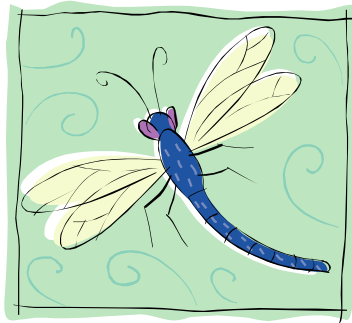


**DIXON MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL
CALIFORNIA CHARTER #667**



**PETITION FOR CHARTER RENEWAL
DATE SUBMITTED:**

**CO-PETITIONERS:
CAITLIN O'HALLORAN AND SCOTT HILL**

**SUBMITTED TO:
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

“Table of Contents of Legal Requirements”:

This charter has been created in the format encouraged by the California State Board of Education (SBE) in its adopted “Model Application for Charter Schools” and goes beyond the legal requirements of Education Code Section 47605. According to the State Board of Education, the Model Application format ensures that charter petitioners cover all of the minimum elements required by law in a systematic way. However, as the Model Application format requires that statutory provisions in the Charter Schools Act be addressed out of the order presented in the Education Code, this “Table of Contents of Legal Requirements” is presented to assist the Reviewer in establishing that all requirements of law have been met.

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AFFIRMATIONS/ASSURANCES

As the authorized lead petitioner, I, Scott Hill hereby certify that the information submitted in this renewal petition for Dixon Montessori Charter School, a California public charter school (the “Charter School” or “DMCS”) to be located within the boundaries of the Dixon Unified School District (DUSD) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that this petition does not constitute the conversion of a private school to the status of a public charter school; and further, I understand that if the charter is renewed, the Charter School:

- Shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessment tests pursuant to Education Code Sections 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(c)(1)]
- Shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(O)]
- Shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations.
- Shall not charge tuition.
- Shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).
- Shall admit all pupils who wish to attend the Charter School, and who submit a timely application, unless the Charter School receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case each application will be given equal chance of admission through a public random drawing process. Admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the student or his or her parents within the State.
- Shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004 (“IDEIA”), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”).
- Shall meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary.
- Shall ensure that teachers in the Charter School hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in

other public schools are required to hold. As allowed by statute, flexibility will be given to non-core, non-college preparatory teachers.

- Shall at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
- Shall, for each fiscal year, offer at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D)
- If a pupil is expelled or leaves the Charter School without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the Charter School shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card, and health information.
- Will follow any and all other federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to the Charter School including but not limited to:
 - The Charter School shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection.
 - The Charter School shall on a regular basis consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School's education programs.
 - The Charter School shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities.
 - The Charter School shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment.
 - The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of the No Child Left Behind Act.
 - The Charter School shall comply with the Public Records Act.
 - The Charter School shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
 - The Charter School shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
 - The Charter School shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum of school days.

Scott Hill,
Lead Petitioner

Date

INTRODUCTION

In 1992, the California State Legislature passed the Charter Schools Act, creating the vehicle for parents and educators to collaborate on innovative educational opportunities for children throughout the state of California. Pursuant to Education Code Section 47601, charter schools were created as a method to accomplish all of the following:

- Improve pupil learning
- Increase learning opportunities for all pupils with special emphasis on expanded learning opportunities for pupils who are identified as academically low achieving.
- Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.
- Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system
- Hold the schools accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes and provide the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.
- Provided vigorous competition within the public school system to stimulate continual improvements in all public schools.

Dixon Montessori Charter School (the “Charter School”) fully embraces the Legislative intent of the Charter Schools Act, and its mandate.

I. FOUNDING GROUP

The California State Board of Education, in its Model Application for Charter Schools, has stated that the founding group of a charter school should be able to present evidence that it and its members have the necessary background in the following areas:

- Curriculum, instruction and assessment;
- Finance, facilities and business management; and
- Organization, governance and administration.

School Leadership and Staffing:

The leadership and staffing of the school have been stable and consistent. The school is governed by a 7-member board comprised of parents and allows for a representative of the SBE. The Board meets the fourth Tuesday of each month and adheres to the open meeting requirements of the Brown Act.

The DMCS Board of Directors maintains a constant communication loop within the school community, Dixon, and larger public education circles. There is constant discussion and refinement of the school's work in ensuring that students will be prepared as citizens and for post-secondary work and careers. Because the school has a direct pipeline into state, national, and international movements in education, there is a constant quest to explore new ways of ensuring that students are provided with the support they will need to succeed.

Fiscal Responsibility:

As a demonstration of the Charter School Board's financial expertise, in its first years of operation, the governing board has been extremely conservative in ensuring the financial well-being of the school. As a result, the school is on firm financial standing. It has one final year and approximately \$50,000 remaining to pay on its state charter school start up loan. It has approximately \$225,000 in reserve (as of May 2009). These funds represent both a conservative approach to spending public dollars, but also a significant amount of community-based fundraising. Over four years, the school's annual Dragonfly Dinner and Auction has raised approximately \$70,000.

Board:

The following Board members provide the background and necessary expertise in the above areas to ensure the success of the School:

Board President – Debbie Knox

Deborah Knox, appointed to the Board in May 2010, is a 30 year property and casualty insurance claims veteran with executive leadership experience in strategic planning, operations management, vendor management, governance, and budgeting. Currently she is a strategic consultant with a firm that specializes in improving transaction efficiencies. She also has a CA Life Standard Elementary Teaching Credential. Her granddaughter attends DMCS.

Board Treasurer – Dean Baldwin

Dean has been in Commercial Banking and Management for his entire professional career. His expertise is centered primarily in financial analysis as well as people management. Dean has been involved in local Dixon area non-profit organizations as well as some based in the Sacramento area over the last ten years. Dean and his wife Patty have lived in Dixon the past fifteen years and have two sons, Marco and Samuel, in attendance at Dixon Montessori Charter School.

Board Secretary – Jose Setka

Jose Setka was appointed to the DMCS Board in May 2010 and has a strong background in science, management and team building skills. He currently runs an environmental monitoring and research program for a public utility company. Jose hopes to provide the staff the resources needed to provide a strong science curriculum within the DMCS program. In addition to parenting, Jose enjoys coaching youth soccer and baseball. Jose and his wife Gail have lived in Dixon since 1997. They have two kids, Daniela and Ricardo, who will be starting 5th and 2nd grades respectively at DMCS.

Board Member – Erica Hurtado

Erica Hurtado has lived in Dixon for over ten years and can often be seen around DMCS with a camera in her hands, as she is our resident school photographer. Erica has four children, Katie (a fifth grader), Ryan (a first grader), Ethan and Owen (both future DMCS students). Her husband Dave is a life-long Dixonite and attended elementary and high school in Dixon. As the mother of a son with disabilities, Erica has a special interest in advocating services for children within the special education system.

Board Member – Dennis Ballance

Dennis Ballance was appointed to the Board in January 2011. He is a veterinarian with a strong background in information technology, medical informatics, and management. Dennis currently works for VCA, a veterinary hospital corporation, and he has provided technology leadership for the school since its inception. He and his wife Jenni have lived in Dixon for ten years, and his two daughters attend DMCS in the fifth and third grades.

Board Member – Jodie Esquer

Jodie Esquer began her term on the DMCS Board in 2006. She was elected Secretary and served that post until 2007. She is a fourth-generation Dixon resident. Jodie is very active in her community, if you don't see her at the baseball fields, you may see her at the soccer fields, since both of her children love to play various sports in Dixon. Jodie and her husband Joe both attended Dixon schools and graduated from Dixon High School. Their son, Kyle, a sixth grader,

and Rylie, a fourth grader, both attend DMCS. Jodie is passionate about the community of Dixon and enthusiastic in her support of local school choice.

Staffing:

The school has had a single director, and the staff has been loyal, stable, and a significant part of the day-to-day governance and decision making. The school has a professional support program for its staff. All teachers are California credentialed teachers. Additionally, about half have earned formal Montessori credentialing. The school provides for staff two forms of ongoing professional support. There is a lifetime \$5000 grant for teachers to use—with the board’s specific approval—for training that supports the mission of the school. Teachers have used funds from these grants to spend the summer involved in Montessori training, attending content-specific conferences, and also to attend conferences and workshops. As a result, several teachers have gained formal Montessori certification. Additionally, each classroom-based staff member receives approximately \$400 annually to use for more specific professional development opportunities. Teachers also receive a \$250 grant each summer for purchasing supplies for their classroom.

Current DMCS Staff:

Hires in 2005-2006

- Melanie Ingram (Hansen) - K-1 California State Credentialed Teacher with Montessori Training
- Michele Arriaga - Assistant Teacher with Montessori Training
- Kim Machado - P.E. California State Credentialed Teacher

Hires in 2006-2007

- George Pagulayan - Assistant Teacher with Montessori Training and college degree
- Kim Raines - K-1 - California State Credentialed Teacher with Montessori Training
- Noelle Kramer - 3-4 California State Credentialed Teacher
- Jen Stevens - Executive Assistant
- Carolyn Pfister – Executive Director
- Keith Carey - Music Instructor

Hires in 2007-2008

- Remy Glovin - 2-3 California State Credentialed Teacher with Montessori Training
- Elishama Goldfarb - 2-3 California State Credentialed Teacher with Montessori Training
- Amie Hansen - K-1 California State Credentialed Teacher
- Emily Jones - Extended Day Coordinator, Noon Duty, Office Assistant
- Jessica Carlisle - Extended Day Assistant

Hires in 2008-2009

- Jonathan Feagle - 5-6 California State Credentialed Teacher with Montessori Training

- Charlene Payne Schmid - 7-8 California State Credentialed Teacher with Montessori Training
- Joanne Green - 3-4 California State Credentialed Teacher
- Patty Baldwin - Assistant Teacher with Montessori Training and a college degree
- Penny Florent - Custodian
- Michael Schwagerus - Music
- Alex Dillon - Part time math interventions - California State Credentialed Teacher with Montessori Training
- Amy Rea - Part time reading interventions - California State Credentialed Teacher with RSP and Reading Specialist Training

Additionally, the following consultants have been hired to assist in the development and operation of this Charter School:

Spector, Middleton, Young & Minney, LLP, Sacramento, CA

Spector, Middleton, Young & Minney, LLP is California's most experienced, knowledgeable and respected firm working in the unique area of charter school law.

As a leader in charter school representation since the passage of California's Charter Schools Act of 1992, SMY&M offers expertise in every facet of charter school creation, expansion and operation — including charter petitions and negotiations, MOUs, non-profit incorporation, board governance, facilities, student issues, policy development and more. SMY & M is a leader in charter school law, with experience representing over 350 charter schools throughout the state.

SMY&M's expertise encompasses every facet of California charter school law, from planning to ongoing operation including but not limited to the following:

- Nonprofit incorporation
- School Finance
- Representation Before State and Federal Agencies
- Board Governance
- Student Issues
- Special Education
- Facilities Development
- Personnel and Labor Relations
- Litigation
- In Service Training

II. EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND PROGRAM

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

If the proposed 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. – California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii).

Mission Statement

DMCS strives to be an intimate learning community that realizes globally-competitive student learning and achievement. DMCS’ mission statement adopted by the DMCS Board is:

The Dixon Montessori Charter School (DMCS) is a K-8 community dedicated exclusively to students and learning. Academic excellence is best achieved when students work at their own pace in a student-centered environment where individual learning styles and interests are honored. Effective instruction ensures academic progress of each student in order to meet school and state expectations and provides the skills necessary for life-long success.

Educational Philosophy

Whom the School is Attempting to Educate:

Dixon Montessori Charter School is a California public school enrolling students in grades Kindergarten through 8. It is a site-based school program, serving students Monday-Friday under a modified traditional calendar also observed by the authorizing district, State Board of Education (SBE). The school calendar generally starts in mid-August and ends in early June. There is an extended break in December/January of about three weeks.

In serving Dixon and the surrounding communities, the school’s target student population reflects that of California as a whole. DMCS has enrolled a diverse student population of Caucasian, Latino, African American, and Asian student subgroups, as well as a substantial number of English learners and students living in poverty. Students with disabilities also are encouraged to enroll as DMCS, in conjunction with the El Dorado County Office of Education Charter SELPA—provide the range of necessary education services for these students. In many categories, DMCS’ student enrollment reflects the enrollment of DUSD, with the exception of the number of enrolled students who qualify for free and reduced price meals. On the latter

figure, while DMCS has made outreach efforts throughout its existence, about 20 percent of its students qualify for free and reduced price meals—about half the rate of the district as a whole.

According to the School Finance Center (<http://schoolfinancecenter.org>), DMCS’ enrollment for 2007-8 was:

Demographics:

White:	43.0%
Hispanic:	31.0%
Multiple/Decline:	21.1%
Asian:	3.5%
Filipino:	0.7%
African American:	0.7%
English Learners:	14.8%
National School Lunch Program:	18.3%
Socioeconomic Disadvantaged:	16.5%

DMCS has been very pleased with the presence of a Head Start preschool program at the Silveyville site it now occupies. DMCS has used this opportunity to continue to expand its student socioeconomic diversity. DMCS expects that many of these families will continue to be interested in enrolling their students at DMCS and this may bring the opportunity to serve additional students qualifying for free and reduced price meals.

DMCS already has extensive multilingual capacities on staff, as the director and several staff members are fluent in Spanish.

The enrollment at Dixon Montessori has been as follows:

2005-06:	38 students in grades K-3
2006-07	100 students in grades K-6
2007-08	140 students in grades K-7
2008-09	180 students in grades K-8
2009-10	School closed – 0 students
2010-11	212 students in grades K-8 (none in grade seven, 1 in grade 8)
2011-12	287 students in grades K-7

DMCS has occupied two different facilities owned by DUSD. DMCS willingly provided significant improvements to the Anderson Elementary School facilities it used from 2005—08, moved both its office and its classrooms on that site twice during the time it was housed there and accommodated DUSD’s request to move to the Silveyville campus for the 2008-09 year.

DMCS grew more slowly than the original charter contemplated to accommodate DUSD's request. DMCS, per the district's request, reduced its growth by one classroom in 2007-08 despite a waiting list of students wishing to enroll in DMCS at all grade levels.

DMCS has an eventual enrollment goal of 432 students or 48 students per grade level at each of the grades taught at the school. We anticipate that this would mean the following projected enrollment between 2012-13 and 2014-15:

2012-13	367 students in K-8
2013-14	412 students in K-8
2014-15	432 students in K-8

DMCS as an Education Choice in Dixon:

DMCS was founded on the ideal that parents and students in Dixon and surrounding communities would support a school that offered:

1. an education alternative in a small town setting
2. an education program with a view that students must connect to their communities and the world
3. a small school community
4. a program founded on and built from parent and family support and involvement
5. a program that fostered individual student development in a structured education setting that, at the same time, recognized that each student is an individual with singular learning styles, needs, and pace

Though a Montessori-based school, DMCS welcomes students who enter the school with or without prior Montessori experience. In fact, the overwhelming majority of the students enter DMCS without prior Montessori education. DMCS' commitment to enrolling a broad array of students from many backgrounds results in the school providing a curriculum that is based in Montessori but integrates instructional resources that respond to each student's needs. Consequently, DMCS is seen by parents in Dixon, and by interested families in surrounding communities, much more as an alternative education opportunity that is student-centered, has high parent participation, and is a small learning community. These elements provide the overwhelming impetus for parents and students to become part of DMCS. Over time, as parents and families experience the Montessori approach, they also value the student-centered philosophy that guides learning at the school.

