

DENAIR UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
DENAIR CHARTER ACADEMY
CHARTER SCHOOL PROPOSAL



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DENAIR CHARTER ACADEMY
CHARTER SCHOOL PETITION
DENAIR UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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DENAIR UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
DENAIR CHARTER ACADEMY
CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL PETITION

SECTION 1 - OVERVIEW OF PROPOSAL:

1.1 THE DENAIR CHARTER ACADEMY: AN INTRODUCTION

It is the intent of this Denair Charter Academy renewal petition to continue to allow Denair Unified School District to offer alternative programs at Denair Charter Academy (DCA) under the provisions of the California Charter School Act. DCA employs educational strategies that include, but are not limited to, Home Schooling, Independent Study, and Distance Learning programs as well a traditional setting option. DCA enrollment includes students from the Denair Unified School District and other school districts in Stanislaus and adjacent counties.

The DCA philosophy describes an educated person in the 21st century as a lifelong learner who is competent and self-motivated, possessing the skills necessary to contribute meaningfully to the society at large. One of our country's greatest challenges is to develop our children into educated persons, equipped with the essential skills that will allow them to achieve personal and intellectual growth and to succeed in the rapidly changing global and technological world. Denair Unified School District's mission and that of the DCA is to offer educational opportunities for success.

DCA is founded on the belief that all students can learn. The DCA educational program is designed to provide each student with optimum educational strategies needed for successful learning and preparation for postsecondary education and/or the world of work. A standards-based curriculum and strategies that maximize each use of each student's learning modalities form the basis for the educational program described in the student's *Individual LearningPlan (ILP)*.

Under this Charter renewal, DCA will continue to promote and enhance student success by:

- academic testing
- design of a meaningful educational program to meet each student's needs
- development and maintenance of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) to record and monitor student progress and adjust the educational program to identified abilities, interests, motivation, learning styles, and demonstrated achievement
- scheduling of program hours during the day and evening, Monday through Sunday. (Teachers may volunteer for weekend hours and adjust their week accordingly.)
- understanding of learning styles and employment of learning strategies based on principles of multiple intelligences and differentiated instruction
- thematic integration of SCANS competencies and School-to-Career awareness and exploration
- counseling and intervention programs as necessary
- ensuring that parents and/or guardians can adequately facilitate learning through independent study or home schooling.

The overriding goal of the DCA program is to provide expanded choices for students and parents in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system. The DCA program is based on a belief that each student can succeed and deserves an education that is rigorous and well-defined. At the same time, DCA recognizes that each individual is unique and, therefore, is entitled to an education that is meaningful and sensitive to his or her varied and often changing needs. This is especially true for at-risk students who may not respond to traditional teaching and evaluation methods as well as for highly gifted students whose educational abilities and needs may surpass or differ from their counterparts in a traditional public school system.

In recognition of these important concepts, the DCA charter renewal petition is being submitted by Denair Unified School District to continue operation of the DCA in order to serve the needs of grades K-12 students within the Denair Unified School District ("District") and other school districts in Stanislaus County and adjacent counties. DCA will also serve any student in need of an alternative approach including students referred by the School Attendance Review Board (SARB), Student Study Team, Probation Department, expulsion process, or an alternative placement

committee.

DCA implements a flexible educational program designed to meet the needs of all students. This flexible program may include some combination of independent study, classroom learning, home schooling, and “school-to career” programs.

The program provides personalized instruction through *individual learning plans* so students can receive meaningful individual attention. Given the social and emotional factors that can impede learning for at-risk children, this personalized instruction allows teachers to identify any issues that may hinder a particular student's schoolwork. Students and parents are encouraged to be involved in the planning and implementation of a collaboratively designed educational program. Within the framework of State Standards and course requirements, students are able to choose the course of study on which they want to concentrate. This allows students to select courses that are relevant and interesting to them, engendering, as a result, an interest in the process of learning while meeting graduation or promotion requirements commensurate with State and District standards. In addition, the program is designed so that students work within the educational methodology through which they learn best, thereby avoiding boredom and frustration. Students are given assignments matched to individual needs and interests that can be completed in a reasonable amount of time. Students receive immediate feedback and continual encouragement that builds success and leads to greater self-confidence in the student's abilities. The academic and behavioral standards to which the students are held develop discipline and productive work habits. Furthermore, staff continues to be trained to understand how students learn through multiple intelligences and how to differentiate instruction.

DCA’s approach to teaching and learning is to match a student's educational experiences to his or her identified abilities, interests, motivation, learning styles and demonstrated achievement. Learning plans are adjusted to match the student's level and pace of learning through a variety of instructional practices. To that end, DCA may employ any modality that will produce the best educational outcomes in a manner consistent with charter school laws.

