy shall be developed in consultation with school and community stakeholders, school-employed mental health professionals, and suicide prevention experts. Charter School shall provide the CSD with a copy of its pupil suicide prevention policy for review upon request.

Element 7 – Means to Achieve Racial and Ethnic Balance

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

COURT-ORDERED INTEGRATION

Charter School shall comply with all requirements of the *Crawford v. Board of Education, City of Los Angeles* court order and the LAUSD Integration Policy adopted and maintained pursuant to the Crawford court order by the District’s Student Integration Services (collectively the “Court-ordered Integration Program”). The Court-ordered Integration Program applies to all schools within or chartered through LAUSD.

Charter School has set forth below its initial plan for achieving and maintaining the LAUSD’s Racial and Ethnic Balance goal of a 70:30 or 60:40 ratio. (*Ratio represents the percentage of Predominantly Hispanic Black Asian Other (PHBAO) compared to Other White (OW)*). The written plan lists specific dates and locations of recruitment activities that Charter School will undertake in order to achieve the District’s Racial and Ethnic Balance goal. Charter School shall monitor the implementation and outcomes of the initial plan, and modify it as necessary throughout the term of the Charter to achieve the District’s goal. Upon request, Charter School shall provide the District with a copy of its current written plan.

The District receives neither average daily attendance allocations nor Court-ordered Integration Program cost reimbursements for charter school students. The District may receive the Targeted Instructional Improvement Block Grant (TIIBG) for its Court-ordered Integration Program. The District retains sole discretion over the allocation of TIIBG funding, where available, and cannot guarantee the availability of this funding.

Element 8 – Admission Requirements

“Admission requirements, if applicable.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(H).)

DOCUMENTATION OF ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT PROCESSES

Charter School shall maintain complete and accurate records of its annual admissions and enrollment processes, including but not limited to documentation of implementation of lottery and waitlist criteria and procedures in accordance with the terms of the Charter. These records shall be made available to the District upon request.

HOMELESS AND FOSTER YOUTH

Charter School shall adhere to the provisions of the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths. Charter School shall provide specific information, in its outreach materials, websites, at community

meetings, open forums, and regional center meetings, that notifies parents that Charter School is open to enroll and provide services for all students, and provides a standard District contact number for access to additional information regarding enrollment.

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws regarding homeless and foster youth, including but not limited to the provisions of AB 379 (2015) and Chapter 5.5 (commencing with Section 48850) of Part 27 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education Code, as amended from time to time. Charter School shall extend its uniform complaint procedure to complaints filed pursuant to the applicable provisions of AB 379.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Charter School shall not require a parent/legal guardian/student to provide information regarding a student's disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, legal or economic status, primary language or English Learner status, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in section 422.55 of the Penal Code, or any other information that would violate federal or state law, prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment. Charter School may request, at the time of, and as part of, conducting its lottery process, the provision of information necessary to apply specific admissions preferences set forth in this Charter.

Charter School shall not request or require submission of a student's IEP, Section 504 Plan, or any other record or related information prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment.

Element 9 – Annual Financial Audits

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

Charter School shall provide for an annual audit that shall be conducted in compliance with applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to the requirements of Education Code sections 47605(b)(5)(I) and 41020 as they may be amended from time to time. Charter School shall ensure compliance with the requirements of section 41020(f)(2), which makes it unlawful, absent an Education Audits Appeal Panel waiver, for a public accounting firm to provide audit services to a local educational agency if the lead audit partner, or coordinating audit partner, having primary responsibility for the audit, or the audit partner responsible for reviewing the audit, has performed audit services for that local educational agency in each of the six previous years.

The following reports will be submitted to LAUSD, in the required format and within timelines to be specified by LAUSD, each year:

- a. Provisional Budget – Spring prior to operating fiscal year
- b. Final Budget – July of the budget fiscal year
- c. First Interim Projections – November of operating fiscal year
- d. Second Interim Projections – February of operating fiscal year
- e. Unaudited Actuals – July following the end of the fiscal year

- f. Audited Actuals – December 15 following the end of the fiscal year
- g. Classification Report – monthly according to Charter School’s Calendar
- h. Statistical Report – monthly according to Charter School’s Calendar of Reports

In addition:

- P1, first week of January
- P2, first week of April
- i. Instructional Calendar – annually five weeks prior to first day of instruction
- j. Other reports as requested by the District

Element 10 – Suspension and Expulsion Procedures

“The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(J).)

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Charter School shall provide due process for all students, including adequate and timely notice to parents/guardians and students of the grounds for all suspension and expulsion recommendations and decisions and their due process rights regarding suspension and expulsion, including rights of appeal.

Charter School shall ensure that its policies and procedures regarding suspension and expulsion will be periodically reviewed, and modified as necessary, in order to conform to changes in state law.

Charter School shall ensure that its staff is knowledgeable about and complies with the District’s Discipline Foundation Policy and/or current equivalent policy, as required by the Modified Consent Decree. Charter School shall comply with the terms of the School Discipline Policy and School Climate Bill of Rights resolution adopted by the LAUSD Board of Education on May 6, 2013.

Charter School shall be responsible for the appropriate interim placement of students during and pending the completion of Charter School’s student expulsion process and shall facilitate the post-expulsion placement of expelled students.

Charter School shall document and implement the alternatives to suspension and expulsion that Charter School utilizes in response to attendance-related concerns, e.g. truancy or excessive tardiness.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Charter School shall establish and implement policies and procedures to ensure full compliance with federal and state laws and regulations regarding the discipline of students with disabilities. If a student is recommended for expulsion and the student receives or is eligible for special education, pending the completion of the expulsion process, Charter School shall identify and provide special

education programs and services at an appropriate interim educational placement determined in coordination with the LAUSD Division of Special Education.