As a school community DMCS, like others, seeks to be reflective on its progress and status. Members of the DMCS staff, board, and community have expressed interest that under the school's next charter timeline (2010-14), that the school explore further how it can contribute to the Dixon community in the following ways:

- Establishing an international education program and/or link with schools abroad for exchange programs

- Further refinement of the DMCS curriculum to reflect current research and international benchmarking on student competitiveness and education expectations in math and science
- Exploring partnerships with outside agencies, including schools of education and or non-profits to build research and data gathering capacity and to serve as a model program
- Exploring partnerships with local and regional institutions of higher education and businesses to build a framework of college and career readiness for DMCS students.

What it means to be an educated person in the 21st Century:

The Charter School believes an educated person in the 21st century has a solid foundation in all core academic subjects and 21st century learning skills; and mastery of 21st century tools. The Charter School will prepare self-motivated, competent, life-long learners for the 21st century. The Charter School will employ a blend of Montessori methods and direct instruction for remediation to ensure all students gain the knowledge and skills that are valued in the modern world and necessary for future success. The use of Montessori methods will ensure that students in the program develop the ability to learn, not just the ability to memorize a group of facts or dates.

How Learning Best Occurs

The Learning Environment:

The school prioritizes its attention and resources on offering very small class sizes. DMCS offers instruction in traditional, permanent classroom facilities. Classrooms are equipped with typical public school equipment, and each teacher has a computer. In many other classrooms, additional technology resources are available to students. No classroom has more than 24 students, and each teacher has a half-time aide; hence the real student-adult ratio for the classrooms is approximately 15:1. While the school does not offer an organized athletics program, it does have a very popular music program. Weekly music lessons are part of each class, and the school also supports a beginning band activity. Students have the state-required minimum minutes of physical education, and the school's physical education instructor provides varied aerobic, strength, and team sports and activities.

Each year, the staff reviews and recommends to the Board a grade/class configuration for the next year. This review is done with extreme consideration given to student needs, enrollment by grade, and parent input. Generally, DMS offers multi-grade classrooms. For the 2008-09 year, the school had the following configuration:

K-1 (3 classrooms)
 2-3 (2 classrooms)
 3-4 (2 classrooms)
 5-6 (1 classroom)
 7-8 (1 classroom)

DMCS expects the lower grade enrollments to be steady as the school has capped Kindergarten enrollment each year at 30 students. Waiting lists, especially for Kindergarten, and in some years, the school can offer enrollment to approximately half of the students interested in enrollment. Growth in enrollment will occur in the upper grades as the original class of students (Kindergarteners in 2005-6) advance each year.

The school offers an Extended Day Program (EDP) that also operates during the summer as a full-time program. EDP is a self-sufficient operation, and the program's director and aide are considered part of the DMCS staff. Students participating in EDP have a structured (mandatory) homework period (with the staff available to provide assistance), and then structured physical activity periods to ensure that students stay active. Healthy snacks are offered; student attendance is monitored through daily check-in/out sheets. During the summer, students are able to go on local field trips, do extended study and special projects, and have organized physical activities.

Family Participation:

Family participation is a cornerstone of DMCS' education program. Each family is asked to invest a minimum of 40 hours per year in various school activities. This has been a highly successful model to date. Parents are frequently in the classrooms serving as additional support for teachers. In the lower grades, parents often help with small group reading and math lessons; in upper elementary grades, parents more frequently assist with special projects and field trips. Families also have been the backbone of expanding the school's facilities as needed, organizing the school's move in 2008, and leading fundraising efforts.

Student Learning:

DMCS begins with a basic philosophical foundation derived from Maria Montessori. Maria Montessori's exploration of student learning in Italy at the beginning of the 20th century resulted in a learning method rooted in observation of how students learn. Montessori education was built by observing how students in abject poverty learned. It is, therefore, not surprising, that Montessori education programs are seen as a way to reach students who do not respond successfully in other learning environments. DMCS particularly welcomes students and their families who arrive at the school in need of an education alternative.

DMCS places a high value on providing students a context to explore and understand their individual responsibilities and place in the world. Therefore, students are exposed to a most comprehensive curriculum that often exceeds California academic standards. In addition to core academic work in language arts and math, DMCS provides a rich experience in visual and performing arts, the social sciences, science, physical education, and career education (practical life).

Student interaction with their community is a critical underpinning of the school. Routine visits to the local public library, combine a healthy field trip (a 15-minute supervised walk from the school), with learning how to use the library, the ecology of renewable public resources, and becoming familiar with local leaders and officials. Students routinely visit local private

businesses—ranging from veterinarians when studying biology to art galleries when studying California history—to experience life in our small town as it reflects the practical application of what’s learned in the class room. Students in the grades 3-4 classrooms participate in the Sutter’s Fort authentic overnight experience for California history and 5-6th graders also participate in a week-long environmental education program.

The Learning Environment:

DMCS is organized by several core beliefs about student learning. These include:

- School and the lesson students engage in must have meaning and relevance
- School must connect students to their community
- Students must gain responsibility by directing their work and projects and completing their weekly work plan provided by their teacher
- Students work is performed individually and in groups
- Each students’ work becomes increasingly complex
- Students are supported by teachers, aides, and parents
- Students learn from and help each other
- Student learning is defined by California’s academic content standards

DMCS has established specific classroom structures to facilitate student learning. These include:

- Multi-age/grade classrooms
- Interdisciplinary, project-based learning
- Individual weekly work plans
- Low student/teacher ratio

Learning is an iterative process that requires inputs, assessments, analysis, and adjustments. At DMCS, the school institutionalizes these steps throughout the school year. DMCS employs an annual cycle for student learning that begins with an initial benchmark assessment of where students begin the year. Individual work plans for each student are provided weekly, culminating in a first term report. DMCS uses a standards-based report card as a tool for both student and teacher interim evaluations. DMCS uses the formative assessment tool Scantron Performance Series to provide a comprehensive review of student progress towards mastery of California state standards. Both Montessori and supplemental instructional materials are constantly evaluated as well. Finally, DMCS is committed to the transparent objective that each student will, minimally, make a year’s progress in each of the core areas each academic year

Highly Qualified and Supported Teachers

The faculty will consist of well-prepared and certified teachers. All teachers, in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(I), will meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act. Professional development and teacher collaboration will be scheduled on a regular and ongoing basis to support teachers throughout their career. In establishing a professional teaching

environment the Charter School will ensure collaborative planning time for teachers to design student focused curriculum, pedagogy and assessment through which students can make connections, and deepen their understanding of concepts and the Charter School at higher levels.

Attendance Guidelines

The Charter School will offer the same number of instructional minutes as set forth in Education Code 47612.5(a) for the appropriate grade levels and will operate at least for the required minimum of 175 days. The Charter School shall maintain written contemporaneous records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection.

The DMCS Curriculum

The DMCS Approach to Instruction:

It is appropriate in this charter for DMCS to make clear that its instructional program is a reflection of all that the school has learned in its initial years of operating as a Montessori public charter school. DMCS recognizes that student mastery of California's core academic content standards is the school's objective. To the extent that various aspects of Montessori education help students achieve that goal, DMCS emphasizes these aspects. However, it also is DMCS' experience that a hybridized curriculum benefits students in other aspects. DMCS, therefore, has studied and worked to extract the optimal benefits of the Montessori education program; to ensure that students are provided a standards-based curriculum, DMCS also uses standards-based supplemental materials.

DMCS staff approach each academic year working collaboratively within and across their grade-spans to build pacing guides for the entire school year and to ensure complete coverage of each grade/year's academic content standards.

Many educators, school board members, and parents are familiar with the manner in which current standards based instructional materials build and reinforce concepts lesson over lesson and year over year. The Montessori instructional methodology was among the first to build and describe this so-called scaffolding of concepts. In the Montessori classroom, students in kindergarten may trace and cut out triangles as a practical life lesson that develops motor skills. However, that lesson is also introducing students to future understanding of angles and measurements that will be vital to them in 3rd grade as they tackle geometry.

DMCS is intent on ensuring that its students reach early primary grade (end of grade 3) mastery of reading and basic computation. Montessori curriculum resources are especially rich in mathematics, and DMCS' meeting of its accountability targets for mathematics is but one indicator of the strength of the program.

The Instructional Day at DMCS:

A typical day in a typical classroom at DMCS reveals that several activities are common for all students, while individualized and group instruction is at the center of the student work day. Students spend time each in day in a classroom meeting. There, the day's activities are

discussed, teacher expectations are made clear, and questions and concerns, if any, from students may be raised. At DMCS, classrooms also focus on a daily reinforcement of language arts and computational skill development through the use of Rocket Math and daily board exercises for language arts. Students spend the majority of classroom time focusing on their weekly work plan.

Teachers and aides provide individualized instruction (or small group) during this time. Each student has an extensive log of observations, written work, and weekly assessments analyzed by the teacher. Additionally, students at DMCS receive a weekly homework packet on Monday, customized for their current progress. The homework is turned in on Friday morning.

Teachers provide very clear direction for each student's work, and evaluation is frequent and specific. Teacher observation guides next steps for each student; at times this is an individual lesson plan to refine or explain a concept; other times, it is a group lesson to introduce the next chapter or sequence of work.

Teachers review each Wednesday during their common planning time (usually lasting 2-3 hours) lessons, materials, idea, challenges, and best practices. DMCS has used the common planning time for teachers to create a common, hybridized curriculum.

In the multi-age/grade classroom, older students often provide instruction to younger students as well. The classroom teachers monitor student-based instruction to ensure that more advanced students are able to communicate concepts and principles to others. These written and oral presentations by students are among the indicators of when a student has mastered a concept to the point of proficiency.

Teachers are expected to translate all classroom work into progress on California's core content academic standards. DMCS emphasizes standards-based report cards rather than a Montessori report card so that parents have a clear, transparent understanding of their student's standing and progress.

Defining Montessori at DMCS:

DMCS defines Montessori education as having three distinct elements to it. These are:

1. Skills that provide access to learning. Montessori education is the original multimedia curriculum. Montessori curriculum emphasizes the use of materials and tools that unleash and engage students' natural curiosity. In this vein, Montessori reinforces in students their innate capacity as learners and brings to each student methods to systematize, organize, and adapt learning regardless of the environment students find themselves in. At DMCS, it is the specific objective for each student to gain learning skills that allow for each student to be independent, analytical, flexible, creative, and insightful. When students gain these learning skills, they can learn in any classroom, with any teacher, using any materials.

2. Montessori is also a unique and comprehensive instructional methodology. Montessori's instructional methodology uses self-motivation as a centerpiece of learning. In a classroom rich with materials in various media, students at DMCS can choose any number of activities in a content area. This is a purposeful structure at DMCS, designed to ensure that students have many access points into curriculum content.

Montessori curriculum materials are at the cornerstone of this approach. As DMCS has added classrooms, the school administration has worked with each teacher to build a customized classroom filled with Montessori materials and supported by additional materials. Montessori materials are specifically designed to provide interest, access, and curiosity to students. The materials are used for assignments (jobs) in the areas of:

Language arts (reading and writing)

Math (including geometry)

History

Geography

Science (including Biology, Botany, Zoology, Astronomy)

Visual Arts

Given access to a broad array of materials, environments, and the expectation that students will succeed when they work at their own pace, Montessori provides a forum in which students can develop, refine, and explore interests in and across many disciplines.

3. Finally, Montessori is also seen as a wholly-contained curriculum, with content coverage of all major areas. Through observation and evaluation, DMCS has identified areas in which the content coverage of the Montessori curriculum is fully aligned with California's standards. In some areas, the content exceeds California state standards; DMCS generally regards Montessori mathematics content to be especially strong.

More importantly, DMCS has determined that it's critical for its staff, students, parents, and community supporters to understand that as a California public school, student mastery of the Montessori curriculum content is not the academic focus at DMCS. The school's focus is for students to achieve mastery of California's academic content standards. With this in mind, DMCS teachers provide greater oversight, performance evaluation, and direct support with supplemental materials than would be found in the most traditional Montessori classroom.

The DMCS Curriculum, Grades K-8:

DMCS staff has created and can communicate with precision, justification, and coherence the overall curriculum provided to students in each grade. The curriculum is an integration of a core level Montessori program with standards-based supplemental materials. DMCS teachers are conversant in and committed to providing instruction that ensures DMCS students receive a standards-based curriculum.

What follows is a statement of principles and general overview of the DMCS curriculum for each grade. Each grade-level sequence was developed and refined by DMCS staff to ensure that all standards are covered during the year. While many of the standards are taught using Montessori materials, others are taught using supplemental, standards-based materials.

Kindergarten

In Kindergarten, students are expected to make at least one year of measured progress in addition to mastering the California state academic content standards.

As a general statement, Kindergarten is treated in the Montessori education program as both a pre-elementary (ages 3-6) and early elementary (ages 6-9) course of study. Children at this age have absorbent minds; classroom materials should be concrete and assist students in moving at their own pace to a more abstract learning environment.

In addition to the Montessori instructional materials used in the Kindergarten classroom, DMCS uses many supplemental materials. For each, DMCS have identified the academic standards coverage they for which they provide additional coverage and focus. For example, the materials listed below are used at DMCS in a systematic approach to standards-based instruction. Among the materials used in the kindergarten classroom are:

SRA Reading--*Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development; Reading Comprehension, Literary Response and Analysis.*

Explode the Code—*Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Development; Reading Comprehension; Writing Strategies*

Evan-Moor Spelling Program—*Writing Strategies; Written and Oral English Language Conventions*

Zoo Phonics—*Concepts of Print; Phonemic Awareness; Decoding and Word Recognition*

DRA—*Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development; Reading Comprehension; Literary Response and Analysis*

Spectrum Test Prep (Language)—*Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development; Reading Comprehension; Literary Response and Analysis; Writing Strategies; Written and Oral Language Conventions; Listening and Speaking Strategies*

Spectrum Test Prep (Math)—*Number Sense; Algebra and Functions; Measurement and Geometry; Statistics, Data Analysis, and Probability; Mathematical Reasoning*

Rocket Math—*Number Sense*

First Grade

In first grade students are expected to make at least one year of measured academic progress and to achieve mastery of California's first grade academic content standards.

At DMCS the Montessori philosophy for first graders emphasizes student capacity for order, concentration, coordination and independence. Teachers work with the children as individuals to create work plans that reflect the interaction of their current progress, state standards goals, and materials to elicit optimal learning environments.

For first grade, a priority is student understanding through hands-on learning. The Montessori-prepared environment is meant to engage all kinds of learners and invite students into lessons that will enhance their intellectual understanding of the world around them. An important aspect of the prepared environment is that of indirect preparation for future learning. The indirect preparation of academic concepts makes learning a joyful experience. Early, indirect exposure makes material less foreign, so that direct presentations of new concepts are more easily discovered independently. It makes the "a-ha moment" a more frequently experienced event.

Also important in the first grade classroom are a mixed age group and a three-hour work period. The mixed age group is important in fostering independence and confidence in oneself and respect and empathy for different kinds of people. Keeping the same teacher over the course of two or more years is important in the development of trust in the student and continuity across grade levels as students grow and change. The three-hour work period is important in helping develop concentration over longer periods of time so that a deeper understanding of materials may be obtained.