DCA provides opportunities for teachers, parents, students and community members to accomplish, among other things:

- improved student learning;

- increased learning opportunities for all students (with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are identified as academically low achieving);
- innovations in teaching methods;
- new professional opportunities for teachers (including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site);
- expanded choices for students and parents in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system; and
- accountability for meeting measurable student outcomes.

Students may demonstrate their ability in various academic areas by selecting from the following choices:

- I. High School Academic Credit: DCA is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges for grades 9-12. Students may earn credits by completing course work based on District standards. While working independently, students accumulate a portfolio of completed work that will demonstrate evidence of their achievement.
- II. Course Challenge Testing: Students may receive credit for a given course by demonstrating mastery of the content for that course by obtaining an acceptable minimum score on a designed course competency test. A teacher or proctor designated by DCA will administer the test in compliance with the District-approved procedures.

Students will be given entry assessments in various subject areas and will be tested periodically for learning gains. Attendance will be calculated and an audit trail will be maintained for each student based on California State Department of Education charter school regulations.

DCA is evaluated annually. DCA is evaluated according to student performance, student and parent satisfaction with the program, the number of students graduating or being promoted from the program, and by success, where applicable, in returning students to the traditional school system. Records and reports of all of the outcomes are maintained and disseminated by the DCA aligned with District procedures.

1.2 PRINCIPAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CHARTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The principal goals of the DCA program are: (i) to provide expanded choices for pupils and parents in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system, (ii) to offer a comprehensive learning experience to DCA students, and (iii) to provide intervention support and other educational services to these students in order to:

- reintegrate and/or reinstate them into a District or other comprehensive site;
- offer them the opportunity to pursue independent study, home schooling and extended classroom learning for academic credit; and
- enable them to become self-motivated, competent, and life-long learners.

To achieve these goals, students will demonstrate learning progress documented in:

- State Testing and Reporting(STAR) and other state tests as applicable, e.g., California English Language Development Test (CELDT), physical fitness, etc.
- schoolwide assessments [Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE) and Group Mathematics Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GMADE)].
- Teacher-made tests, homework assignments, portfolios, and teacher observations

Learning progress in all subjects is monitored in the Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

SECTION 2 - THE CHARTER SCHOOL PLAN OF OPERATION:

2.1 ADMISSION CRITERIA AND ENROLLMENT

It is the intent of DCA to serve any students who are not in existing public schools including individuals expelled from school, at risk of dropping out of school, and other those students referred to DCA. Target students may include, among others, students referred by Student Attendance Review Board (SARB), Probation, or the District's alternative placement procedures. Special emphasis is placed on providing a comprehensive learning experience to pupils identified as academically low achieving (a description that may include highly gifted students). The recruitment effort focuses on these populations. To that end, the DCA staff works to identify target students through a variety of channels, principally:

- counselor and administrator referral/student study teams;
- court, probation and judicial system referrals;
- School Attendance Review Board process;
- social service agency referrals; and
- the District's alternative education placement committee.

DCA may collaborate with community agencies, e.g., as libraries, colleges, community-based organizations, churches, and local businesses to assist in the process of identifying target students and to provide support services.

DCA shall admit any student who wishes to attend the DCA. However, if the number of students who wish to attend DCA exceeds the school's capacity, attendance, except for existing students of DCA, shall be determined by a public random drawing that complies with the intent of school choice, capability to add teachers, and/or facilities. Preference shall be extended to students currently attending DCA and students who reside in the District. Other preferences may be permitted consistent with law.

2.2 OPERATIONS AND SERVICES PROVIDED

After initial location of students who are interested in enrolling, DCA will identify the particular needs of each student by providing diagnostic testing in content areas to determine gaps in the individual student's knowledge and skill base. Working with the teacher, students develop an Individual Learning Plan (the ILP) to help them maximize their goals. DCA recognizes that individual students have varied and often changing needs, and teachers will adjust the ILP to meet these needs while maintaining strict adherence to a well-defined set of content standards. Students are provided a balance between structure and flexibility in their learning process.

DCA will actively pursue the following objectives when developing the ILP for each student:

- examine the expectations for the individual student;
- develop the ILP based on the student's knowledge base and expectations;
- understand the cause of any discrepancy between the expectations and the student's knowledge base;
- assess the academic strengths and areas for improvement of students through both formal and informal assessment;

- locate available resources and services so that an appropriate match can be achieved; and
- design an ILP that is flexible, modifiable and includes an evaluation procedure to determine if desired outcomes have been achieved.