In the case of a student who has an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”), or a student who has a Section 504 Plan, Charter School shall ensure that it follows correct disciplinary procedures to comply with the mandates of state and federal laws, including IDEA and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973. As set forth in the MOU regarding special education between the District and Charter School, an IEP team will meet to conduct a manifestation determination and to discuss alternative placement utilizing the District’s Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual. Prior to recommending expulsion for a student with a Section 504 Plan, Charter School’s administrator will convene a Link Determination meeting to ask the following two questions:

- A. Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student’s disability?
- B. Was the misconduct a direct result of the Charter School’s failure to implement Section 504?

NOTIFICATION OF THE DISTRICT

Upon expelling any student, Charter School shall notify the Charter Schools Division by submitting an expulsion packet to the CSD immediately or as soon as practicable, which shall contain:

- Completed “Notification of Charter School Expulsion” [form available from the CSD website or office], including attachments as required on the form
- Documentation of the expulsion proceeding, including statement of specific facts supporting the expulsion and documentation that Charter School’s policies and procedures were followed
- Copy of parental notice of expulsion hearing
- Copy of expulsion notice provided to parent stating reason for expulsion, term of expulsion, rehabilitation plan, reinstatement notice with eligibility date and instructions for providing proof of student’s compliance for reinstatement, appeal process, and options for enrollment
- If the student is eligible for Special Education, documentation related to expulsion in compliance with IDEA and the MCD, including the Expulsion Analysis page of the pre-expulsion IEP
- If the student is eligible for Section 504 accommodations, documentation that Charter School conducted a Link Determination meeting to address two questions:
 - A. Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student’s disability?
 - B. Was the misconduct a direct result of Charter School’s failure to implement Section 504 Plan?

Notwithstanding and apart from the documentation sent to the Charter Schools Division as indicated above, if the student is a resident of a school district other than LAUSD, Charter School must notify the superintendent of the student’s district of residence within 30 days of the expulsion. Additionally, upon request of the receiving school district, Charter School shall forward student

records no later than 10 school days from the date of the request as stated in Education Code section 49068 (a) and (b).

OUTCOME DATA

Charter School shall gather and maintain all data related to placement, tracking, and monitoring of student suspensions, expulsions, and reinstatements, and make such outcome data readily available to the District upon request.

REHABILITATION PLANS

Pupils who are expelled from Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by Charter School's governing board at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. Terms of expulsion should be reasonable and fair with the weight of the expelling offense taken into consideration when determining the length of expulsion. Therefore, the rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may apply to Charter School for readmission. Charter School shall inform parents in writing of its processes for reinstatement and applying for expungement of the expulsion record.

READMISSION

Charter School's governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for the filing and processing of requests for readmission and the process for the required review of all expelled pupils for readmission. Upon completion of the readmission process, Charter School's governing board shall readmit the pupil, unless Charter School's governing board makes a finding that the pupil has not met the conditions of the rehabilitation plan or continues to pose a danger to campus safety. A description of the procedure shall be made available to the pupil and the pupil's parent or guardian at the time the expulsion order is entered and the decision of the governing board, including any related findings, must be provided to the pupil and the pupil's parent/guardian within a reasonable time.

REINSTATEMENT

Charter School's governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for processing reinstatements, including the review of documents regarding the rehabilitation plan. Charter School is responsible for reinstating the student upon the conclusion of the expulsion period in a timely manner.

GUN-FREE SCHOOLS ACT

Charter School shall comply with the federal Gun-Free Schools Act.

Element 11 – Employee Retirement Systems

“The manner by which staff members of the charter schools will be covered by the State Teachers’ Retirement System, the Public Employees’ Retirement System, or federal social security.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(K).)

Charter School shall comply in a timely manner with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, as they may change from time to time, including but not limited to Internal Revenue Code section 414(d) and related regulations, governing Charter School’s participation in, and/or coverage of its staff members by, the State Teachers’ Retirement System (CalSTRS), the Public Employees’ Retirement System (CalPERS), and/or federal social security.

If Charter School participates in, or otherwise covers its staff members by enrolling or continuing their enrollment in, a “government plan” governed by section 414(d) (e.g., CalPERS), upon dissolution or final liquidation of Charter School, and/or its nonprofit public benefit corporation, notwithstanding any provision in Element 15 to the contrary, Charter School shall distribute its net assets in accordance with section 414(d), related regulations, and the government plan’s requirements.

If Charter School participates in CalSTRS and/or CalPERS, Charter School shall continue such participation for the duration of Charter School’s existence under the same CDS code, if mandated by applicable legal and retirement plan requirements.

Element 12 – Public School Attendance Alternatives

“The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(L).)

Pupils of Charter School do not have or gain any right to admission in a particular school of any school district, or program of any school district, as a consequence of applying to or enrolling in Charter School, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the school district.

A pupil who chooses not to attend Charter School may attend a public school within the pupil’s school district of residence in accordance with applicable law and that school district’s policies and procedures. The pupil alternatively may seek to enroll in another charter school in accordance with applicable law and the terms of the school’s charter. If LAUSD is the pupil’s school district of residence, an eligible pupil may pursue an inter-district transfer, if available, in accordance with the admission, enrollment, and transfer policies and procedures of the District, as they may change from time to time.

Element 13 – Rights of District Employees

“The rights of an employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(M).)

Employees of the District who choose to leave the employment of the District to work at Charter School shall have no automatic rights of return to the District after employment at Charter School

unless specifically granted by the District through a leave of absence or other agreement or policy of the District as aligned with the collective bargaining agreements of the District. Leave and return rights for District union-represented employees and former employees who accept employment with Charter School will be administered in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements and any applicable judicial rulings.