In language arts, first grade is an exploration of:

- Short and long vowels (reading, writing, listening)
- Fluency and accuracy in reading and writing
- Handwriting (print/D'Nealian) and cursive
- Reading and listening comprehension
- Concepts of print
- Speaking conventions
- Describing things in detail using the senses
- Spelling
- Rhyming
- Writing strategies
- Introductory grammar in writing
- Grammar accuracy in speaking

In addition to the Montessori instructional materials, DMCS first grade teachers also use the following materials to ensure complete and supplemental coverage of the state's academic standards and content domains previously identified:

- Bob Books
- Houghton Mifflin, *Invitations to Literacy*
- Selected McGraw-Hill *Open Court* reading materials

- SRA reading materials

In math, teachers focus on the following curriculum areas:

- Surveys and graphing
- Number recognition to 1,000's place
- Place value
- Addition and subtraction with and without regrouping
- Measurement with standard and non-standard units
- Weight, volume, and capacity
- Concepts of time (especially telling time to the minute and calendar skills)
- Money (quarter, nickel, dime and penny)
- 2-D and 3-D objects and their elements (names, faces, vertices, equivalency, congruity and similarity/dissimilarity).

Montessori materials in mathematics are particularly strong in these early grades. Therefore, DMCS teachers supplement with:

- Rocket Math
- Spectrum Test Prep Math

In science, DMCS first grade curriculum focuses on:

- Matter and its 3 phases
- Properties of air
- Introductory physics concepts
- Elements of water including surface tension, its properties and the water cycle
- The senses
- Animals, their parts, coverings, food and babies; lifecycles and animal/insect growth
- Plant and Earth resources
- Plant parts and lifecycle
- Concepts of sink and float
- Recycling, reducing and reusing
- Composting
- The seasons
- Weather
- How people use plants and animals
- Living and non-living
- Landforms
- Biomes
- Map making
- Globes and astronomy
- Seeds
- Magnetism

- Color mixing

In addition to the Montessori instructional materials, DMCS teachers use the following materials to ensure full access to California's academic content standards:

- McGraw-Hill botany charts
- Harcourt *Science*
- Annual field trip to UC Davis Children's Garden
- Lakeshore models Sun and Earth
- *Science Experiments for Young Learners*

In Social Science, the DMCS first grade curriculum focuses on:

- Structured and thematic exploration of: continents, countries, biomes, and culture
- Leonardo da Vinci and other social/ historical figures in and out of the U.S
- Celebrating local holidays
- Foreign holidays and celebrations
- Understanding globes, maps, compass, and directions
- Daily Pledge of Allegiance
- National symbols

In addition to the Montessori instructional materials, DMCS teachers ensure coverage of the social science academic content standards with the following supplemental materials:

- Harcourt Brace selected social studies materials
- American Legion classroom visits/presentations
- Dixon Public Library field trips
- Mock elections
- Cultural celebrations for classroom and families

Second Grade

In second grade, DMCS students are expected to make at least one year of measured academic progress and to achieve mastery of California standards in each content area.

Language Arts

In language arts, grammar, story-writing and reports are the focus. Grammar is taught with hands-on materials; student work covers nouns, verbs, adjectives, articles, prepositions, adverbs, conjunctions, pronouns, and interjections. Student use grammar symbols that represent each part of speech. The symbols are placed over the particular parts of speech in sentences and paragraphs. Students learn direct and indirect objects within sentences and begin the process of sentence deconstruction and analysis. They write paragraphs and reports linked to our social studies, science, and math curriculum.

Math

In math, students are expected to make a transition from understanding basic facts to more abstract concepts. Students utilize the Montessori bead cabinet, which contains chains, blocks, and other manipulatives that represent numbers and place value. Students then move to color-coded materials that reinforce this place value. By the middle of the year students are doing computations completely in the abstract. They also have begun doing single and double digit multiplication and division using these basic materials. The materials themselves allow us to show concepts that involve algebra, squaring, cubing, and algorithms. It is particularly exciting that in math, the DMCS curriculum allows students to reach far beyond the standards for the second grade.

Social Science and Science

In second grade, students learn how they fit into time and space, specifically how things are now as apposed to long ago. Because the Montessori curriculum is unusually rich and comprehensive, students study units that include but are not limited to: botany, zoology, geography, geology, history, foreign language, cultural studies. The DMCS second grade curriculum is designed to link study of diverse content through math and language arts to build connections among subjects. These units usually culminate with a project, report, or field trip.

The DMCS science and social science curriculum for second grade merits specific discussion. Students begin with a focus on the Big Bang itself. Montessori curriculum provides a very clear and well sequenced series of lessons, utilizing timelines, science experiments, and historical re-enactments to bring students from the beginning of time up to the present day. Students learn about the formation of Earth, the beginnings of life on our planet, the geologic movements of the continents, and the history of humans on our planet. Students also research their own family histories and the history of our local community. Each unit is designed to help students achieve a greater understanding of who and where they are in the context of history.

The DMCS second grade curriculum also ensures that students appreciate the wonder and beauty of the natural world and also the historic accomplishments of humanity. Students develop a sense of their own place in the universe, their individual responsibility, and their potential to enhance both the natural and cultural environment in which they live. Their studies of nature and people emphasize the tremendous diversity that abounds in the world, which ultimately leads also to an attitude of tolerance and respect.

For second grade, DMCS supplemental materials help students become familiar with the California Standards Tests format, and give extra practice in all areas. They link directly to the California State Standards for the 2nd grade, and allow direct instruction as well as independent practice time for students. Following is a matrix of the supplemental materials and a brief synopsis of how each is used.

Supplementary Material	Classroom Use	California State Standards
SRA	Strengthens reading comprehension and practice with testing format	Reading/Comprehension 1.0, 2.0, 3.0
Rocket Math (Otter Creek)	Helps students reach automaticity with their math facts. Students finish addition,	Math (number sense) 2.0, 3.0

	and subtraction books (many also begin/finish multiplication and division)	
Words Their Way	Comprehensive spelling and language development program to improve word knowledge and assessment tools for appropriate instruction	Writing 1.7, 1.8 Reading 1.0
Board Math	Help students practice testing questions orally to reinforce learning	Math All standards
Board Language	Help students practice testing questions orally to reinforce learning	Language All standards
Houghton Mifflin Math units and worksheets	Give students extra practice during class and at home with Math concepts	Math All standards
Take-it-to-your seat vocabulary centers	Opportunity for independent practice with homophones, synonyms, and other challenging vocabulary	Reading/Vocabulary 1.7, 1.8, 1.9
Daily Language Review Daily Academic Vocabulary Daily Word Problems Daily Paragraph Editing Daily Handwriting	Students practice language skills and math skills on a daily basis in a variety of areas to strengthen their knowledge base and become familiar with the testing language and format	Language All standards Math All standards
Curriculum Associates Benchmark Testing	Students complete tests in Language Arts and Math each trimester to see growth over time, and help drive our instruction.	Language All standards Math All standards
Spectrum Test Prep Books: Math and Language	Extra practice with standards based testing, and an assessment tool	All standards

Third Grade

In third grade, students are expected to make one year of measured progress and to achieve mastery of the California state standards.

Students continue their transition from concrete knowledge to abstract reasoning and application of that reasoning. Students begin the year learning standards such as parts of speech or multiplication with concrete materials and by the end of the year will be able to complete these activities without materials. They learn how to utilize the materials for more in-depth learning.

In Language Arts, third graders read grade level texts with appropriate fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. They think critically about what they have read and distinguish various types of literature. In writing, students compose a comprehensive paragraph with proper grade level punctuation. To meet these goals, students use Montessori materials and supplemental materials (see table below). The Montessori philosophy is especially strong in developing grammar skills. Each part of speech correlates with a grammar symbol, which students use to diagram the parts of speech in a sentence. The farm allows students to use concrete materials to practice parts of speech and is especially valuable for ELL students. All Montessori materials are incorporated into the work period and used as students are ready for lessons.

Supplemental materials are used to enhance writing and reading instruction. Writer’s Workshop, Words Their Way Spelling, and reading groups occur weekly during the work period. Students are required to complete three to four SRAs a week independently. The L.A. centers are used as needed during the work period. Daily, students participate in Silent Sustained Reading (a time when many read books for Battle of the Books) and read alouds.

Montessori Materials	Supplemental Materials
Sentence Analysis and Diagramming	Writer’s Workshop
Grammar Boxes (parts of speech)	Words Their Way (spelling program)
Green Material (digraphs, word families)	SRA Reading Laboratory by McGraw-Hill
Cursive Sandpaper Letters	Battle of the Books Program
The Farm	Language Arts Centers by Lakeshore
Grammar Symbols	Language Arts Centers by Evan Moore
	Read Aloud of grade level texts
	Daily Silent Sustained Reading (SSR)
	Weekly Reading Groups
	Spectrum Test Prep
	STAR Released Questions

In Math, students learn math facts in multiplication and division and use those skills to solve word problems that require critical thinking. Third graders begin to use symbols in algebra and in geometry they study measurement, geometric figures and angles. They learn how to express probability. The Montessori materials allow students to begin learning these concepts concretely. Students learn to multiply with the unit multiplication board, but practice this skill abstractly daily with the Rocket Math program. When analyzing the chart below, the breath of Montessori materials is obvious. For many of the materials, students have been using them since kindergarten. Now they are learning the in-depth mathematical reasoning behind each material. For example, they began to use the bead cabinet for skip counting, and now they use it for multiplication. Later they learn how to use it for squaring and cubing. They learned how to add and subtract on the large bead frame (similar to an abacus), and now they will learn how to compute multi-digit multiplication problems on it. Through the sequential order of Montessori, students are making natural progressions in Math with concrete materials.

Even though the Montessori Math materials are especially strong, DMCS has supplemented our program with various materials. Students use the Rocket Math Facts Program daily to learn Math facts, an essential goal in third grade. The *Mathematics* text by Houghton Mifflin provides

students with a variety of grade level problems to solve across the various standards while working in class. The Houghton Mifflin online Math resources are utilized primarily in students' weekly homework packets. Homework assignments vary by students' status and progress towards proficiency.

Montessori Materials	Supplemental Materials
Unit Multiplication and Division Board	<i>Mathematics</i> Houghton Mifflin text 2002
Multiplication and Division Working Charts	Houghton Mifflin online resources
Stamp Game	Rocket Math Facts Program
Negative Snake Game	Math Centers by Lakeshore
Pythagoras Board	Math Centers by Evan Moore
Elementary Banker Game	Teacher Created Materials
Fraction Insets	Spectrum Test Prep
Long Division Materials	
Detective Game (a game of triangles & angles)	
Large Bead Frame	
Bead Cabinet	
Geometry Cabinet	
Four Triangle Boxes	
Decimal Board	
Area Material	

In Social Studies, third graders study their community and change. Though Montessori does not have specific materials to meet all these standards, lessons embrace the Montessori philosophy of active, hands-on learning. When studying history, Montessori asks students to consider the fundamental human needs (shelter, food, climate, values, resources) for people in a specific location and during a specific time period. Students examine how humans act to meet these needs. For instance, when students study Native American tribes like the Patwins, who used to live in this area, they consider how they met their fundamental needs. What shelter did they have? What foods did they eat? Why? Students explore these types of questions in research reports. Students read *From Sea to Shining Sea* and other expository texts to help answer such questions. Many lessons are enhanced through teachers' thoughtful lesson plans and additional materials.

Montessori Materials	Supplemental Materials
Land Forms	Dixon & Solano History Binder
Maps Cabinet	Research Reports
Control Charts for Maps	Fieldtrips
Pin Poking/Creation of Maps	<i>From Sea to Shining Sea</i> Houghton Mifflin
	Expository Texts
	Teacher Created Materials

In Science, students study matter & energy, light, adaptations, habitats, and astronomy. Montessori encourages investigative learning, and that is the focus of scientific inquiry at DMCS. When learning an aspect of science students often begin with experiments to allow for

self discovery. Many of these are from purchased science kits or are teacher created. Students explore these concepts further in lessons or in research reports. Student field trips are integral to third grade science, and DMCS students go to the Davis Explorit Science Center, the Yolo Basin Wetlands, and the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

Montessori Materials	Supplemental Materials
The 5 Great Lessons (creation of universe)	Science kits from Learning Resources
	Experiments
	Expository Texts
	Fieldtrips
	Research Reports

Fourth Grade

In fourth grade, DMCS students are expected to make at least one year of measured academic progress and to achieve mastery of the California academic content standards.

DMCS students at the fourth grade level continue their transition from concrete concepts abstract inquiry and reasoning. They continue utilizing Montessori materials for more in-depth learning.

In Language Arts, fourth graders read grade level narrative and expository texts with appropriate fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. Students think critically about what they have read, use appropriate reading strategies and distinguish the structural features of literature. In writing, students create coherent, multiple-paragraph compositions with proper grade level punctuation in various genres. Students edit and revise their own work.

To meet these learning objectives, DMCS fourth graders use Montessori materials and supplemental materials (see table below). The Montessori curriculum is especially strong in developing grammar skills. Each part of speech correlates with a grammar symbol, which students use to diagram the parts of speech in a sentence. All Montessori materials are incorporated into the work period and used as students are ready for lessons.

Supplemental materials are used to enhance writing and reading instruction. Writer’s Workshop, Words Their Way Spelling, and reading groups occur weekly during the work period. Fourth graders use the writing lessons outlined in *10 Easy Writing Lessons* to target multiple paragraph compositions. Students are required to complete three to four SRAs per week independently. The language arts centers are used as needed during the work period. Daily, students participate in Silent Sustained Reading (a time when many read books for Battle of the Books) and classroom “read-alouds.”

Montessori Materials	Supplemental Materials
Sentence Analysis and Diagramming	Writer’s Workshop
Grammar Boxes (parts of speech)	Words Their Way (spelling program)
Green Material (digraphs, word families)	SRA Reading Laboratory by McGraw-Hill
Cursive Sandpaper Letters	Battle of the Books Program
The Farm	Language Arts Centers by Lakeshore

Grammar Symbols	Language Arts Centers by Evan Moore
	Read Aloud of grade level texts
	Daily Silent Sustained Reading (SSR)
	Weekly Reading Groups
	Spectrum Test Prep
	STAR Released Test Questions
	<i>10 Easy Writing Lessons That Get Kids Ready for Writing Assessments</i> by Mary Rose, Scholastic ©1999

In Math, students utilize their math facts knowledge for multiple-digit multiplication and long division problems; those skills are then used to solve word problems that require critical thinking. In algebra, fourth graders use variables to solve simple computations that include parentheses. In geometry students solve complex perimeter and area problems, graph on coordinate grids, and study geometric objects. In statistics, students organize, represent, and interpret data as well make predictions in probability.

Students use Montessori to learn these concepts concretely. For example, students learn to divide on the long division material before solving it abstractly on paper. Students begin multiple-digit multiplication on the checker board and decimals on the decimal checker board. Students use the Montessori sequence of materials to ensure they have the necessary skills before moving onto a new concept.