Individual Learning Plans may include independent study, home schooling programs, online courses, and/or classroom time that will allow students to organize their learning around existing family schedules. Independent study students will meet with their teacher at mutually agreed-upon hours, one (1) time per week for approximately one (1) hour per session. Home Schooling students may be schooled in non-traditional environments with the parent as the primary facilitator. Teachers meet with the student weekly to review and record student work, to provide academic counseling, and to create individualized learning plans pursuant to the parents' request, student needs, and State Standards. Students may also elect to participate in such activities as field trips, computer lab activities, and small group instruction for additional tutorial assistance.

Students are regularly tested to assess skill level growth and the adequacy of the program in meeting individual needs. All DCA students are tested annually using applicable state mandated tests and/or other District approved recognized basic skills tests. DCA students, who often represent a transient population, are re-tested periodically through the school year. Students are encouraged to return to a comprehensive or alternative school when appropriate. The DCA campus, composed of thirteen re-locatable buildings for administration and instruction, is adjacent to the District Office and easily accessible to students. Elementary, Middle, and High School campuses are also adjacent if students wish to access classes or activities at those schools. DCA'S facilities meet all applicable laws and ordinances for the health and safety of faculty and students. DCA is generally exempt from the Field Act.

Pursuant to applicable law, the District permits DCA to use facilities not currently being used by the District for instructional or administrative. The District shall be responsible for reasonable maintenance of those facilities. DCA may use other District facilities in the future with District approval.

DCA shall comply with all the provisions of this renewal petition and all laws establishing minimum age for public school attendance, but is otherwise exempt from the laws governing school

districts, except as specified in Sections 47600 et seq. (the "Charter School Act of 1992"), 4761 1 (Participation in Teachers' Retirement System - STRS) and 41365 (Charter School Revolving Loan Fund) of the California Education Code.

2.3 THE CHARTER SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM IN DETAIL

To meet the principal goals of DCA, the Program is designed, among other things, to identify those students whom the school is attempting to educate, to instill in those students what it means to be an "educated person" for this century, and to adopt learning modalities that recognize how learning best occurs for each student.

A. Curriculum:

Curriculum offerings include courses in English Language Arts, mathematics, science, social science, physical education, health education, art, music, computer literacy, agriculture, business, foreign languages, industrial technology, trade and technology, and other career-oriented courses. Online courses provide college preparatory English, mathematics, science, social science and foreign languages.

The curriculum focuses on courses covering core knowledge in each of the subject areas. This ensures that students receive a strong foundation of basic skills. Pedagogical strategies take into consideration the individual student's level of prior knowledge and motivation. Advanced courses and electives are available for those students who have the capability to learn concepts above and beyond the core and desire advanced study or specialization in a certain area.

Wherever possible, courses are integrated so that skills learned from other subject areas can be applied in new contexts. Once the core courses are mastered, students may be asked to synthesize their knowledge of different subject areas to solve problems. In particular, reading and analytical skills are emphasized across the curriculum.

The curriculum covers foundational knowledge but is flexible enough to take advantage of new materials, innovations and improvements. The curriculum, to

the extent possible, draws on local community resources to expand students' educational experiences. This may take the form of interaction with representatives of a particular business or agency specializing in an area of the student's interest. Additionally, the curriculum allows students to apply their knowledge in situations that take advantage of a particular student's background. This may involve students' learning about their own ethnic, cultural or socioeconomic history.

In accordance with the intent of the state legislature, DCA is also a forum for testing and implementing new curriculum materials. A team of credentialed teachers with curriculum experience reviews new textbooks and other instructional materials prior to their use in the program.

B. Accelerated Learning Strategies:

DCA's curriculum introduces instruction in higher order thinking skills (Bloom's Taxonomy) as early as possible in the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and offers interesting and challenging curricula that allow students to progress as quickly as their capabilities permit. The program promotes students' ability to use the knowledge they are accumulating in novel situations and to solve problems differing from the ones they may have practiced in textbooks. A philosophy of DCA is that the true test of learning is not the accumulation of disconnected facts but the ability to make connections in order to apply student understanding to real problems. Thus, assessments include such activities as using language skills to draw inferences from reading materials or employing novel problem-solving tasks to mathematical equations.

C. Systematic Monitoring of Attendance and Student Intervention:

Every effort is made to encourage students to fulfill their Individual Learning Plan (ILP). As part of this effort, the teacher determines whether there are logistical problems or personal issues that hinder the student from completing his/her course

work. The personalized interaction between the teacher and the student makes it possible for such issues to be discovered at the early stages of the relationship. The teacher quickly identifies absenteeism or the failure to complete course work at the learning sessions.