Element 14 – Mandatory Dispute Resolution

“The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(N).)

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Any claim, controversy or dispute between the District and Charter School arising out of or relating to this Charter, except for any claim, controversy or dispute related to the authorization (non-renewal, revision and/or revocation) of this Charter, (“Dispute”) shall be resolved pursuant to the terms of this Element 14.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, each party shall bear and be solely responsible for all of its own attorneys’ fees, costs and expenses associated with any Dispute, including, but not limited to, any written/oral communication, meeting, Issues Conference, mediation, arbitration, administrative and/or civil action (including all levels of appeal), and no party shall be ordered to pay, or be awarded, any other party’s attorneys’ fees, costs or expenses in connection therewith, regardless of who may be deemed the prevailing party. Any fees, costs and expenses charged by a mediator or arbitrator (including all associated administration fees, costs and expenses) shall be shared equally by the parties regardless of the outcome or award. To that effect, any order or award of attorneys’ fees, costs and/or expenses, or mediator’s or arbitrator’s fees, costs or expenses (including any associated administration fees, costs and expenses), issued by a mediator, arbitrator, judicial officer (including all levels of appeal) or jury in any Dispute shall be deemed invalid as a matter of law and unenforceable by one party against the other party.

PROPOSITION 39 DISPUTES

Any Dispute related to or arising out of Education Code §47614 and/or its implementing regulations set forth in California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 11969 *et seq.* (“Proposition 39”), shall be resolved in accordance with the procedures set forth below:

- 1) Any Dispute shall be communicated in writing (“Written Notification”). The Written Notification must identify the nature of the Dispute and all supporting facts. The Written Notification shall be tendered to the other party by personal delivery, by facsimile or e-mail, or by certified mail. The Written Notification shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile or e-mail, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by certified mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.

Unless directed otherwise, all Written Notifications to the District and Charter School shall be addressed respectively as follows:

Director
Charter Schools Division
Los Angeles Unified School District
333 South Beaudry Avenue, 20th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90017

Operations Director
El Rio Community School
1338 Coronado Terrace
Los Angeles, CA 90026

- 2) A written response (“Written Response”) shall be tendered to the other party within fifteen (15) business days from the date of receipt of the Written Notification or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties. The Written Response shall be tendered to the other party by personal delivery, by facsimile or e-mail, or by certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such communication if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile or e-mail, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by certified mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.
- 3) If the Dispute has not been resolved by mutual agreement from the Written Response, the parties agree to schedule a conference to discuss the Dispute identified in the Written Notice (“Issue Conference”). The Issue Conference shall take place within fifteen (15) business days from the date on which the Written Response is received by the other party or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties.
- 4) If the Dispute has not been resolved by mutual agreement at the Issue Conference, either party may then request that the Dispute be resolved by mediation. Within fifteen (15) business days of the date of the request for mediation or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties, the parties shall mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator. If the parties are unable to mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator, the mediator shall be selected from a list of mediators prepared and provided by the American Arbitration Association. Mediation proceedings shall commence within thirty (30) business days of the date of the request for mediation or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties, and conclude within forty (40) business days of the date of the request for mediation or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, mediation proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial mediation procedures of the American Arbitration Association.
- 5) If the mediation is not successful, either party may then initiate a civil action. Venue for any civil action between the parties shall be the Los Angeles County Superior Court.

NON-PROPOSITION 39 DISPUTES

Any Dispute not related to or arising out of Proposition 39 shall be resolved in accordance with the procedures set forth below:

- 1) Any Dispute shall be communicated in writing (“Written Notification”). The Written Notification must identify the nature of the Dispute and any supporting facts. The Written Notification shall be tendered to the other party by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Notification shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.

Unless directed otherwise all Written Notifications to the District and Charter School shall be addressed respectively as follows:

Director
Charter Schools Division
Los Angeles Unified School District
333 South Beaudry Avenue, 20th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90017

Operations Director
El Rio Community School
1338 Coronado Terrace
Los Angeles, CA 90026

- 2) A written response (“Written Response”) shall be tendered to the other party within twenty (20) business days from the date of receipt of the Written Notification or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties. The Written Response shall be tendered to the other party by personal delivery, by facsimile or e-mail, or by certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such communication if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile or e-mail, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by certified mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.
- 3) If the Dispute has not been otherwise resolved by mutual agreement, the parties agree to schedule a conference to discuss the Dispute identified in the Written Notice (“Issue Conference”). The Issue Conference shall take place within fifteen (15) business days from the date from the date on which the Written Response is received by the other party or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties.

- 4) If the Dispute has not been resolved by mutual agreement at the Issue Conference, either party may then request that the Dispute be resolved by mediation. Within fifteen (15) business days of the date of the request for mediation or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties, the parties shall mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator. If the parties are unable to mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator, the mediator shall be selected from a list of mediators prepared and provided by the American Arbitration Association. Mediation proceedings shall commence within thirty (30) business days of the date of the request for mediation or other date as determined by mutual agreement of the parties. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, mediation proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial mediation procedures of the American Arbitration Association.
- 5) If the mediation is not successful, then the parties agree to resolve the Dispute by binding arbitration conducted by a single arbitrator. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, arbitration proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial arbitration rules of the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator must be an active member of the State Bar of California or a retired judge of the state or federal judiciary of California.

Element 15 – Charter School Closure Procedures

“The procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the charter school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records.” (Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(O).)