Even though the Montessori Math materials are especially strong, we have supplemented our program with various materials. We use the Rocket Math Facts Program daily to help our students learn and maintain their Math facts. The Houghton Mifflin online Math resources are utilized primarily in students' weekly homework packets. Homework assignments vary by students' status and progress towards academic proficiency. The Math centers in our classrooms are utilized during different units, such as a probability unit. We use the Spectrum Test Prep as an informal assessment after completing a standard. The STAR released questions are used in class as review. DMCS teachers have adapted released STAR test items to create word problems for students to do in class.

Montessori Materials	Supplemental Materials
Unit Multiplication and Division Board	Houghton Mifflin online resources
Multiplication and Division Working Charts	Rocket Math Facts Program
Stamp Game	Math Centers by Lakeshore
Negative Number Line	Math Centers by Evan Moore
Pythagoras Board	Teacher Created Materials
Box of Sticks (geometry)	Spectrum Test Prep
Fraction Insets	STAR Released Test Questions
Long Division Materials	
Detective Game (a game of triangles & angles)	
Large Bead Frame	
Bead Cabinet	

Geometry Cabinet	
Four Triangle Boxes	
Decimal Checker Board	
Checker Board	
Decanomeal Box	
Snake Game (negative and positive)	
Area material	

In Social Studies, fourth graders study changes in California. Though Montessori does not have specific materials to meet all these standards, DMCS teachers create learning experiences that follow Montessori’s emphasis on student centered learning. When studying history, students examine how different populations in California met their fundamental human needs. For example, when studying missions students explore the differences between the ways Native Americans and Spaniards met their fundamental needs. Students explore these types of questions in research reports.

Students read *California Adventures in Time and Place* and other expository texts to help answer such questions. The most important unit for fourth graders at DMCS is on pioneers because students participate in the Sutter’s Fort Environmental Living Program. This is not only a fieldtrip where students participate in daily activities of pioneers (such as candle making, baking, basket weaving, carpentry, weaving, etc.) at Sutter’s Fort, but a learning experience that requires enormous preparation in the classroom. Students study pioneer life in class. They adopt the persona of a character from that time period, people like John Sutter and James Marshall. Students research their character so they can write a report and give an oral presentation. In addition, students wear a period accurate costume when giving their presentation and when at the fort. The social studies curriculum is as interactive as possible.

Montessori Materials	Supplemental Materials
Land Forms	<i>California Adventures in Time and Place</i> McGraw-Hill ©2000
Maps Cabinet	California Missions Simulation by interact
Control Charts for Maps	California Gold Rush Simulation by interact
Pin Poking/Creation of Maps	Expository Texts
	Teacher Created Materials
	Fieldtrips
	Sutter’s Fort Environmental Living Program

In Science, fourth grade students study electricity & magnetism, organisms’ needs for life and survival, rocks & minerals, and weather’s affect on Earth’s land. Montessori encourages investigative learning, and students conduct experiments to allow for self discovery. Many experiments are from purchased science kits or are teacher created. As one example, when studying rocks & minerals students use the Rocks & Minerals kit by Learning Resources to conduct an experiment to test the hardness of various minerals. Students then made their own scale after testing various minerals and then compared it to the Mohs scale of mineral hardness. Through research reports, students further explore grade level standards. Students also go on

several science-related fieldtrips like the Explorit Science Center, the Yolo Basin Wetlands, and the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

Montessori Materials	Supplemental Materials
The 5 Great Lessons (creation of universe)	Science kits from Learning Resources
	Experiments
	Expository Texts
	Fieldtrips
	Research Reports

Fifth Grade

At DMCS fifth grade students are expected to make at least one year of measured progress and achieve mastery of California's academic content standards.

DMCS provides a curriculum that integrates deeply Montessori and supplemental materials. Students learn increasingly abstract materials and prepare to undertake increasingly independent investigations.

For fifth grade, DMCS embeds in narrative form the state learning expectations and how and where the Montessori curriculum builds on the state standards.

Math

California State Standards

By the end of grade five, students increase their facility with the four basic arithmetic operations applied to fractions, decimals, and positive and negative numbers. They know and use common measuring units to determine length and area and know and use formulas to determine the volume of simple geometric figures. Students know the concept of angle measurement and use a protractor and compass to solve problems. They use grids, tables, graphs, and charts to record and analyze data.

Montessori Grade Level Content

In addition to the mastery of grade level state standards, students master grade level content of the Montessori curriculum for Mathematics and Geometry. Students master addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of positive and negative integers. Students master addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of fractions. Students understand mixed numbers. Students learn how to compute the area of a trapezoid, rhombus, pentagon, and decagon. Students are introduced to the problem of finding square and cube roots.

ELA

California State Standards

Students use their knowledge of word origins and word relationships, as well as historical and literary context clues, to determine the meaning of specialized vocabulary and to understand the precise meaning of grade-level-appropriate words.

Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They describe and connect the essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of the text by using their knowledge of text structure, organization, and purpose. The selections in Recommended Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students. In addition, by grade eight, students read one million words annually on their own, including a good representation of grade-level-appropriate narrative and expository text (e.g., classic and contemporary literature, magazines, newspapers, online information). In grade five, students make progress toward this goal.

Students read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of literature. They begin to find ways to clarify the ideas and make connections between literary works. The selections in Recommended Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students.

Students write clear, coherent, and focused essays. The writing exhibits the students' awareness of the audience and purpose. Essays contain formal introductions, supporting evidence, and conclusions. Students progress through the stages of the writing process as needed.

Students write narrative, expository, persuasive, and descriptive texts of at least 500 to 700 words in each genre. Student writing demonstrates a command of standard American English and the research, organizational, and drafting strategies outlined in Writing Standard 1.0.

Students write and speak with a command of standard English conventions appropriate to this grade level.

Students deliver focused, coherent presentations that convey ideas clearly and relate to the background and interests of the audience. They evaluate the content of oral communication.

Students deliver well-organized formal presentations employing traditional rhetorical strategies (e.g., narration, exposition, persuasion, description). Student speaking demonstrates a command of standard American English and the organizational and delivery strategies outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard 1.0.

Montessori Grade Level Content

In addition to the mastery of grade level state standards, students master grade level content of the Montessori curriculum for English-Language Arts. In the upper elementary classroom, there is an emphasis on independent and group research. Students in the fifth grade continue developing strong research skills. Fifth grade students routinely compose research essays on grade level standards based content (e.g. American History prior to 1850, periodic table of elements.) Students in the fifth grade continue to master the various writing formats of

paragraphs and essays. All students in the fifth grade participate in the Junior Great Books Program.

History & Social Science

California State Standards

Students in grade five study the development of the nation up to 1850, with an emphasis on the people who were already here, when and from where others arrived, and why they came. Students learn about the colonial government founded on Judeo-Christian principles, the ideals of the Enlightenment, and the English traditions of self-government. They recognize that ours is a nation that has a constitution that derives its power from the people, that has gone through a revolution, that once sanctioned slavery, that experienced conflict over land with the original inhabitants, and that experienced a westward movement that took its people across the continent. Studying the cause, course, and consequences of the early explorations through the War for Independence and western expansion is central to students' fundamental understanding of how the principles of the American republic form the basis of a pluralistic society in which individual rights are secured.

Montessori Grade Level Content

Students in a Montessori classroom are introduced to historical topics from a more general point of view. Students are introduced to more specific topics once they have an academically appropriate context for more specific topics. In this way, the Montessori History and Social Science curriculum is used to support the academic learning of the state standards in this content area. Students at each grade level are given the five Great Lessons of the Montessori curriculum at the beginning of each year. Each year, students review the big picture and more completely integrate their learning of new specifics with what they have learned in the past. California history is presented to the student in the greater context of the history of the nation, civilization, the Earth, and even the Universe.

Science

California State Standards

Students in grade five will learn about chemical reactions and discover the special (and shared) properties of metallic elements. They will clearly distinguish between molecules and atoms and chemical compounds and mixtures and learn about the organization of atoms on the periodic table of the elements. They can then be shown how particular chemical reactions (e.g., photosynthesis and respiration) drive the physiological processes of living cells. They will add to what they have learned in previous grade levels about the external characteristics and adaptations of plants and animals and learn about some of the fundamental principles of physiology. They will learn about blood circulation and respiration in humans; digestion of food and collection and excretion of wastes in animals; the movement of water and minerals from the roots of plants to the leaves; and the transport of sugar generated during photosynthesis from the leaves to the other parts of the plant.

Students in grade five also study the hydrologic cycle (water cycle), the process by which water moves between the land and the oceans. They will learn how the hydrologic cycle influences the distribution of weather-related precipitation and, as a consequence, the types and rates of erosion. They will also study the solar system and learn that it contains asteroids and comets in addition to the Sun, planets, and moons. They will learn the composition of the Sun and the relationship between gravity and planetary orbits.

Montessori Grade Level Content

As is the case with the History and Social Science curriculum, the Montessori curriculum in Science is used explicitly to support the academic learning of the state content standards in this area. Students are introduced to the Solar System through a lesson on theories of the origin of the Universe. Chemistry is also introduced through the lesson on theories of the origin of the Universe as well as chemistry's relation to physical science and biology. Students in a Montessori classroom approach their studies of the hydrologic cycle through a study of the history of the Earth and its formation.

Sixth Grade

DMCS students are expected to make at least one year measured progress and achieve mastery of California's academic content standards.

DMCS provides a curriculum that integrates deeply Montessori and supplemental materials.

Students learn increasingly abstract materials and prepare to undertake increasingly independent investigations.

For sixth grade, DMCS has embedded in narrative form the state learning expectations and how and where the Montessori curriculum builds on the state standards.

Math

California State Standards

By the end of grade six, students have mastered the four arithmetic operations with whole numbers, positive fractions, positive decimals, and positive and negative integers; they accurately compute and solve problems. They apply their knowledge to statistics and probability. Students understand the concepts of mean, median, and mode of data sets and how to calculate the range. They analyze data and sampling processes for possible bias and misleading conclusions; they use addition and multiplication of fractions routinely to calculate the probabilities for compound events. Students conceptually understand and work with ratios and proportions; they compute percentages (e.g., tax, tips, interest). Students know about π and the formulas for the circumference and area of a circle. They use letters for numbers in formulas involving geometric shapes and in ratios to represent an unknown part of an expression. They solve one-step linear equations.

Montessori Grade Level Content

In addition to the mastery of grade level state standards, students master grade level content of the Montessori curriculum for Mathematics and Geometry. Students learn how to compute the square and cube roots of six digit numbers. Students learn to square and cube polynomials. They understand how to factor polynomials. Students are introduced to non-decimal based number systems. Equivalence between solids (prisms with difference bases.)

ELA

California State Standards

Students use their knowledge of word origins and word relationships, as well as historical and literary context clues, to determine the meaning of specialized vocabulary and to understand the precise meaning of grade-level-appropriate words.

Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They describe and connect the essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of the text by using their knowledge of text structure, organization, and purpose. The selections in Recommended Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students. Students read a good representation of grade level appropriate narrative and expository text (e.g., classic and contemporary literature, magazines, newspapers, online information).

Students read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of literature that reflect and enhance their studies of history and social science. They clarify the ideas and connect them to other literary works. The selections in Recommended Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students.

Students write clear, coherent, and focused essays. The writing exhibits students' awareness of the audience and purpose. Essays contain formal introductions, supporting evidence, and conclusions. Students progress through the stages of the writing process as needed.

Students write narrative, expository, persuasive, and descriptive texts of at least 500 to 700 words in each genre. Student writing demonstrates a command of standard American English and the research, organizational, and drafting strategies outlined in Writing Standard 1.0.

Students write and speak with a command of standard English conventions appropriate to this grade level.

Students deliver focused, coherent presentations that convey ideas clearly and relate to the background and interests of the audience. They evaluate the content of oral communication.

Students deliver well-organized formal presentations employing traditional rhetorical strategies (e.g., narration, exposition, persuasion, description). Student speaking demonstrates a command of standard American English and the organizational and delivery strategies outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard 1.0.

Montessori Grade Level Content

In addition to the mastery of grade level state standards, students master grade level content of the Montessori curriculum for the English-Language Arts. Students have knowledge of the historical origin of writing and the stages of development through time. Students understand the differences between scripts composed of pictographs and ideograms, syllabary scripts, and alphabets. Students create their own system of pictographs, as well as a syllabary script and alphabet based off of their system of pictographs. By the end of the sixth grade, students master the following writing formats: Example, Compare & Contrast, Cause & Effect, Analogy, Definition, Process. All students in the sixth grade participate in the Junior Great Books based program that places an emphasis on developing critical questions, weighing evidence and support for a writer's position on an issue, and learning how to participate in a small group, seminar style discussion on primary texts.

History & Social Science

California State Standards

Students in grade six expand their understanding of history by studying the people and events that ushered in the dawn of the major Western and non-Western ancient civilizations. Geography is of special significance in the development of the human story. Continued emphasis is placed on the everyday lives, problems, and accomplishments of people, their role in developing social, economic, and political structures, as well as in establishing and spreading ideas that helped transform the world forever. Students develop higher levels of critical thinking by considering why civilizations developed where and when they did, why they became dominant, and why they declined. Students analyze the interactions among the various cultures, emphasizing their enduring contributions and the link, despite time, between the contemporary and ancient worlds.

Montessori Grade Level Content

Students in a Montessori classroom are introduced to historical topics from a more general point of view. Students are introduced to more specific topics once they have an academically appropriate context for more specific topics. In this way, the Montessori History and Social Science curriculum is used to support the academic learning of the state standards in this content area. Students at each grade level are given the five Great Lessons of the Montessori curriculum at the beginning of each year. Each year, students review the big picture and more completely integrate their learning of new specifics with what they have learned in the past. The history of ancient civilizations is presented to the students in the greater context of the history of the Upper Paleolithic, the Old Stone Age, the Earth, and even the Universe.

Science

California State Standards

The science curriculum in grade six emphasizes the study of earth sciences. Students at this age are increasing their awareness of the environment and are ready to learn more. The standards in grade six present many of the foundations of geology and geophysics, including plate tectonics and earth structure, topography, and energy. The material is linked to resource management and ecology, building on what students have learned in previous grades. Unless students take a high school earth science class, what they learn in grade six will be their foundation for earth science literacy.

Montessori Grade Level Content

As is the case with the History and Social Science curriculum, the Montessori curriculum in Science is used explicitly to support the academic learning of the state content standards in this area. Students in the sixth grade focus much of their science based learning in the area of Earth Science. The academic context and knowledge that the sixth grade student has acquired in the previous two years serves as a strong foundation for science based inquiry at a more abstract, logical level. Students in the sixth grade are for the third time given lessons on the history of the Universe, the Earth and of life. The natural interest of students in these topics, as well as the research skills acquired in the previous two years, serves as a strong academic foundation for learning success.

Seventh and Eighth Grades

The seventh and eighth grade curriculum continues to evolve at DMCS. Students are expected to make at least one year's measured progress and to master the California academic content standards.

As a multi-grade/multi-age classroom, DMCS has established a two-year curriculum that reflects the entire range of California's academic standards, while providing an extended time-frame for students to master that content. In the middle grades, preparation of students for their next phase in life reflects both the Montessori philosophy and the DMCS core mission. DMCS seeks to prepare students for success in traditional high school settings and to further student opportunities for college, careers, and productive citizenship and community service.