DCA policy requires that teachers contact parents of all students if they fail to complete course work or fail to keep appointments during any school week. Teachers, staff and administrators make every reasonable effort to identify the reasons for student absenteeism and to encourage students to continue with the program. Often, the student has been or is currently experiencing unusual economic or personal hardship. In these cases, DCA staff may consult with local governmental, health and charitable agencies to try to ensure that the individual receives the help he/she needs. Therefore, the process is designed so that no student simply becomes unsuccessful.

Failure to complete course work or to meet performance standards may also be due to the student's difficulty in comprehending the academic material being studied. This is discovered as soon as possible in the learning session with the teacher. In such cases, additional time may be scheduled for review and practice of the subject matter. If the student has a pressing personal issue, the student may limit or reduce the number of courses that he or she is taking. Due to the flexible nature of the DCA program, students are able to alter their course-load and concentrate on the number of courses in which they are able to succeed. This alleviates the problem that students sometimes face in conventional public school where the sheer number of courses itself leads to failure. In addition, it enables the students to maintain a connection with a schooling program. Such a connection, once broken, may be difficult to restore. By continuing with even one course, the student will be better able to regain the momentum needed to complete his or her Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

D. Linkage with Local Schools and the Community:

The DCA staff works with community-based organizations to identify and recruit students and to keep students in school. DCA continually seeks potentially helpful community-based organizations, matches the organizations' capabilities with the needs of the students and promotes awareness of the DCA's activities. DCA, to the extent possible, also forms relationships with local businesses so students will have job contacts when they complete their ILP and/or graduate from DCA. Furthermore, DCA seeks businesses that are willing to lend their expertise and experience in their particular areas of specialty. DCA allows students to gain real world experience and skills through community service, work experience, and pursuit of school-to-career programs.

DCA staff also work with personnel from Community Services Agency, Health Services Agency, the juvenile justice system and probation departments to confirm that students who are receiving services from these agencies are enrolled full-time in the DCA program and attending on a regular basis. To address the special needs of students, DCA personnel may also call upon the services of these agencies if the staff determines that such intervention may help resolve personal issues so that the student can continue with his or her educational program. The teachers also direct the students to available public services, such as programs for teenage parents, counseling for anger management, and other applicable programs.

DCA maintains a close, informal relationship with the District's elementary, middle and high schools. This relationship is critical to the success of DCA and also serves as an essential source of information to the District. Students may be referred to the District's alternative placement procedure to see if DCA may be an appropriate alternative for them. As requested by other districts from which students come, DCA personnel inform school principals, teachers and counselors about program developments and the progress of individual students. DCA continues these contacts with other districts to ensure that all those inside and outside the traditional public

school system are aware of the services offered by DCA.

E. School Organization and Culture:

Students are scheduled at DCA for assessments, individualized instruction, independent work, small group or classroom instruction, or instruction in the computer lab. In DCA, students have opportunities to work in many learning modalities. Students may ask each other for assistance and feedback on their particular project. This teaches the value of cooperation and respect and exposes students to other topics and course work they may find interesting. In addition, students may obtain support from other students who are similarly situated.

Students are exposed to an environment comparable to the one they will face when they enter the real world of work. As a result, the students may encounter professionals on a regular basis. This will provide many of the students with their very first experience of what occurs in the adult world of work. In this setting, students see models of responsible and productive citizens and may be motivated to aspire to similar positions. At a minimum, the students will be expected to exhibit the same professional behavior as the adults whose environment they are sharing.

DCA's administrator is responsible for the academic operation and for developing the staff into a team that works together. Although each teacher is responsible for a specific group of students, teachers may interact with all students. As a result, all students will be known by, and will be accountable to, the entire staff.

F. Promotion/Graduation Requirements:

DCA is authorized to award high school diplomas to DCA students who successfully complete the credit and academic requirements established by the Denair Unified School District and pass state-required assessments. Credits awarded by the DCA are transferable to other high schools. DCA is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges for grades 9-12.

2.4 EVALUATION - MEASURABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

To ensure the continued quality of the program, the District external evaluator and DCA staff annually analyze student outcomes. The results of the evaluation and the evaluator's recommendations are used to update curriculum and instructional materials and modify or expand existing programs and instructional strategies.

Assessment, both formal and informal, is an essential component of DCA's approach to its operation. Appropriately selected and administered assessment instruments provide information that is critical in order to:

- make meaningful placement decisions;
- document student growth through pre-testing and post-testing;
- assist teachers in making effective decisions about instructional content and pacing for individual students; and
- evaluate overall program effectiveness.