REVOCATION OF THE CHARTER

The District may revoke the Charter pursuant to the provisions set forth in the Charter Schools Act of 1992, as they may be amended from time to time. The District may revoke the Charter of Charter School if the District finds, through a showing of substantial evidence, that Charter School did any of the following:

- Charter School committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the Charter.
- Charter School failed to meet or pursue any of the pupil outcomes identified in the Charter.
- Charter School failed to meet generally accepted accounting principles, or engaged in fiscal mismanagement.
- Charter School violated any provision of law.

Prior to revocation, and in accordance with Education Code section 47607(d) and state regulations, the LAUSD Board of Education will notify Charter School in writing of the specific violation, and give Charter School a reasonable opportunity to cure the violation, unless the LAUSD Board of Education determines, in writing, that the violation constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of the pupils. Revocation proceedings are not subject to the dispute resolution provisions set forth in this Charter.

Pursuant to AB 97, charter schools may be identified for assistance based on state evaluation rubrics and be subject to revocation pursuant to Education Code section 47607.3.

CLOSURE ACTION

The decision to close Charter School, by the governing board of Charter School must be documented in a “Closure Action”. A Closure Action shall be deemed to have been automatically taken when any of the following occur: the Charter is revoked (subject to the provisions of Education Code section 47607(i)) or non-renewed by the LAUSD Board of Education and Charter School has exhausted its revocation or non-renewal administrative appeal rights pursuant to Education Code sections 47605(j)(1) and 47607(f), or its administrative appeal rights have lapsed, or the charter school voluntarily closes at any stage of the administrative appeal process;; the governing board of Charter School votes to close Charter School; or the Charter lapses.

CLOSURE PROCEDURES

The procedures for charter school closure set forth below are guided by *Education Code* sections 47604.32, 47605, and 47607 as well as *California Code of Regulations*, title 5, sections 11962 and 11962.1, and are based on “Charter School Closure Requirements and Recommendations (Revised 08/2009)” posted on the California Department of Education website. All references to “Charter School” apply to Charter School, including its nonprofit corporation and governing board.

Designation of Responsible Person(s) and Funding of Closure

Prior to or at the time of the taking of a Closure Action by either the governing board of Charter School or the LAUSD Board of Education, the governing board of Charter School shall designate a person or persons responsible for conducting and overseeing all closure-related procedures and activities, and allocate sufficient funding for, or otherwise determine how Charter School will fund, these activities.

Notification of Closure Action

Upon the taking of a Closure Action, Charter School shall send written notice of its closure to:

1. The LAUSD Charter Schools Division (CSD). Charter School shall provide the CSD with written notice of (1) the person(s) designated to be responsible for conducting and overseeing all closure activities, and (2) the source, location, and management of the funding for such activities. If the Closure Action is an act of Charter School, Charter School shall provide the CSD with a copy of the governing board resolution or minutes that documents its Closure Action.
2. Parents/guardians of all students, and all majority age and emancipated minor students, currently enrolled in Charter School within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of the written parent notification to the CSD.
3. Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE). Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action to LACOE by registered mail within 72 hours of the

Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of this notification to the CSD.

4. The Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) in which Charter School participates. Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action to the SELPA in which Charter School participates by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of this notification to the CSD.
5. The retirement systems in which Charter School's employees participate. Within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Closure Action, Charter School shall notify, as applicable, the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS), Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), the Social Security Administration, and the Los Angeles County Office of Education of the Closure Action, and follow their respective procedures for dissolving contracts and reporting. Charter School shall provide a copy of these notifications and correspondence to the CSD.
6. The California Department of Education (CDE). Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action to the CDE by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this notification to the CSD.
7. Any school district that may be responsible for providing education services to the former students of Charter School. Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action within 72 hours of the Closure Action. This notice must include a list of potentially returning students and their home schools based on student residence. Charter School shall provide a copy of these notifications, if any, to the CSD.
8. All Charter School employees and vendors within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of the written employee and vendor notification, with any attachments, to the CSD.

Notification of all the parties above, with the exception of employees and vendors, must include but is not limited to the following information:

1. The effective date of the closure of Charter School
2. The name(s) and contact information for the person(s) handling inquiries regarding the closure
3. The students' school districts of residence
4. How parents/guardians of all students, and all majority age and emancipated minor students, may obtain copies of student records and transcripts, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements

In addition to the four required items above, notification of the CDE shall also include:

1. A description of the circumstances of the closure

2. The location of student and personnel records

In addition to the four required items above, notification of parents/guardians of all students, and all majority age and emancipated minor students, shall also include:

1. Information on how to enroll or transfer the student to an appropriate school
2. A certified packet of student information that includes closure notice, a copy of the student's cumulative record and other records, including but not limited to grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, completed coursework, credits that meet graduation requirements, a transcript, and state testing results
3. Information on student completion of college entrance requirements, for all high school students affected by the closure

Notification of employees and vendors shall include:

1. The effective date of the closure of Charter School
2. The name(s) and contact information for the person(s) handling inquiries regarding the closure
3. The date and manner, which shall be no later than 30 days from the effective date of the closure of Charter School, by which Charter School shall provide employees with written verification of employment

Within 30 calendar days of the effective date of closure, Charter School shall provide all employees with written verification of employment. Charter School shall send copies of all such employee verification letters to the CSD.

Records Retention and Transfer

Charter School shall comply with all applicable laws as well as District policies and procedures, as they may change from time to time, regarding the transfer and maintenance of Charter School records, including student records. These requirements include:

1. Charter School shall provide the District with all original student cumulative files and behavior records, pursuant to District policy and applicable District handbook(s) regarding cumulative records for secondary and elementary schools, for all students, both active and inactive, of Charter School. Transfer of the complete and organized original student records to the District, in accordance with District procedures applicable at the time of closure, shall occur within seven (7) calendar days of the effective date of closure.
2. Charter School's process for transferring copies of student records to receiving schools shall be in accordance with applicable law and LAUSD procedures for students moving from one school to another.