Seventh grade students in mathematics focus on mastery of all mathematical operations, including fractions, decimals, percents; statistics; utilizing geometric formulas; mastering squaring, cubing and square/cube roots; developing competence in various step equations and inequalities; and preparing for algebra in the 8th grade through introducing the quadratic formula and understanding aspects and terminology related to graphing. DMCS expects to achieve enrollment of all its students in Algebra as eighth graders by 2012.

Montessori materials provide an excellent visual/manipulate resource for proving concepts or as remediation to aide abstraction. However, to ensure success in 8th grade Algebra and future math coursework, DMCS believes that students need to work from a California State adopted

math textbook. DMCS adopted Prentice Hall California Pre-Algebra and Algebra textbooks as the primary curriculum for 7th / 8th grade and use what Montessori offers as a secondary resource to bridge what is known and understood with the presentation in the standardized format and terminology adapted by the state of California.

Similarly, Montessori education in language arts is beneficial in the earlier elementary grades, with strength in learning grammar and the structure of English. However, writing instruction, literary critique and literary elements required in the 7th/8th grades is not a component of Montessori materials. Here, the state has clearly defined standards and the adopted textbooks for Language Arts instruction are the primary resource; DMCS uses the Prentice Hall Penguin Edition Language Arts anthology and Writing and Grammar handbooks for 7th and 8th grade instruction.

There is a more balanced integration of Montessori and state aligned textbook instruction in Science for both grades. In the 7th grade, Montessori materials provide a strong foundation with the life sciences, particularly around classification of the plant and animal kingdoms, scientific characteristics used for classification, anatomy and physiology for systems of plant and animal life, evolution and earth history. Integration of labs providing hands on experience with light and genetics are a necessary complement. Montessori complements the 8th grade curriculum in the study of states of matter, chemical building blocks, forces, reactions and astronomy. Integration of labs or activities providing hands on experience is necessary for the chemistry and periodic table standards. Knowing the student needs to be prepared for the traditional setting of high school sciences, these thorough Montessori lessons are mixed in with the instruction using a state aligned textbook. Part of the practical life emphasis associated with text usage is to assist students to develop the skills to glean the key ideas and concepts of written language so they can excel in any academic environment. DMCS has adopted the State approved and aligned Prentice Hall California Life and Physical Science Textbooks for instruction.

In the middle grades, correlation between Montessori's philosophy of history instruction and the California state standards is not strong. Therefore, state-adopted materials are the primary source of content instruction, with the Montessori philosophy of history instruction used to develop cultural sensitivity for people of past cultures and understanding the underlying causes for past actions and traditions.

Montessori provides an excellent, scientifically based foundation for elementary education, but her work shifts to philosophy for the child above the age of 12. The state of California has established specific standards that are specialized in the content areas. It is fair to say that at DMCS, Montessori philosophy is applied to the method of instruction, keeping it student centered, individualized and inquiry based. Montessori materials are integrated where they apply as a beneficial supplement. Specific lessons that demonstrate or provide experience to the student are integrated in instruction. In fulfilling the goal of preparing the student for success in high school, the Jr. High years are to bridge the Montessori education with the traditional setting by building competent use of state adopted materials for instruction, content area studies and assessment, or we are not properly serving the Montessori student. It is for this reason that Montessori materials serve primarily as a supplement and support to state adopted materials at these grade levels.

DMCS and Students with special needs: students performing below grade-level, above grade-level, English learners, and students with disabilities

Below Grade-level Performance:

Students who are determined to be performing below grade level—via teacher observation, classroom assignments and assessments, California Standards Tests and other criteria—are provided targeted support and intervention.

DMCS uses the Curriculum Associates instruments, SRA Reading, and other tools at specified timelines during the year to monitor student progress. DMCS teachers also work in grade-level and content area groups to develop grade-level skill expectations that are matched to the state's academic standards.

Students working below grade-level have many intensive strategies available to them and their families. These include:

1. Individualized homework packets bring intensive lessons that are scripted to each student's specific and identified weaknesses.
2. Targeted individual and small group instruction with DMCS teachers, aides, and intervention specialists.
3. DMCS has created a staffing schedule where classroom teachers with intervention expertise and experience along with intervention specialists provide reading and math support
4. DMCS emphasizes the flexibility of instructional programs and curriculum content so that students have access to a range of materials and methodologies that are consistent with improving their learning.
5. Students can be and are grouped for assistance which also can be in a pull-out session from the regular classroom.

Above Grade-level Performance:

The multi-age and multi-grade classrooms at DMCS lend themselves extraordinarily well to providing appropriate challenges for students working above grade level. As with all other students, individualized homework packets are tailored to each student's progress. Additionally, DMCS offers students working above grade-level:

1. Opportunities for deeper inquiry and research, including investigation and inquiry; presentations to classmates and schoolmates through research projects.
2. Work and coordinated placement in advanced classrooms as an opportunity to work on more complex content and with older, more advanced students
3. Opportunities to use their advanced academic standing to build confidence by teaching other students at the school, often by leading lessons to either small groups of students.

Plan for English Learners

Overview

The Charter School will meet all applicable legal requirements for English Learners (“EL”) as it pertains to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, EL and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, re-classification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing requirement. The Charter School will implement strategies for serving English Learners which are research-based, supported by Charter School resource, and evaluated annually for effectiveness.

Home Language Survey

The Charter School will administer the home language survey upon a student’s initial enrollment into the Charter School (on enrollment forms).

CELDT Testing

All students who indicate that their home language is other than English will be CELDT tested within thirty days of initial enrollment¹ and at least annually thereafter between July 1 and October 31st until re-designated as fluent English proficient.

The Charter School will notify all parents of its responsibility for CELDT testing and of CELDT results within thirty days of receiving results from publisher. The CELDT shall be used to fulfill the requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act for annual English proficiency testing.

English Learner Instructional Strategies and Curriculum

Students identified as English learners benefit from access to positive features of DMCS, including:

1. Individualized homework
2. A focus on instructional tools to bring students access to conversational and academic language
3. Language tools, such as Leapfrog, used in the early primary grades
4. Peer assistance
5. DMCS teachers and aides set aside specific instructional time and support for English learners during the day—as part of their weekly work plan and when doing individual and small group lessons—to focus on English language acquisition.
6. Classroom and school assessment instruments, along with teacher observation and assessments monitor and report progress.

¹ The thirty-day requirement applies to students who are entering a California public school for the first time or for students who have not yet been CELDT tested. All other students who have indicated a home language other than English will continue with annual CELDT testing from their prior school of enrollment.

Reclassification Procedures

Reclassification procedures utilize multiple criteria in determining whether to classify a pupil as proficient in English including, but not limited to, all of the following:

- Assessment of language proficiency using an objective assessment instrument including, but not limited to the CELDT,
- Participation of the pupil's classroom teachers and any other certificated staff with direct responsibility for teaching or placement decisions of the pupil to evaluate the pupil's curriculum mastery,
- Parental opinion and consultation, achieved through notice to parents or guardians of the language reclassification and placement including a description of the reclassification process and the parents opportunity to participate, and encouragement of the participation of parents or guardians in the Charter School's reclassification procedure including seeking their opinion and consultation during the reclassification process
- Comparison of the pupil's performance in basic skills against an empirically established range of performance and basic skills based upon the performance of English proficient pupils of the same age that demonstrate to others that the pupil is sufficiently proficient in English to participate effectively in a curriculum designed for pupils of the same age whose native language is English.

Plan for Serving Students with Disabilities

Overview

The Charter School shall comply with all applicable State and Federal Laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ("Section 504"), the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act ("IDEIA").

The Charter School shall be categorized as a "public school" in conformity with Education Code Section 47641(b). DMCS is an LEA in partnership with the El Dorado County Office of Education Charter SELPA.

The Charter School shall comply with all state and federal laws related to the provision of special education instruction and related services and all SELPA policies and procedures; and shall utilize appropriate SELPA forms.

The Charter School shall be solely responsible for its compliance with Section 504 and the ADA.

The facilities to be utilized by the School shall be accessible for all students with disabilities.

Services for Students under the “IDEIA”

The following description regarding how special education and related services will be provided and funded is being proposed by the Charter School for the sole purpose of providing a reasonably comprehensive description of the special education program in the Charter Petition. The specific manner in which special education and related services will be provided and funded shall be in accordance with the expectations of the El Dorado County Office of Education Charter SELPA. The following provisions are meant to summarize the Charter School Petitioner’s understanding of the manner in which special education instruction and related services shall be provided. The following language aligns the typical “industry standard” arrangement with State and Federal law, which requires that students in charter schools receive special education and related services in the same manner as any other student in the EDCOE Charter SELPA.

The Charter School intends to provide special education instruction and related services in accordance with the IDEIA, Education Code requirements, and applicable policies and practices of the Special Education Local Plan Area (“SELPA”). The Charter School shall become an independent LEA and join a SELPA pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(a) either on its own or with a grouping of charter school LEA’s as a consortium.

The Charter School will follow EDCOE Charter SELPA policies and procedures, and shall utilize SELPA forms in seeking out and identifying and serving students who may qualify for special education programs and services and for responding to record requests and parent complaints, and maintaining the confidentiality of pupil records. The Charter School will comply with EDCOE Charter SELPA protocol as to the delineation of duties between the SELPA central office and the local school site in providing special education instruction and related services to identified pupils. Regular meetings and training between the Charter School and the SELPA will occur to review special education policies, procedures, protocols, and forms of the SELPA and SELPA protocol. This will ensure that the Charter School and the EDCOE Charter SELPA have an ongoing mutual understanding of protocol and will facilitate ongoing compliance.

The Charter School acknowledges the importance of cooperating with the SELPA so that appropriate special education services are provided to Charter School students. The Charter School agrees to promptly respond to all SELPA inquiries, to comply with SELPA directives, and to allow the SELPA access to Charter School students, staff, facilities, equipment and records as required to fulfill all SELPA obligations under this Agreement or imposed by law.

Staffing

All special education services at the Charter School will be delivered by individuals or agencies qualified to provide special education services as required by California’s Education Code and the IDEIA. Charter School staff shall participate in all needed in-service training relating to special education.

The Charter School will be responsible for the hiring, training (in conjunction with the EDCOE SELPA), and employment of site staff necessary to provide special education services to its students, including, without limitation, special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and resource. The Charter School shall ensure that all special education staff hired by the Charter School is qualified pursuant to SEPLA policies, as well as meet all legal requirements. The SELPA may review the qualifications of all special education staff hired by the Charter School and may require pre-approval of all hires to ensure consistency with SELPA policies. The Charter School shall be responsible for the hiring, training, and employment of itinerant staff necessary to provide special education services to Charter School students, including, without limitation, speech therapists, occupational therapists, behavioral therapists, and psychologists.

Notification and Coordination

The Charter School shall follow SELPA policies as they apply to implementation of special education services.

The Charter School shall follow SELPA policies as they apply for notifying SELPA personnel regarding the discipline of special education students to ensure SELPA pre-approval prior to imposing a suspension or expulsion. The Charter School shall assist in the coordination of any communications and immediately act according to SELPA administrative policies relating to disciplining special education students.

Identification and Referral

The Charter School shall have the responsibility to identify, refer, and work cooperatively in locating Charter School students who have or may have exceptional needs that qualify them to receive special education services. The Charter School will implement SELPA policies and procedures to ensure timely identification and referral of students who have, or may have, such exceptional needs. A pupil shall be referred for special education only after the resources of the regular education program have been considered, and where appropriate, utilized.

It is the Charter School's understanding that the EDCOE Charter SELPA shall provide the Charter School with assistance that it generally provides its schools in the identification and referral processes. The SELPA shall have unfettered access to all Charter School student records and information in order to serve all of Charter School's students' special needs.

The Charter School will follow child-find procedures to identify all students who may require assessment to consider special education eligibility and special education and related services in the case that general education interventions do not provide a free appropriate public education to the student in question.

Assessments

The term “assessments” shall have the same meaning as the term “evaluation” in the IDEIA, as provided in Section 1414, Title 20 of the United States Code. The Charter School shall work to obtain parent/guardian consent to assess Charter School students as necessary..

IEP Meetings

The Charter School shall arrange and notice the necessary IEP meetings. IEP team membership shall be in compliance with state and federal law. The Charter School shall be responsible for having the following individuals in attendance at the IEP: the Principal and/or the Charter School designated representative with appropriate administrative authority as required by the IDEIA; the student’s special education teacher; the student’s general education teacher if the student is or may be in a regular education classroom; the student, if appropriate; and other Charter School representatives who are knowledgeable about the regular education program at the Charter School and/or about the student. The Charter School’s shall arrange for the attendance or participation of all other necessary staff that may include, but are not limited to, an appropriate administrator to comply with the requirements of the IDEIA, a speech therapist, psychologist, resource specialist, and behavior specialist; and shall document the IEP meeting and provide of notice of parental rights.

IEP Development

The Charter School will make the decisions regarding eligibility, goals/objectives, program, services, placement, and exit from special education pursuant to the SELPA’s IEP process. Programs, services and placements shall be provided to all eligible Charter School students in accordance with the policies, procedures and requirements of the SELPA and State and Federal law.

IEP Implementation

The Charter School shall be responsible for all school site implementation of the IEP. The Charter School shall provide the parents with timely reports on the student’s progress as provided in the student’s IEP, and at least quarterly or as frequently as progress reports are provided for the Charter School’s non-special education students, whichever is more. The Charter School shall also provide all home-school coordination and information exchange unless directed otherwise by the SELPA. The Charter School shall also be responsible for providing all curriculum, classroom materials, classroom modifications, and assistive technology unless directed otherwise by the SELPA. The Charter School shall comply with any directive of the SELPA as relates to the coordination of the Charter School for IEP implementation including but not limited to adequate notification of student progress and immediate notification of any considered discipline of special education students in such matters, the petitioners would notify the SELPA of relevant circumstances and communications immediately and act according to SELPA administrative authority.

Interim and Initial Placements of New Charter School Students

For students who enroll in the Charter School from another school district outside of the SELPA with a current IEP, the Charter School shall conduct an IEP meeting within thirty days or notify parents of a continuation of services. Prior to such meeting and pending agreement on a new IEP, the Charter School shall implement the existing IEP at the Charter School, to the extent practicable or as otherwise agreed between the Charter School and parent/guardian.

Non-Public Placements/Non-Public Agencies

The Charter School shall be solely responsible for selecting, contracting with, and overseeing all non-public schools and non-public agencies used to serve special education students. The Charter School shall immediately notify the SELPA of all parental requests for services from non-public schools or agencies, unilateral placements, and/or requests for reimbursement.

Non-discrimination

It is understood and agreed that all children will have access to the Charter School and no student shall be denied admission nor counseled out of the Charter School due to the nature, extent, or severity of his/her disability or due to the student's request for, or actual need for, special education services.

Parent/Guardian Concerns and Complaints

The Charter School shall follow SELPA policies as they apply for responding to parental concerns or complaints related to special education services. The Charter School shall immediately notify the SELPA of any concerns raised by parents. In addition, the Charter School and the SELPA shall immediately bring to the other's attention any concern or complaint by a parent/guardian that is in writing and/or which involves a potential violation of state or federal law.

The Charter School's designated representative shall investigate as necessary, respond to, and address the parent/guardian concern or complaint.

The Charter School shall timely notify the SELPA of any meetings scheduled with parents/guardians or their representatives to address the parent/guardian concerns or complaints so that a representative of each entity may attend.

The Charter School and the SELPA shall cooperate in responding to any complaint to or investigation by the California Department of Education, the United States Department of Education, or any other agency, and shall provide timely notice to the other upon receipt of such a complaint or request for investigation.

Parents have the opportunity to participate in the Charter SELPA CAC and trainings and that parents can easily access the SELPA staff via a toll-free 800 number.

Due Process Hearings

The Charter School or SELPA may initiate a due process hearing or request for mediation with respect to a student enrolled in Charter School if such action is legally necessary or advisable. In the event that the parents/guardians file for a due process hearing, or request mediation, the SELPA and the Charter School shall work together to defend the case. In the event that the SELPA determines that legal representation is needed, the Charter School shall follow the directives of the SELPA.

SELPA Representation

The Charter School's will send a representative to SELPA meetings.

Funding

The Charter School understands that it will enter into a MOU with the EDCOE Charter SELPA regarding Special Education funding, and cannot at this time unilaterally dictate the funding relationship between the SELPA and the Charter School. The Charter School anticipates, based upon State and Federal law that the fiscal relationship could be summarized as follows

Retention of Special Education Funds by the District

The SELPA shall retain a portion of state and federal special education funding allocated for Charter School students for their administrative oversight and assistance. The bulk of the special education funding will flow to the Charter School for the payment of special education salaries, equipment and other services required by special education students.

Retention of ADA Funds by the District for Non-Public Placements

The Charter School acknowledges that it may be required to provide students with placements at locations other than at the Charter School's school site in order to provide them with a free appropriate public education. Such placements could include, without limitation, programs or services in other District schools, in other public school districts within the SELPA, in a County Office of Education program, in a non-public school, at home, at a hospital, or in a residential program.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

The Charter School recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program of the Charter School. Any student, who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits a major life activity including but not limited to learning, is eligible for accommodation by the School.

A 504 team will be assembled by the principal of the Charter School and shall include parents/guardians, the student (where appropriate), and other qualified persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, placement options, and accommodations. The 504 team will review the student's existing records, including academic, social and behavioral records and is responsible for making a determination as to whether an evaluation for 504 services is appropriate. If the student has already been evaluated under the IDEA, but found ineligible for special education instruction or related services under the IDEA, those evaluations may be used to help determine eligibility under Section 504. The student evaluation shall be carried out by the 504 team who will evaluate the nature of the student's disability and the impact upon the student's education. This evaluation will include consideration of any behaviors that interfere with regular participation in the educational program and/or activities. The 504 team may also consider the following information in its evaluation:

- a. Tests and other evaluation materials that have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and are administered by trained personnel.
- b. Tests and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligent quotient.
- c. Tests are selected and administered so as to ensure that when a test is administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level or whatever factor the test purports to measure rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills.

The final determination of whether the student will or will not be identified as a person with a disability is made by the 504 team in writing and notice is given in writing to the parent or guardian of the student in their primary language. If during the evaluation, the 504 team obtains information indicating possible eligibility of the student for special education per the IDEA, a referral for special education assessment will be made by the 504 team.

If the student is found by the 504 team to have a disability under Section 504, the 504 team shall be responsible for determining what, if any, accommodations or services are needed to ensure that the student receives a free and appropriate public education ("FAPE"). In developing the 504 Plan, the 504 team shall consider all relevant information utilized during the evaluation of the student, drawing upon a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, assessments conducted by the Charter School's professional staff.

The 504 Plan shall describe the Section 504 disability and any program modification that may be necessary.

All 504 team participants, parents, guardians, teachers and any other participants in the student's education, including substitutes and tutors, must have a copy of each student's 504 Plan. The site administrator will ensure that teachers include 504 Plans with lesson plans for short-term substitutes and that he/she review the 504 Plan with a long-term substitute. A copy of the 504 Plan shall be maintained in the student's file. Each student's 504 Plan will be reviewed regularly

to determine the appropriateness of the Plan, continued eligibility or readiness to discontinue the 504 Plan.

III. MEASURABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES AND OTHER USES OF DATA

Governing Law: The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the Charter School. "Pupil outcomes," for purpose 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.--California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(B)

Governing Law: The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured.--California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(C)

DMCS and Academic Achievement:

DMCS recognizes that as a public and as a charter school, it is the expectation of students, parents, the Dixon community, and the State of California that students enrolled at DMCS will benefit academically. The growth of the school from 2005-09 with more teachers, students, and grades made longitudinal measurement of progress more challenging. But as the school's enrollment tops off and the grades stabilize, DMCS is eager to provide transparency for student and school performance.

The sections that follow provide details on how DMCS measures student outcomes, methods of assessment, and DMCS's established performance targets on the state's Academic Performance Index.

Measurable Student Outcomes at DMCS:

DMCS believes its worthiness to students and the community must be reflected in academic performance. DMCS, therefore seeks to perform at a level that equals, if not exceeds, other schools in the Dixon community. During the first year that DMCS had sufficient student enrollment to reflect an Academic Performance Index score (2006-07), DMCS received an API of 738, which placed it squarely in the middle of the Dixon community schools. The school's decile ranking was 4.

Disappointingly, in 2007-08, with the tragic and unexpected loss of a veteran teacher, the inclusion of three first-year teachers, and the addition of seventh grade, DMCS's API fell to 695. CDE notes that DMCS still met both its participation targets and its subgroup proficiency targets with these scores. While other Dixon schools also declined to an average in the 730 range, this is not acceptable to the school.

The fall in scores must be understood in context of rapid growth of the school, addition of new staff, and the basic unreliability of having only 125 tests administered over the course of the school's first three years. The California Department of Education notes that for schools with enrollments of 11-99 test takers, the scores are inherently less reliable. CDE does not report similar school rankings for small schools.

Therefore, DMCS proposes the following measurable outcomes for the school:

**Dixon Montessori Charter School
API Targets**

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-2015
810	825	840	855	875

Other elementary schools in the Dixon Unified School District have 2008 base APIs ranging from 725-774. DMCS commits to meeting or exceeding the performance of the community's schools.

DMCS participates in all pupil assessments required pursuant to Education Code 60605 (c) (1) and all other assessments and accountability measures required of charter schools. The cornerstone of DMCS' academic preparation is to gauge performance on the California Standards Test (CST). DMCS believes that the CSTs provide an objective means of measuring student progress that is consistent with desired student learning outcomes.

For 2008, DMCS had the following student performance, by school and by subgroups:

GROUPS	<u>Valid</u>	<u>Number At or</u>	<u>Percent At or</u>	<u>Met 2008</u>	<u>Alternative</u>	<u>Valid</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent At or</u>
	<u>Scores</u>	<u>Above</u>	<u>Above</u>			<u>Scores</u>	<u>At or</u>	
Schoolwide	75	23	30.7	Yes	<u>CI</u>	75	32	42.7
African American or Black (not of Hispanic origin)	1	--	--	--		1	--	--
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	--	--	--		1	--	--
Asian	6	--	--	--		6	--	--
Filipino	0	--	--	--		0	--	--
Hispanic or Latino	37	7	18.9	--		37	13	35.1
Pacific Islander	0	--	--	--		0	--	--
White (not of Hispanic origin)	30	10	33.3	--		30	13	43.3
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	13	0	0.0	--		14	0	0.0
English Learners	18	5	27.8	--		18	6	33.3
Students with Disabilities	5	--	--	--		6	--	--

Source: California Department of Education

Methods of Assessment

Method for Measuring Pupil Progress

DMCS uses a comprehensive array of tools to measure student progress. At the center of the data collection is the California Standards Test.

Each teacher meets in the home with students and their families before the beginning of the school year. At that meeting, results from the CSTs (if available) are used to establish where each student begins the academic year and how the teacher will ensure that the students makes academic progress and either exceeds, maintains, or reaches proficiency.

Teachers administer an initial benchmark exam to gain an in-class overview of the student's academic standing and use that to establish the initial weekly work plans.

Student progress on non-state mandated exams, including daily math and language quizzes, weekly spelling tests, in-class observations, weekly student homework, and student project presentations are used as interim assessments that guide continuous refinement of the student's instructional program.

Evidence of student progress is reported at two interim and a final parent-teacher meeting. Teachers are expected to present in a standards-based report card format the student's status in meeting grade-level standards.

The following table describes the school's method for measuring student progress, as it generally follows the academic year:

<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Measurable Outcome</i>	<i>Utility</i>
California Standards Tests	Provides detailed report on student proficiency on state academic standards; establishes roadmap for current academic year	Used by teachers to identify student strengths and weaknesses and to establish academic growth targets and instructional programs.
Curriculum Associates	Standards-based benchmark	Establish Instructional Program; note standing for grade-level proficiency
Rocket Math and Board English	Daily indicators of student mastery of standards-based skill and knowledge	Provide evidence on student understanding of work plan; evidence to continue or alter instructional program
Individual weekly work plans/homework	Establish weekly learning objectives	Creates year-long pacing towards academic proficiency

In-Class Assessments, including DRA, Rigby, SRA, and San Diego Quick	Evidence of mastery of lessons, concepts, and standards	Evidence to continue or alter instructional program
Standards-based Report Card	Provided to parents as indicator of student progress towards mastery of grade-level standards	Deep analysis of student learning that brings together assessment, observation, classroom, and project-based evidence
Scantron Performance Series Testing	Computer adaptive assessment used to provide data to guide individual instruction	Used to provide interim report to parents; to check instruction for teachers; to provide individual work plans for students.

Use And Reporting Of Data

Reporting of Achievement Data

DMCS has always had a commitment to transparency of information on student progress towards meeting academic standards. Beginning in the 2011-2012 academic year, the DMCS director will report to the DMCS board at an open meeting noticed to parents and interested parties an annual performance report that includes:

- The school's API
- Grade-level proficiency scores by content area
- The school's progress towards meeting its API and student proficiency targets
- Recommended activities to ensure success

Use of Achievement Data to Improve Upon Charter School Programs

Staff will receive data on student achievement during regularly scheduled staff meetings and will use this data to help monitor and improve the Charter School's education program.

The Charter School will utilize the assessment tools indicated above to review the educational program on an ongoing basis and to suggest improvements in areas of low performance for all identified student populations.

Performance Report

The Charter School will compile and provide an annual performance report. This report will, at a minimum, include the following data:

- Summary data showing student and school progress toward the goals and outcomes discussed above. This data will be displayed on both a Charter School-wide basis and

disaggregated by grade level subject area and reportable subgroup categories to the extent feasible without compromising student confidentiality.

- A summary of major decisions and policies established by the Charter School Board during the year.
- Data on the level of parent involvement in the Charter School's governance (and other aspects of the school, if applicable) and summary data from an annual parent and student satisfaction survey.
- Data regarding the number of staff working at the Charter School and their qualifications, proof of required credentialing, background clearance, and tuberculosis clearance.
- A copy of the Charter School's health and safety policies and/or a summary of any major changes to those policies during the year.
- Information demonstrating whether the Charter School implemented the means listed in the charter to strive to achieve a racially and ethnically balanced student population.
- An overview of the Charter School's admissions practices during the year and data regarding the numbers of students enrolled, the number on waiting lists and the numbers of students expelled and/or suspended.
- Analyses of the effectiveness of the Charter School's internal and external dispute mechanisms and data on the number and resolution of disputes and complaints.
- Other information regarding the educational program and the administrative, legal and governance operations of the Charter School relative to compliance with the terms of the charter generally.

The Charter School will use the information compiled in the performance report to evaluate and improve upon its programs as necessary.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604.3, the Charter School will promptly respond to all reasonable inquiries, including, but not limited to inquiries regarding its financial records from the District. The Charter School will automatically submit all financial reports required under Education Code Section 47604.33 and 47605(m). The Charter School recognizes the right of the State Board of Education and California Department of Education to inspect financial records.

IV. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Governing Law: The governance structure of the school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement—California Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(D)

Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation

The Charter School will be operated by Dixon Montessori Charter School, Inc., a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation.

The Charter School shall be liable for the debts and obligations of the Charter School.

Board Of Directors

The Charter School is governed by a corporate Board of Directors who shall be selected, and serve, and govern the Charter School in accordance with their adopted corporate bylaws, which shall be maintained to align with the terms of this charter and applicable law.

The State Board of Education may appoint a representative to serve on the Board of Directors.

Board Duties

The Board of Directors will be responsible for the operation and fiscal affairs of the Charter School including but not limited to:

- Approval of the annual school budget, calendar, salary schedules, major fundraising events, and grant writing;
- Negotiation and approval of a MOU or other contracts with the State Board of Education and Dixon Unified School District (facilities and maintenance MOU);
- Approval of all contracts, contract renewals, and personnel actions (e.g., hiring, discipline, dismissal)
- Approval of bylaws, resolutions, and policies and procedures of school operation
- Approval of all changes to the charter to be submitted to the CDE as necessary in accordance with applicable law
- Long-term strategic planning for the Charter School;
- Participation as necessary in dispute resolution;
- Monitoring overall student performance;

- Filling the position of Principal, as necessary;
- Evaluation of the Principal;
- Monitoring the performance of the Charter School and taking necessary action to ensure that the school remains true to its mission and charter;
- Monitoring the fiscal solvency of the Charter School;
- Participation in the Charter School's independent fiscal audit;
- Participation in the Charter School's performance report to the District;
- Participation as necessary in student expulsion matters; and
- Increasing public awareness of the Charter School
- Fundraising efforts

The Charter School's Board of Directors may initiate and carry out any program or activity that is not in conflict with or inconsistent with any law and which is not in conflict with the purposes for which charter schools are established.

Board Meetings

The Board of Directors will meet at least monthly (except for summer months) to review and act on its responsibilities. All meetings shall be held in accordance with the Brown Act.

The Charter School shall adopt a conflicts code which shall comply with the Political Reform Act, Government Code Section 87100, and applicable conflict restrictions required by the Corporations Code and any conflicts restrictions that may be adopted in the future as applicable to the Charter School.

The Board of Directors meetings will be headed by a Board President, who will be elected annually amongst the Board at the concluding meeting of the school year.

As long as quorum exists as defined by the corporate bylaws, measures voted on by the Board of Directors may be passed with a simple majority of those members present.

Board Delegation of Duties

The Board may execute any powers delegated by law to it and shall discharge any duty imposed by law upon it and may delegate to an employee or contractor of the Charter School any of those duties with the exception of employment of the Principal, dismissal of employees, approval of Board policies, approval of the budget or budget revisions or purchases over \$25,000. The

Board however, retains ultimate responsibility over the performance of those powers or duties so delegated. Such delegation will:

- Be in writing;
- Specify the entity designated;
- Describe in specific terms the authority of the Board being delegated, any conditions on the delegated authority or its exercise and the beginning and ending dates of the delegation; and
- Require an affirmative vote of a majority of present Board members.

Charter School Principal

The Principal will be the leader of the school. The Principal will ensure that the curriculum is implemented in order to maximize student-learning experiences. The Principal must report directly to the Charter School Board of Directors, and s/he is responsible for the orderly operation of the school and the supervision of all employees in the Charter School.