3. Charter School shall prepare and provide an electronic master list of all students to the Charter Schools Division in accordance with the District procedures applicable at the time of closure. This list shall include the student's identification number, Statewide Student Identifier (SSID), birthdate, grade, full name, address, home school/school district, enrollment date, exit code, exit date, parent/guardian name(s), and phone number(s). If the Charter School closure occurs before the end of the school year, the list also shall indicate the name of the school to which each student is transferring, if known. This electronic master list shall be delivered to the CSD in the form of a CD or otherwise in accordance with District procedures.
4. Charter School must organize the original cumulative files for delivery to the District in two categories: active students and inactive students. Charter School will coordinate with the CSD for the delivery and/or pickup of student records.
5. Charter School must update all student records in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) prior to closing.
6. Charter School must provide to the CSD a copy of student attendance records, teacher gradebooks, and Title I records (if applicable).
7. Charter School must provide to the CSD the name, title, and contact information of the person designated to maintain all Charter School personnel records after the closure. Personnel records to be transferred to and maintained by the designee must include any and all employee records, including but not limited to, records related to performance and grievance. Charter School must provide to the CSD and the designee a list of all active and inactive employees and their periods of service. Both Charter School and the designee, individually and separately, shall inform the CSD immediately upon the transfer of Charter School's employee records to the designee.
8. Charter School shall ensure that all records are boxed and clearly labeled by classification of documents and the required duration of storage in accordance with District procedures.
9. Charter School shall provide to the responsible person(s) designated by the governing board of Charter School to conduct all closure-related activities a list of students in each grade level and, for each student, a list of classes completed and the student's district of residence.

Financial Close-Out

After receiving notification of closure, the California Department of Education (CDE) will notify Charter School and the authorizing entity of any liabilities Charter School owes the state, which may include overpayment of apportionments, unpaid revolving fund loans or grants, and/or similar liabilities. The CDE may ask the county office of education to conduct an audit of the charter school if it has reason to believe that the school received state funding for which it was not eligible.

Charter School shall ensure completion of an independent final audit within six months after the closure of Charter School that includes:

1. An accounting of all financial assets. These may include cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value.
2. An accounting of all liabilities. These may include accounts payable or reduction in apportionments due to loans, unpaid staff compensation, audit findings, or other investigations.
3. An assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to Charter School.

This audit may serve as Charter School's annual audit if it meets all of the requirements of the annual audit.

Charter School shall pay for the financial closeout audit of Charter School. This audit will be conducted by a neutral, independent licensed CPA who will employ generally accepted accounting principles. Any liability or debt incurred by Charter School will be the responsibility of Charter School and not LAUSD. Charter School understands and acknowledges that Charter School will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of Charter School. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source. Charter School understands and acknowledges that only unrestricted funds will be used to pay creditors. Any unused AB 602 funds will be returned to the District SELPA or the SELPA in which Charter School participates, and other categorical funds will be returned to the source of funds.

Charter School shall ensure the completion and filing of any annual reports required. These reports include but are not necessarily limited to:

1. Preliminary budgets
2. Interim financial reports
3. Second interim financial reports
4. Final unaudited reports

These reports must be submitted to the CDE and the authorizing entity in the form required. These reports should be submitted as soon as possible after the Closure Action, but no later than the required deadline for reporting for the fiscal year.

For apportionment of categorical programs, the CDE will count the prior year average daily attendance (ADA) or enrollment data of the closed Charter School with the data of the authorizing entity. This practice will occur in the first year after the closure and will continue until CDE data collection processes reflect ADA or enrollment adjustments for all affected LEAs due to the charter closure.

Disposition of Liabilities and Assets

The closeout audit must identify the disposition of all liabilities of Charter School. Charter School closure procedures must also ensure appropriate disposal, in accordance with the District Required Language provisions in Element 11 of this Charter, Charter School's governing board bylaws, fiscal procedures, and any other applicable laws and regulations, of any net assets remaining after

all liabilities of Charter School have been paid or otherwise addressed. Such disposal includes, but is not limited to:

1. Charter School, at its cost and expense, shall return to the District any and all property, furniture, equipment, supplies, and other assets provided to Charter School by or on behalf of the District. The District discloses that the California Education Code sets forth the requirements for the disposition of the District's personal property and Charter School shall bear responsibility and liability for any disposition in violation of statutory requirements.
2. The return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any terms and conditions set when the donations were accepted.
3. The return of any grant and restricted categorical funds to their sources according to the terms of the grant or state and federal law.
4. The submission of final expenditure reports for any entitlement grants and the filing of Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as appropriate.

If Charter School is operated as or by a nonprofit corporation, and if the corporation does not have any functions other than operation of Charter School, the corporation shall be dissolved according to its bylaws.

Charter School shall retain sufficient staff, as deemed appropriate by the Charter School governing board to complete all necessary tasks and procedures required to close the school and transfer records in accordance with these closure procedures.

Charter School's governing board shall adopt a plan for wind-up of Charter School and, if necessary, the corporation, in accordance with the requirements of the Corporations Code.

Charter School shall provide LAUSD within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Closure Action with written notice of any outstanding payments due to staff and the time frame and method by which Charter School will make the payments.

Prior to final close-out, Charter School shall complete all actions required by applicable law, including but not limited to the following:

- a. File all final federal, state, and local employer payroll tax returns and issue final W-2s and Form 1099s by the statutory deadlines.
- b. Make final federal tax payments (employee taxes, etc.)
- c. Complete and submit all required federal and state filings and notices to the State of California, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Department of the Treasury, including but not limited to final tax returns and forms (e.g., Form 990 and related Schedules).