The Board of Directors intends to hire a principal who will be responsible for administering the school in all of the aspects of its day to day operations, working with the Charter School Board of Directors, the District, students, parents, and community members and the other governing bodies specified by local and state law. The Principal's duties shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Provide instructional leadership to the Charter School
- Attend meetings at the SBE and stay in direct contact with CDE to assist in its oversight duties;
- Supervise all employees of the Charter School; make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding the hiring of all Charter school employees;
- Provide performance evaluations of all Charter School employees at least once annually;
- Prepare proposals of policies for adoption by the Board of Directors;
- Provide comments and recommendations regarding policies presented by others to the Board;
- Advise the Board and make written recommendations to the Board on programs, policies, budget and other school matters;
- Communicate with the Charter School's legal counsel;

- Stay abreast of school laws and regulations;
- Participate in the dispute resolution procedure and the complaint procedure when necessary;
- Write applications for grants;
- Attend meetings with the Financial Services Provider on fiscal oversight issues periodically upon request;
- Provide all legally required financial reports to the CDE;
- Develop and administer the budget as approved by the Board in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles;
- Present quarterly financial reports to the Board of Directors;
- Provide assistance and coordination in the implementation of curriculum;
- Oversee parent/student/teacher relations;
- Attend IEP meetings as required by law;
- Oversee student disciplinary matters;
- Coordinate the administration of Standardized Testing;
- Plan and coordinate student orientation;
- Attend all Charter School Board meetings and attend as necessary District or SBE Board meetings;
- Site safety;
- Foster an amicable relationship between District and the Charter School;
- Establish a Communication Model to facilitate communication among all the groups within the Charter School, between the Charter School and the District, and between the Charter School and the community at large;
- Graduations;
- Develop the Charter School annual performance report and SARC;
- Present performance report to the Charter School; and

- Facilitate open house events.

The above duties may be delegated or contracted as approved by the Board to another employee of the Charter School or to an appropriate third party provider as allowed by applicable law.

Parent Participation in Governance

In addition to their ability to serve on the Board, the Charter School will ensure parents have an opportunity to participate in governance of the Charter School through involvement in the Charter School Advisory Council. The Charter School Advisory Council shall be composed of three parents, self-nominated and elected amongst the parent body; three teachers, self-nominated and elected amongst the teachers; and a student representative. The Advisory Council shall meet regularly and shall make recommendations to the Board of Directors for all aspects of operation. The Principal shall attend all Advisory Council meetings and shall report Advisory Council recommendations to the Board of Directors.

V. HUMAN RESOURCES

Qualifications of School Employees

Governing Law: The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the school. California Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(E)

In accordance with Charter School health and safety policies, described below, all employees shall be fingerprinted and background checked and receive background clearance and tuberculosis clearance prior to commencing employment with the Charter School.

The Charter School's key staff members (Principal and Teachers) will meet the following qualifications:

Principal Qualifications

The Charter School's Principal will be the instructional leader at the school and will be responsible for helping the school and students achieve the outcomes outlined in this charter petition. The Principal will have the following qualifications:

Required knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Understanding of Montessori methodology, measurement and implementation
- Understanding of teacher evaluation
- Superb communication and community-building skills
- Deep knowledge of curriculum development and program design
- A record of success in developing teachers
- Entrepreneurial passion
- Knowledge of school management

Required experience:

- Experience in performance assessment
- Experience in school management

Teacher Qualifications

Required knowledge, skills, and abilities:

Candidates are evaluated using these standards:

- Committed to students and learning
- Experience teaching using Montessori methods
- Highly Qualified under applicable requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act
- Technologically knowledgeable
- Skilled in management of learning

- Reflective in their practice
- Community-oriented

Required educational level / credentialing:

Charter School teachers will be required to hold a California Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold, in accordance with Education Code section 47605(I), and shall meet applicable “highly qualified” requirements required by the No Child Left Behind Act.

Student to teacher ratio will be in accordance with Education Code Section 51745.6. The Charter School will maintain auditable files of teacher credentials in compliance with applicable law.

Teacher Recruitment

The Charter School will develop a comprehensive teacher recruitment policy to attract highly-qualified, credentialed teachers. The Charter School recruitment strategies for employing highly qualified teachers include using established teacher credentialing services, such as EdJoin, Monster.com, college employment fairs, among other generally acceptable strategies. Teachers with Montessori experience will be preferred.

Professional Development

Professional development will be provided on an ongoing basis and will be built into the school calendar. Professional development workshop days include:

- An intensive one-week retreat during the summer to implement and develop curriculum and instructional strategies that address the needs of our targeted student population.
- A comprehensive monthly staff meeting.
- Other designated professional development days scheduled throughout the school year.

Professional development needs will be assessed through analysis of student assessment data, annual parent surveys, and formal staff discussions on recommended modifications to the educational program.

Compensation and Benefits

Governing Law: The manner by which staff members of the Charter Schools will be covered by the State Teachers’ Retirement System, the Public Employee’s Retirement System, or federal social security. —California Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(K)

The Charter School will structure its employee compensation plan in a manner that will attract candidates with the necessary skills and experience.

The Charter School employees will participate in the State Teacher Retirement System (“STRS”) and the Public Employee Retirement System (“PERS”) as applicable to the position. All employees, except for those participating in STRS, shall participate in the Social Security system. The Charter School shall seek reporting services from the District or County pursuant to 47611.3, in exchange for the actual costs of such services.

The Principal shall coordinate and ensure appropriate participation in applicable retirement programs.

Employee Representation

Governing Law: A declaration whether or not the Charter School shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act.—California Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(O)

Charter School shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the Charter School teachers, staff and other employees of the Charter School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. The Charter School recognizes the employees’ rights under the EERA provisions to organize for collective bargaining.

Rights of School District Employees

Governing Law: A description of the rights of any employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school—California Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(M)

Persons employed by the Charter School are not considered employees of the District for any purpose whatsoever. Employees of the District who resign from District employment to work at the Charter School and who later wish to return to the District shall be treated the same as any other former District employee seeking reemployment. The Charter School shall not have any authority to confer any rights to return on District employees. Sick or vacation leave or years of service credit at the District or any other school district will not be transferred to the Charter School. Employment by the Charter School provides no rights of employment at any other entity, including any rights in the case of closure of the Charter School.

Health and Safety

Governing Law: The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school record summary as described in Section 44237—California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(F)

In order to provide safety for all students and staff, the Charter School has adopted and implemented full health and safety procedures in consultation with its insurance carriers and risk management experts. These procedures are attached as Appendix 2.

The following is a summary of the health and safety policies of the Charter School:

- **Procedures for Background Checks**

Employees and contractors of the Charter School will be required to submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Sections 44237 and 45125.1. New employees not possessing a valid California Teaching Credential must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. The Principal of the school shall monitor compliance with this policy and report to the Charter School Board of Directors on a quarterly basis. The Charter School Board President shall monitor the fingerprinting and background clearance of the Principal. Volunteers who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee.

- **Role of Staff as Mandated Child Abuse Reporters**

All non-certificated and certificated staff will be mandated child abuse reporters and will follow all applicable reporting laws, the same policies and procedures used by the District.

- **TB Testing**

Employees will be tested for tuberculosis prior to commencing employment as required by Education Code Section 49406.

- **Immunizations**

All students enrolled and staff will be required to provide records documenting immunizations as is required at public schools pursuant to Health and Safety Code Sections 120325-120375, and Title 17, California Code of Regulations Sections 6000-6075.

- **Medication in School**

The Charter School will adhere to Education Code Section 49423 regarding administration of medication in school.

- **Vision, Hearing/Scoliosis**

Students will be screened for vision, hearing and scoliosis in accordance with Education Code Section 49450, *et seq.*, as applicable to the grade levels served by the Charter School.

- **Diabetes**

Beginning in the 2010-11 school year, the Charter School will provide an information sheet regarding type 2 diabetes to the parent or guardian of incoming 7th grade students. The information sheet shall include, but shall not be limited to, all of the following:

1. A description of type 2 diabetes.
2. A description of the risk factors and warning signs associated with type 2 diabetes.
3. A recommendation that students displaying or possibly suffering from risk factors or warning signs associated with type 2 diabetes should be screened for type 2 diabetes.
4. A description of treatments and prevention of methods of type 2 diabetes.
5. A description of the different types of diabetes screening tests available.

- **Emergency Preparedness**

The Charter School shall adhere to a School Safety Plan/Emergency Preparedness Handbook drafted specifically to the needs of the school site in conjunction with law enforcement and the Fire Marshall. This handbook shall include, but not be limited to the following responses: fire, flood, earthquake, terrorist threats, and hostage situations. If utilizing facilities that were previously used as a School site, any existing emergency preparedness plan for the school site shall be used as a starting basis for updating the handbook for the Charter School. The School Safety Plan/Emergency Preparedness Handbook is attached as Appendix 3.

- **Blood borne Pathogens**

The Charter School shall meet state and federal standards for dealing with blood borne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the work place. The Board shall establish a written infectious control plan designed to protect employees and students from possible infection due to contact with blood borne viruses, including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and hepatitis B virus (HBV).

Whenever exposed to blood or other bodily fluids through injury or accident, students and staff should follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.

- **Drug Free/Alcohol Free/Smoke Free Environment**

The Charter School shall function as a drug, alcohol and tobacco free workplace.

- **Facility Safety**

The Charter School shall comply with Education Code Section 47610 by utilizing facilities that are compliant with the Field Act or the California Building Standards Code. The Charter School agrees to test sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms annually at its facilities to

ensure that they are maintained in an operable condition at all times. The School shall conduct fire drills as required under Education Code Section 32001.

Comprehensive Sexual Harassment Policies and Procedures

The Charter School is committed to providing a school that is free from sexual harassment, as well as any harassment based upon such factors as race, religion, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability. The Charter School has adopted a comprehensive policy to prevent and immediately remediate any concerns about sexual discrimination or harassment at the Charter School (including employee to employee, employee to student, and student to employee misconduct). Misconduct of this nature is very serious and will be addressed in accordance with the Charter School sexual harassment policy, a draft of which is attached as Appendix 4.

Dispute Resolution

Governing Law: The procedures to be followed by the Charter School and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter—California Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(N)

VI. STUDENT ADMISSIONS, ATTENDANCE, AND SUSPENSION/EXPULSION POLICIES

Student Admission Policies and Procedures

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

The Charter School will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, and all other operations, and will not charge tuition nor discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). The Charter School shall comply with all applicable legally required minimum and maximum age requirements.

All pupils who wish to attend DMCS shall be admitted, subject only to the school's capacity.

If the number of students who wish to attend the school exceeds the school's capacity, admission except for existing students of the Charter School, shall be determined by a public random drawing. Existing students enrolled in the charter school, and siblings of currently enrolled students shall be exempt from the public random drawing. Children of the charter school founders and faculty shall be exempt from the public random drawing up to 10% of total enrollment, combined for both categories. In the case of a public random drawing, preference will be given in the following order:

1. Students residing with the boundaries of the Dixon Unified School District;

2. All others.

Volunteer requirements are not mandatory.

Attendance at orientations and submission of pupil documents will be requested only after the pupil has been admitted to DMCS.

Upon admission to the Charter School, the registration process is comprised of the following:

- Completion of a student registration form;
- Proof of Immunization;
- Home Language Survey;
- Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form;
- Proof of minimum and maximum age requirements, e.g. birth certificate;

Non-Discrimination

Governing Law: The means by which the school will achieve 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.—California Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(G)

The Charter School will implement a student recruiting strategy that includes but is not necessarily limited to the following elements or strategies to ensure a racial and ethnic balance among students that is reflective of the territorial jurisdiction of the District:

- An enrollment process that is scheduled and adopted to include a timeline that allows for a broad-based recruiting and application process.
- The development of promotional and informational material that appeals to all of the various racial and ethnic groups represented in the district.
- Student recruitment efforts may include, but are not limited to, direct mail, print advertising, and informational meetings directed toward targeted student populations to recruit students from the various racial and ethnic groups represented in the district.
- Outreach meetings that include prospective students and parents of all racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Public School Attendance Alternatives

Governing Law: The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools. —California Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(L)

No student may be required to attend the Charter School. Students who reside within the District who choose not to attend the Charter School may attend school within the District according to District policy or at another school district or school within the District through the District's intra and inter-district policies. Parents and guardians of each student enrolled in the charter school will be informed on admissions forms that the students have no right to admission in a particular school of a local education agency as a consequence of enrollment in the charter school, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the local education agency.

Suspension/Expulsion Procedures

Governing Law: The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled—California Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(J)

This Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policy has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well being of all students at the Charter School. When the policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. This policy shall serve as Charter School's policy and procedures for student suspension and expulsion, and it may be amended from time to time without the need to amend the charter so long as the amendments comport with legal requirements.

Staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. This Policy and its Procedures will clearly describe discipline expectations, and it will be printed and distributed as part of the Student Handbook which is sent to each student at the beginning of the school year. The Charter School administration shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures.

Discipline includes but is not limited to advising and counseling students, conferring with parents/guardians, detention during and after school hours, use of alternative educational environments, suspension and expulsion.

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of the Policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education

Improvement Act of 2004 (“IDEIA”) or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”) is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to regular education students except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. Charter School will follow all applicable federal and state laws when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such students and shall notify the District of the same.

A. Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students

A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is 1) related to school activity, 2) school attendance occurring at Charter School or at any other school, or 3) a Charter School sponsored event. A Pupil may be suspended or expelled for acts that are enumerated below and related to school activity or attendance that occur at any time, including, but not limited to, and of the following:

- a) while on school grounds;
- b) while going to or coming from school;
- c) during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; or
- d) during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

B. Enumerated Offenses

Students may be suspended or expelled for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

1. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
2. Willfully used force of violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
3. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Principal or designee’s concurrence.
4. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
5. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
6. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.

7. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
8. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
9. Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a pupil.
10. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
11. Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11014.5.
12. Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
13. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
14. Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
15. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal code 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code 243.4.
16. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
17. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
18. Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
19. Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property. For purposes of this section, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily

injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school district property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family..

20. Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
21. Caused, attempted to cause, threaten to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive..
22. Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.

Alternatives to suspension or expulsion will first be attempted with students who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from assigned school activities.

C. Suspension Procedure

Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

1. Conference

Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the Principal or the Principal's designee with the student and his or her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the Principal. The conference may be omitted if the Principal or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of the student's right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.

At the conference, the pupil shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him or her and shall be given the opportunity to present his or her version and evidence in his or her defense.

This conference shall be held within two school days, unless the pupil waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason including, but not limited to, incarceration or hospitalization.

No penalties may be imposed on a pupil for failure of the pupil's parent or guardian to attend a conference with school officials. Reinstatement of the suspended pupil shall not be contingent upon attendance by the pupil's parent or guardian at the conference.

2. Notice to Parents/Guardians

At the time of suspension, the Principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension and the date of return following suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time when the student may return to school. If school officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

3. Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Placement/Expulsion

Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension.

Upon a recommendation of Placement/Expulsion by the Principal or Principal's designee, the pupil and the pupil's guardian or representative will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the pupil should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination will be made by the Principal or designee upon either of the following determinations: 1) the pupil's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the pupil poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the pupil's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

D. Authority to Expel

A student may be expelled either by the Charter School Board of Directors following a hearing before it or by the Charter School Board of Directors upon the recommendation of an Administrative Panel to be assigned by the Board as needed. The Administrative Panel should consist of at least three members who are certificated and neither a teacher of the pupil or a Board member of the Charter School Board of Directors. The Administrative Panel may recommend expulsion of any student found to have committed an expellable offense.

E. Expulsion Procedures

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. Unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the Principal or designee determines that the Pupil has committed an expellable offense.

In the event an administrative panel hears the case, it will make a recommendation to the Charter School Board of Directors for a final decision whether to expel. The hearing shall be held in closed session unless the pupil makes a written request for a public hearing three (3) days prior to the hearing.

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the pupil. The notice shall include:

1. The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
2. A statement of specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
3. A copy of Charter School's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
4. Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the 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.

F. Special procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Sexual Assault or Battery Offences

The Charter School may, upon finding a good cause, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of the witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of sworn declarations which shall be examined only by the Charter School Board of Directors, administrative panel, or the hearing officer. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the pupil.

1. The complaining witness in any sexual assault or battery case must be provided with a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of his/her right to (a) receive five days notice of his/her scheduled testimony, (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons of his/her choosing present in the hearing at the time he/she testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, and (c) elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.
2. The Charter School must also provide the victim a room separate from the hearing room for the complaining witness' use prior to and during breaks in testimony.
3. At the discretion of the person or panel conducting the hearing, the complaining witness shall be allowed periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which he or she may leave the hearing room.
4. The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.
5. The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also limit time for taking the testimony of the complaining witness to the hours he/she is normally in school, if there is no good cause to take the testimony during other hours.
6. Prior to a complaining witness testifying, the support persons must be admonished that the hearing is confidential. Nothing in the law precludes the person presiding over the hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The person conducting the hearing may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany him or her to the witness stand.
7. If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, the Charter School must present evidence that the witness' presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to the Charter School. The person presiding over the hearing shall permit the witness to stay unless it is established that there is a substantial risk that the testimony of the complaining witness would be influenced by the support person, in which case the presiding official shall admonish the support person or persons not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way. Nothing shall preclude the presiding officer from exercising his or her discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom he or she believes is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.
8. The testimony of the support person shall be presented before the testimony of the complaining witness and the complaining witness shall be excluded from the courtroom during that testimony.
9. Especially for charges involving sexual assault or battery, if the hearing is to be conducted in the public at the request of the pupil being expelled, the complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a closed session when testifying at a public meeting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are not alternative procedures to avoid the threatened

harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing by means of closed-circuit television.

10. Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness' prior sexual conduct is presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the person conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstances can be made, the witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.

G. Record of Hearing

A record of the hearing shall be made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, as long as a reasonably accurate and complete written transcription of the proceedings can be made.

H. Presentation of Evidence

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A recommendation by the Administrative Panel to expel must be supported by substantial evidence that the student committed an expellable offense.

Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay and sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the Charter School Board of Directors, Panel or designee determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

If, due to a written request by the accused pupil, the hearing is held at a public meeting, and the charge is committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in Education Code Section 48900, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his or her testimony heard in a session closed to the public.

The decision of the Administrative Panel shall be in the form of written findings of fact and a written recommendation to the Charter School Board of Directors who will make a final determination regarding the expulsion. The final decision by the Charter School Board of Directors shall be made within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing. The decision of the Charter School Board of Directors is final.

If the expulsion hearing panel decides not to recommend expulsion, the pupil shall immediately be returned to his/her educational program.

I. Written Notice to Expel

The Principal or designee following a decision of the Charter School Board of Directors to expel shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Charter School Board of Directors' adopted findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian. This notice shall also include the following:

1. Notice of the specific offense committed by the student
2. Notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with the Charter School.

The Principal or designee shall send a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the student's district of residence. This notice shall include the following:

1. The student's name
2. The specific expellable offense committed by the student

J. Disciplinary Records

The Charter School shall maintain records of all student suspensions and expulsions at the Charter School. Such records shall be made available to the District upon request.

K. No Right to Appeal

The pupil shall have no right of appeal from expulsion from the Charter School as the Charter School Board of Directors decision to expel shall be final.

L. Expelled Pupils/Alternative Education

Pupils who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within the County or their school district of residence.

M. Rehabilitation Plans

Students who are expelled from the Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Charter School Board of Directors at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may reapply to the Charter School for readmission.

N. Readmission

The decision to readmit a pupil or to admit a previously expelled pupil from another school, school district or charter school shall be in the sole discretion of the Charter School Board of Directors following a meeting with the Principal and the pupil and guardian or representative to determine whether the pupil has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and to determine whether the pupil poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The Principal shall make a recommendation to the Charter School Board of Directors following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The pupil's readmission is also contingent upon the Charter School's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission.

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

i. Notification of District

The Charter School shall immediately notify the District and coordinate the procedures in this policy with the District the discipline of any student with a disability or student who the Charter School or District would be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability who is suspended for more than ten (10) school days during a school year.

ii. Services During Suspension

Students suspended for more than ten (10) school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment or functional analysis, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

iii. Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination

Within ten (10) school days of a recommendation for expulsion or any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine:

- a) If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
- b) If the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP.

If the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team determine that either of the above is applicable for the child, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

If the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team shall:

- a) Conduct a functional behavioral assessment or a functional analysis assessment, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that the Charter School had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement;
- b) If a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and
- c) Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the Charter School agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

If the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP team determine that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability and that the conduct in question was not a result of the failure to implement the IEP, then the Charter School may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to students without disabilities.

iv. Due Process Appeals

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or the Charter School believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, may request an expedited administrative hearing through the Special Education Unit of the Office of Administrative Hearings.

When an appeal relating to the placement of the student or the manifestation determination has been requested by either the parent or the Charter school, the student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the forty-five (45) day time period provided for in an interim alternative educational setting, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the Charter School agree otherwise.

v. Special Circumstances

Charter School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct.

The Principal or designee may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability in cases where a student:

- a) Carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 USC 930, to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;
- b) Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or
- c. Has inflicted serious bodily injury, as defined by 20 USC 1415(k)(7)(D), upon a person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

vi. Interim Alternative Educational Setting

The student's interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the student's IEP team.

vii. Procedures for Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education Services

A student who has not been identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to IDEIA and who has violated the Charter School's disciplinary procedures may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if the Charter School had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

The Charter School shall be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if one of the following conditions exists:

- a) The parent/guardian has expressed concern in writing, or orally if the parent/guardian does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement, to Charter School supervisory or administrative personnel, or to one of the child's teachers, that the student is in need of special education or related services.
- b) The parent has requested an evaluation of the child.
- c) The child's teacher, or other Charter School personnel, has expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child, directly to the director of special education or to other Charter School supervisory personnel.

If the Charter School knew or should have known the student had a disability under any of the three (3) circumstances described above, the student may assert

any of the protections available to IDEIA-eligible children with disabilities, including the right to stay-put.

If the Charter School had no basis for knowledge of the student's disability, it shall proceed with the proposed discipline. The Charter School shall conduct an expedited evaluation if requested by the parents; however the student shall remain in the education placement determined by the Charter School pending the results of the evaluation.

The Charter School shall not be deemed to have knowledge of that the student had a disability if the parent has not allowed an evaluation, refused services, or if the student has been evaluated and determined to not be eligible.

VII. FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Financial Reporting

The Charter School shall provide the following reports:

1. By July 1, a preliminary budget for the current fiscal year. For a charter school in its first year of operation, financial statements submitted with the charter petition pursuant to Education Code 47605(g) will satisfy this requirement.
2. By December 15, an interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through October 31. Additionally, on December 15, a copy of the Charter School's annual, independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year shall be delivered to the State Controller, State Department of Education and County Superintendent of Schools.
3. By March 15, a second interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through January 31.
4. By September 15, a final non-audited report from the full prior year. The report shall include an annual statement of all the Charter School's receipts and expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.

Insurance

The Charter School shall acquire and finance general liability, workers compensation, and other necessary insurance of the types and in the amounts required for an enterprise of similar purpose and circumstance. The District and the District Governing Board shall be named as additional insured on all policies of the Charter School.

Administrative Services

Governing Law: the manner in which administrative services of the School are to be provided. (Education Code Section 47605(g)).

The principal will assume the lead responsibility for administering the Charter School under the policies adopted by the Charter School's Board of Directors. The Charter School will contract with the District or an appropriate third-party for all "back-office" administrative services, including but not limited to financial management, payroll, and budget development.

Facilities

Governing Law: the facilities to be utilized by the school. The description of facilities to be used by the charter school shall specify where the school intends to locate. (Education Code Section 47605(g))

The Charter School shall be located at facilities assigned to the Charter School by the District under Proposition 39 or another facility within the boundaries of the District. It shall utilize California Building Standards Code or Field Act compliant facilities in accordance with Education Code Section 47610.

Transportation

No transportation to and from school will be provided for students by the Charter School except as required by law for students with disabilities.

Independent Fiscal Audit

Governing Law: The manner in which an annual, independent financial audit 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—California Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(I)

An annual independent fiscal audit of the books and records of the Charter School will be conducted as required under the Charter Schools Act, section 47605(b)(5)(I) and 47605(m). The books and records of the Charter School will be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and shall be conducted in accordance with applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controllers K-12 Audit Guide.

An audit committee will select an independent auditor through a request for proposal format. The auditor will have, at a minimum, a CPA and educational institution audit experience and shall be included by the State Controller's Office on its published list as an educational audit provider. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope will be expanded to include items and processes specified in applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars.

It is anticipated that the annual audit will be completed within four months of the close of the fiscal year and that a copy of the auditor's findings will be forwarded to the District, the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and to the CDE by the 15th of December of each year. The Principal, along with the audit committee, will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Charter School Board of Directors with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Board will submit a report to the District describing how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved to the satisfaction of the District along with an anticipated timeline for the same.

The independent fiscal audit of the Charter School is a public record to be provided to the public upon request.

Closure Protocol

Governing Law: A description of the procedures to be used if the charter School closes, The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the School, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records. (Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(P))

Closure of the School will be documented by official action of the Board of Directors. The action will identify the reason for closure. The official action will also identify an entity and person or persons responsible for closure-related activities.

The Board of Directors will promptly notify parents and students of the Charter School, the District, the Solano County Office of Education, the School's SELPA, the retirement systems in which the School's employees participate (e.g., Public Employees' Retirement System, State Teachers' Retirement System, and federal social security), and the California Department of Education of the closure as well as the effective date of the closure. This notice will also include the name(s) of and contact information for the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure; the pupils' school districts of residence; and the manner in which parents/guardians may obtain copies of pupil records, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements.

The Board will ensure that the notification to the parents and students of the Charter School of the closure provides information to assist parents and students in locating suitable alternative programs. This notice will be provided promptly following the Board's decision to close the School.

The Board will also develop a list of pupils in each grade level and the classes they have completed, together with information on the pupils' districts of residence, which they will provide to the entity responsible for closure-related activities.

As applicable, the School will provide parents, students and the District with copies of all appropriate student records and will otherwise assist students in transferring to their next school. All transfers of student records will be made in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") 20 U.S.C. § 1232g. The School will ask the District to store original records of Charter School students. All records of the School shall be transferred to the District upon School closure. If the District will not or cannot store the records, the Charter School shall work with the County Office of Education to determine a suitable alternative location for storage.

All state assessment results, special education records, and personnel records will be transferred to and maintained by the entity responsible for closure-related activities in accordance with applicable law.

As soon as reasonably practical, the School will prepare final financial records. The School will also have an independent audit completed within six months after closure. The School will pay

for the final audit. The audit will be prepared by a qualified Certified Public Accountant selected by the School and will be provided to the District promptly upon its completion. The final audit will include an accounting of all financial assets, including cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value, an accounting of the liabilities, including accounts payable and any reduction in apportionments as a result of audit findings or other investigations, loans, and unpaid staff compensation, and an assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to the charter school.

The School will complete and file any annual reports required pursuant to Education Code section 47604.33.

On closure of the School, all assets of the School, including but not limited to all leaseholds, personal property, intellectual property and all ADA apportionments and other revenues generated by students attending the School, remain the sole property of Charter School and shall be distributed in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation upon the dissolution of the non-profit public benefit corporation to another California public educational entity. Any assets acquired from the District or District property will be promptly returned upon School closure to the District. The distribution shall include return of any grant funds and restricted categorical funds to their source in accordance with the terms of the grant or state and federal law, as appropriate, which may include submission of final expenditure reports for entitlement grants and the filing of any required Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as well as the return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any conditions established when the donation of such materials or property was accepted.

On closure, Charter School shall remain solely responsible for all liabilities arising from the operation of the School.

As the Charter School is operated by a non-profit public benefit corporation, should the corporation dissolve with the closure of the School, the Board will follow the procedures set forth in the California Corporations Code for the dissolution of a non-profit public benefit corporation and file all necessary filings with the appropriate state and federal agencies.

Charter School will utilize its reserve fund to undertake any expenses associated with the closure procedures identified above.

VIII. IMPACT ON THE DISTRICT

Governing Law: Potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the school and upon the District. (Education Code Section 47605(g))

Potential Civil Liability Effects

Intent

This statement is intended to fulfill the terms of Education Code Section 47605(g) and provides information regarding the proposed operation and potential effects of the Charter School on the District.

Civil Liability

The Charter School shall be operated by Dixon Montessori Charter School, Inc., a California non-profit public benefit corporation. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 23701d. The specific purposes for which the corporation is organized are for the operation of a California public charter school for educational services in accordance with the Education Code Section 47600, et seq.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(c), an entity that grants a charter to a charter school operated by or as a non-profit public benefit corporation shall not be liable for the debts or obligations of the Charter School or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors or omissions by the Charter School if the authority has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law. As stated above in the Governance section, the Dixon Montessori Charter School's Articles of Incorporation and bylaws are attached as Appendix 1. The Charter School shall work diligently to assist the CDE in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including monthly meetings, reporting, or other requested protocol.

Further, Charter School and the District shall enter into a memorandum of understanding, wherein Charter School shall indemnify the District for the actions of the Charter School under this charter.

The corporate bylaws of Charter School shall provide for indemnification of the Charter School's Board of Directors, officers, agents, and employees, and the Charter School will purchase general liability insurance, Directors and Officers insurance, and fidelity bonding to secure against financial risks.

As stated above, insurance amounts will be determined by recommendation of Charter School's insurance company for schools of similar size, location, and student population. Dixon Unified shall be named an additional insured on the general liability insurance of the Charter School.

The Board of Directors of Charter School will institute appropriate risk management practices, including screening of employees, establishing codes of conduct for students, and dispute resolution.

IX. CONCLUSION

By approving this renewal charter, the State Board of Education will be fulfilling the intent of the Charter Schools Act of 1992 to improve pupil learning; increase learning opportunities for all pupils with special emphasis on expanded learning opportunities for all pupils who are identified as academically low achieving; create new professional opportunities for teachers; and provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in education and following the directive of law to encourage the creation of charter schools. The Petitioners pledge to work cooperatively with the CDE to answer any concerns over this document. The Charter School shall be considered renewed as of the date of charter renewal approval. The term of the charter shall expire on June 30, 2015. Renewal of the charter shall be governed by the standards and criteria in Education Code Section 47605 and Education 47607 as applicable.

Appendix 1. Articles of Incorporation and Corporate Bylaws for the Charter School

Appendix 2. Health and Safety Procedures

Appendix 3. Safe School Plan

Appendix 4. Sexual Harassment Policies & Procedures