This Element 15 shall survive the revocation, expiration, termination, cancellation of this Charter, or any other act or event that would end Charter School's authorization to operate as a charter

school or cause Charter School to cease operation. Charter School agrees that, due to the nature of the property and activities that are the subject of this Charter, the District and public shall suffer irreparable harm should Charter School breach any obligation under this Element 15. The District therefore reserves the right to seek equitable relief to enforce any right arising under this Element 15 or any provision of this Element 15 or to prevent or cure any breach of any obligation undertaken, without in any way prejudicing any other legal remedy available to the District. Such legal relief shall include, without limitation, the seeking of a temporary or permanent injunction, restraining order, or order for specific performance, and may be sought in any appropriate court.

Additional Provisions

FACILITIES

Charter School shall comply with all geographic and site limitations and related requirements set forth in Education Code sections 47605.1, 47602(a), and 47605(a).

District-Owned Facilities

If Charter School is using District facilities as of the date of the submission of this charter petition or takes occupancy of District facilities prior to the approval of this charter petition, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by the District for the use of the District facilities as a condition of the approval of the charter petition. If at any time after the approval of this charter petition Charter School will occupy and use any District facilities, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by the District for the use of the District facilities prior to occupancy and commencing use. Charter School shall implement and otherwise comply with the terms of any and all applicable facilities use agreements between Charter School and the District.

The circumstances of Charter School's occupancy of District facilities may change over time such as, but not limited to, enrollment, programs, and the conditions of facilities, and the District has a vested interest in having an agreement that is appropriate for the situation.

For a Sole Occupant Agreement or any other use agreement that is not a Proposition 39 Single Year Co-location Use Agreement or a lease issued through the Notice of Intent and bid process, the term may be co-terminous with the approved Charter, as permitted by law. Charter School and the District shall negotiate any modifications of the agreement with the goal of such amendment or new agreement being considered by the LAUSD Board of Education with the renewal of the charter petition. If Charter School and the District cannot execute an agreement in time for such to be considered by the Board of Education with the renewal of the charter petition, the approval of the renewal of the charter petition shall be conditioned upon Charter School and the District executing an amendment to the existing use agreement or a new agreement no later than May 1st or within nine (9) months of the date of the Board of Education's approval of the renewal of the charter petition. During such time period Charter School shall be permitted to remain in occupancy of the District facilities under the terms and conditions of the immediately preceding, executed use agreement; provided, that if Charter School and the District cannot agree upon and execute an amendment or new use agreement by said deadline, Charter School shall vacate the District facilities on or before June 30th of said school year.

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that occupancy and use of District facilities shall be in compliance with applicable laws and District policies for the operation and maintenance of District facilities and furnishings and equipment. Charter School shall comply with all District health, safety, and emergency procedures and requirements and shall be subject to inspection by the District's Facilities Services Division, OEHS, and other District offices in the same manner as other LAUSD campuses. All District facilities (i.e., schools) will remain subject to those laws applicable to public schools.

In the event of an emergency, all District facilities (i.e., schools) are available for use by the American Red Cross and public agencies as emergency locations, which may disrupt or prevent Charter School from conducting its educational programs. If Charter School will share the use of District facilities with other District user groups, Charter School agrees that it will participate in and observe all District safety policies (e.g., emergency chain of information and participation in safety drills).

The use agreements provided by the District for District facilities shall contain terms and conditions addressing issues such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Use: Charter School will be restricted to using the District facilities for the operation of a public school providing educational instruction to public school students consistent with the terms of the Charter and incidental related uses. Separate and apart from its right as authorizer to observe and inspect any part of the charter school at any time pursuant to Education Code 47607(a)(1), the District shall have and reserves the right to inspect District facilities upon reasonable notice to Charter School.
- Furnishings and Equipment: The District shall retain ownership of any furnishings and equipment, including technology, ("F&E") that it provides to Charter School for use. Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, shall provide maintenance and other services for the good and safe operation of the F&E.
- Leasing; Licensing: Use of the District facilities by any person or entity other than Charter School shall be administered by the District. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement in the use agreement.
- Programs, Services, and Activities Outside Instructional Program; Third Party Vendors
 - (i) Any program, service, or activity provided outside the instructional program shall be subject to the terms and provisions of the use agreement, and, additionally, may require a license, permit, or additional agreement issued by the District. The term "instructional program" is defined, per Education Code section 47612 and 5 CCR section 11960, as those required educational activities that generate funding based on "average daily attendance" and includes those extracurricular programs, services, and/or activities that students are required to participate in and do not require the payment of any consideration or fee.
 - (ii) Any program, service, or activity requiring the payment of any consideration or fee or provided by a third party vendor (defined as any person or entity other than Charter School), whether paid or volunteer and regardless of whether such may be within the instructional program, shall be subject to the terms and provisions of the

use agreement and such third party vendor shall be required to obtain a license, permit, or additional agreement from the District.

- Minimum Payments or Charges to be Paid to District Arising From the Facilities:
 - (i) Pro Rata Share: The District shall collect and Charter School shall pay a Pro Rata Share for facilities costs as provided in the Charter Schools Act of 1992 and its regulations. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding facilities costs in the use agreement; and
 - (ii) Taxes; Assessments: Generally, Charter School shall pay any assessment or fee imposed upon or levied on the LAUSD facilities that it is occupying or Charter School's legal or equitable interest created by the use agreement.
- Maintenance & Operations Services: In the event the District agrees to allow Charter School to perform any of the operation and maintenance services, the District shall have the right to inspect the District facilities, and the costs incurred in such inspection shall be paid by Charter School.
 - (i) Co-Location: If Charter School is co-locating or sharing the District facilities with another user, the District shall provide the operations and maintenance services for the District facilities and Charter School shall pay the Pro Rata Share. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such in the use agreement.
 - (ii) Sole Occupant: If Charter School is a sole occupant of District facilities, the District shall allow Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, to provide some operations and maintenance services for the District facilities in accordance with applicable laws and LAUSD's policies on operations and maintenance services for facilities and F&E. NOTWITHSTANDING THE FOREGOING, the District shall provide all services for regulatory inspections which as the owner of the real property it is required to submit, and deferred maintenance, and Charter School shall pay LAUSD for the cost and expense of providing those services. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such services in the use agreement.
- Real Property Insurance: Prior to occupancy, Charter School shall satisfy requirements to participate in LAUSD's property insurance or, if Charter School is the sole occupant of LAUSD facilities, obtain and maintain separate property insurance for the LAUSD facilities. Charter School shall **not** have the option of obtaining and maintaining separate property insurance for the LAUSD facility IF Charter School is co-locating or sharing the LAUSD facility with another user.

Non-District-Owned Facilities

Occupancy and Use of the Site: Prior to occupancy or use of any school site or facility, Charter School shall provide the CSD with a current Certificate of Occupancy or equivalent document issued by the applicable permitting agency that allows Charter School to use and occupy the site as a charter school. Charter School shall not exceed the operating capacity of the site and shall operate within any limitations or requirements provided by the Certificate of Occupancy and any applicable permit. Charter School may not open or operate without providing a copy of an appropriate Certificate of Occupancy to the CSD. If Charter School intends to move or expand to another facility during the term of this Charter, Charter School shall adhere to any and all District policies and procedures regarding charter material revision and non-material amendment. Prior to occupancy or use of any such additional or changed school site, Charter School shall provide an appropriate Certificate of Occupancy to the CSD for such facility. Notwithstanding any language to the contrary in this Charter, the interpretation, application, and enforcement of this provision are not subject to the Dispute Resolution Process outlined in Element 14.

Facility Compliance: Prior to occupancy or use of any non-District-owned school site and/or facility, Charter School shall ensure that the site and/or facility complies with all applicable building codes, standards and regulations adopted by the city and/or county agencies responsible for building and safety standards for the city in which Charter School is to be located, federal and state accessibility requirements (including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504), and all other applicable fire, health, and structural safety and access requirements. This requirement shall also apply to the construction, reconstruction, alteration of or addition to the facility. Charter School shall resolve in a timely manner any and all corrective actions, orders to comply, and notices issued by any authorized building and safety agency. Charter School cannot exempt itself from applicable building and zoning codes, ordinances, and ADA/Section 504 requirements. Charter School shall maintain on file readily accessible records that document facilities compliance and shall promptly provide such documentation to the CSD upon request.

Pest Management: Charter School shall comply with the Healthy Schools Act, Education Code section 17608, which details pest management requirements for schools.

Asbestos Management: Charter School shall comply with the asbestos requirement as cited in the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), 40 C.F.R. part 763. AHERA requires that any building leased or acquired that is to be used as a school or administrative building shall maintain an asbestos management plan.

INSURANCE

Insurance Requirements

No coverage shall be provided to Charter School by the District under any of the District's self-insured programs or commercial insurance policies. Charter School shall secure and maintain, at a minimum, insurance as set forth below with insurance companies acceptable to the District [A.M. Best A-, VII or better] or the equivalent provided through a California Joint Powers Authority self-insurance program to protect Charter School from claims which may arise from its

operations. Each Charter School location shall meet the below insurance requirements individually.

It shall be Charter School's responsibility, not the District's, to monitor its vendors, contractors, partners, and/or sponsors for compliance with the insurance requirements.

The following insurance policies are required:

1. Commercial General Liability, including Fire Legal Liability, coverage of \$5,000,000 per Occurrence and in the Aggregate. The policy shall be endorsed to name the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles as named additional insureds and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and Charter School's insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in Charter School's policy. Coverage shall be maintained with no Self-Insured Retention above \$15,000 without the prior written approval of the Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services for the LAUSD.
2. Workers' Compensation Insurance in accordance with provisions of the California Labor Code adequate to protect Charter School from claims that may arise from its operations pursuant to the Workers' Compensation Act (Statutory Coverage). The Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage must also include Employers Liability coverage with limits of \$1,000,000/\$1,000,000/\$1,000,000.
3. Commercial Auto Liability, including Owned, Leased, Hired, and Non-owned, coverage with limits of \$1,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence if Charter School does not operate a student transportation service. If Charter School provides student transportation services, the required coverage limit is \$5,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence.
4. Crime Insurance or Fidelity Bond coverage shall be maintained by Charter School to cover all Charter School employees who handle, process or otherwise have responsibility for Charter School funds, supplies, equipment, or other assets. Minimum amount of coverage shall be \$1,000,000 per occurrence/\$1,000,000 aggregate, with deductible that is acceptable to the Los Angeles Unified School District.
5. Cyber Liability insurance coverage with minimum limits of \$500,000 per occurrence and \$500,000 general aggregate.
6. Professional Educators Errors and Omissions liability coverage with minimum limits of \$5,000,000 per occurrence and \$5,000,000 general aggregate.
7. Sexual Molestation and Abuse coverage with minimum limits of \$5,000,000 per occurrence and \$5,000,000 general aggregate. Coverage may be held as a separate policy or included by endorsement in the Commercial General Liability or the Errors and Omissions Policy.

8. Employment Practices Legal Liability coverage with limits of \$5,000,000 per occurrence and \$5,000,000 general aggregate.
9. Excess/Umbrella Liability insurance with limits of not less than \$10,000,000 is required of all high schools and any other school that participates in competitive interscholastic or intramural sports programs.

Coverages and limits of insurance may be accomplished through individual primary policies or through a combination of primary and excess policies and alternative methods of coverage as approved by the District. *The policy shall be endorsed to name the Los Angeles Unified School District and Its Board of Education as named additional insureds and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and Charter School's insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in Charter School's policy.*

Evidence of Insurance

Charter School shall furnish to the District's Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services located at 333 S. Beaudry Ave, 28th Floor, Los Angeles CA 90017 within 30 calendar days of all new policies, inceptions, renewals or changes, certificates, or such insurance signed by authorized representatives of the insurance carrier. Certificates shall be endorsed as follows:

"Charter school shall be required to provide LAUSD with 30 days prior written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, if the insurance afforded by this policy shall be suspended, cancelled, reduced in coverage limits or non-renewed."

Facsimile or reproduced signatures may be acceptable upon review by the Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services. However, the District reserves the right to require certified copies of any required insurance policies.

Should Charter School deem it prudent and/or desirable to have insurance coverage for damage or theft to Charter School, employee or student property, for student accident, or any other type of insurance coverage not listed above, such insurance shall not be provided by the District and its purchase shall be the responsibility of Charter School.

Hold Harmless/Indemnification Provision

To the fullest extent permitted by law, Charter School does hereby agree, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses including but not limited to attorneys' fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever, arising out of, or relating to, this Charter agreement. Charter School further agrees to the fullest extent permitted by law, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses including but not limited to attorneys' fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever for claims, damages, losses and expenses arising from or relating to acts or omission

of acts committed by Charter School and/or its officers, directors, employees or volunteers. Moreover, Charter School agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless “the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers, for any contractual liability resulting from third party contracts with Charter School’s vendors, contractors, partners or sponsors.

FISCAL MATTERS

District Oversight Costs

The District may charge for the actual costs of oversight of Charter School not to exceed 1% of Charter School’s revenue, or the District may charge for the actual costs of oversight of Charter School not to exceed 3% if Charter School is able to obtain substantially rent free facilities from the District. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District may charge the maximum oversight fee allowed under the law as it may change from time to time. The oversight fee provided herein is separate and distinct from the charges arising under charter school facilities use agreements.

Cash Reserves

Charter School acknowledges that the recommended cash reserve is 5% of expenditures, as provided in section 15450, title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

Third Party Contracts

Charter School shall ensure that all third party contracts, whether oral or written, for supplies, equipment, goods and/or services, for the direct or indirect benefit of, or otherwise related to the operation of, Charter School, require compliance with and otherwise conform to all applicable local, state, and federal policies, regulations, laws, and guidelines, including but not limited to licensing and permit requirements as well as requirements related to protection of health and safety.

Special Education Revenue Adjustment/Payment for Services

In the event that Charter School owes funds to the District for the provision of agreed upon or fee for service or special education services or as a result of the State’s adjustment to allocation of special education revenues from Charter School, Charter School authorizes the District to deduct any and all of the in lieu property taxes that Charter School otherwise would be eligible to receive under section 47635 of the Education Code to cover such owed amounts. Charter School further understands and agrees that the District shall make appropriate deductions from the in lieu property tax amounts otherwise owed to Charter School. Should this revenue stream be insufficient in any fiscal year to cover any such costs, Charter School agrees that it will reimburse the District for the additional costs within forty-five (45) business days of being notified of the amounts owed.

Student Body Funds

Charter School shall supervise and manage any and all student body funds in a manner consistent with the provisions of Education Code sections 48930-48938. Charter School shall include and address student body funds in its financial reports, and ensure that such funds are included and addressed in Charter School’s annual audit as a stand-alone item.

Audit and Inspection of Records

Charter School agrees to observe and abide by the following terms and conditions as a requirement for receiving and maintaining its charter authorization:

- Charter School is subject to District oversight.
- The District's statutory oversight responsibility continues throughout the life of the Charter and requires that the District, among other things, monitors the fiscal condition of Charter School.
- The District is authorized to revoke this Charter for, among other reasons, the failure of Charter School to meet generally accepted accounting principles or if Charter School engages in fiscal mismanagement.

Accordingly, the District hereby reserves the right, pursuant to its oversight responsibility, to audit Charter School books, records, data, processes and procedures through the District Office of the Inspector General or other means. The audit may include, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Compliance with terms and conditions prescribed in the Charter agreement,
- Internal controls, both financial and operational in nature,
- The accuracy, recording and/or reporting of Charter School's financial information,
- Charter School's debt structure,
- Governance policies, procedures and history,
- The recording and reporting of attendance data,
- Charter School's enrollment process,
- Compliance with safety plans and procedures, and
- Compliance with applicable grant requirements.

Charter School shall cooperate fully with such audits and shall make available any and all records necessary for the performance of the audit upon 30 days notice to Charter School. When 30 days notice may defeat the purpose of the audit, the District may conduct the audit upon 24- hours notice.

Fiscal Policies and Procedures

Charter School shall establish, maintain, and implement sound fiscal policies and procedures, including but not limited to internal controls governing all financial and business-related activities.

Apportionment Eligibility for Students Over 19 Years of Age

Charter School acknowledges that, in order for a pupil over nineteen (19) years of age to remain eligible for generating charter school apportionment, the pupil shall be continuously enrolled in public school and make satisfactory progress toward award of a high school diploma. (Ed. Code § 47612(b).)

Local Control and Accountability Plan

In accordance with California Education Code sections 47604.33 and 47606.5, Charter School shall include in its annual update a “listing and description of the expenditures for the fiscal year implementing the specific actions included in the charter as a result of the reviews and assessment required by paragraph (1)” of section 47606.5(a). These expenditures shall be “classified using the California School Accounting Manual pursuant to Section 41010.” (Ed. Code § 47606.5(b).)