DCA staff believes that test scores are only one indicator of a student's abilities and knowledge. Assessments are selected in context with other information about the student and only after careful consideration of the best test to use and a full understanding of the individual student being tested. To that end, the DCA staff uses multiple measures to accurately determine student achievement. These include such factors as attendance records, the degree of participation of the student in the DCA Program, academic performance, student and parental satisfaction with the Program, and student and parental feedback regarding DCA.

A. Initial Student Testing:

DCA administers a District approved battery of tests in mathematics, reading, writing and vocabulary to entering students so they can be placed in course work at their skill level. These tests may include Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE), Group Mathematics Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GMADE), San Diego Quick, Informal Reading Inventory. Optional assessments include CORE Phonics Survey, High Frequency Words, and Spelling Inventory.

The tests are immediately scored, and the teacher guides the enrolling student in selecting classes at his or her level that fulfill the student's educational needs. Post-tests are administered after a predetermined period of enrollment at DCA. This pre-testing and post-testing process enables teachers to maintain focus on an individual student's growth in specific content areas as well as providing data that can be used to modify the instructional approach if necessary.

Orientation interviews are also conducted. This process provides the student's teachers with a sense of the student's communication skills, his/her view of schooling, reasons for leaving the previous learning environment, and the student's goals. Understanding this "affective" domain is extremely important in working with this particular at-risk population and provides information the teacher can use in helping the student shape his or her educational and personal goals.

B. Expected Student Outcomes:

The specific expected outcomes for DCA students (home schooled and independent study) are the following:

- All students enrolled in the DCA Program for twelve months or longer will achieve measurable gains in mathematics achievement. Measurable gain will be determined by the student's academic ability and noted in the learning objectives of the Individual Learning Plan (ILP).
- All students enrolled in the DCA Program for twelve months or longer will achieve measurable growth in reading comprehension and language proficiency. Measurable gain will be determined by the student's academic ability and noted in learning objectives of the Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

C. Measuring Student Progress:

DCA shall be responsible for providing an assessment procedure to examine all aspects of the school's effectiveness. DCA will rely on an external District-approved evaluation to provide an accurate and objective assessment of the DCA's educational process, policies and effectiveness. DCA makes every reasonable effort to address any problem areas that are identified in these evaluations. The evaluations utilize

both quantitative and qualitative analyses. The quantitative aspect of the evaluation involves collection of data relating to:

- baseline and growth student profiles that record the following test results: GRADE; GMADE; publisher tests, chapter, and unit tests; and California High School Exit Exam
- enrollment, academic and attendance records of DCA students.
- educational and community agency services rendered to DCA students; and

DCA has an organized system for administering State Testing and Reporting (STAR) System and other mandatory assessments including a calendar listing dates of all key assessments.

The qualitative component consists of structured and unstructured interviews and questionnaires with DCA staff, community agency personnel and DCA students and parents.

Students enrolled in DCA are expected to achieve at a minimum the same academic achievement levels as their counterparts in the regular public schools.

DCA shall meet all Denair Unified School District adopted standards, and conduct the student assessments required pursuant to Section 60605 of the Education Code, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools.

2.5 GOVERNANCE

DCA is a charter school operated by the Denair Unified School District. The Denair Unified School District Board of Education is the governing body for all DCA operations and holder of the Charter. A DCA Site Advisory Council comprised of representation from various stakeholders may be established. As applicable, the DCA Site Advisory Council shall comply with the Brown Act, Public Records Act, Political Reform Act, Education Code section 7050 et seq., and all conflict of interest laws of general application to public agencies.

The DUSD Board of Education encourages the DCA staff to be creative, innovative, and student

centered while promoting a unique educational climate. The DUSD Board also promotes site autonomy through site-based decision making to support the true intent of the charter school petition.

Additionally, DCA will promote parent participation and involvement. Parents will be given the opportunity to convey their interests that moves the charter school into a less traditional program toward an innovative and enriching environment for all students enrolled. One way by which parents will be given the opportunity to be involved is through voluntary participation on the DCA Parent Advisory Committee.

Although, District teachers voluntarily assigned to DCA will be represented by the Denair Unified Teachers Association (DUTA), DCA teachers will still be able to enjoy the autonomy to explore innovation that could reach into the non-charter campuses within the District. DUTA also has an interest to support the spirit of the public charter school through contract language that recognizes the premise of the charter school.

Existing District certificated employees voluntarily assigned to work at DCA are expected to fulfill the same hourly obligations as other District certificated employees who are part of the DUTA collective bargaining unit. Full-time teachers will be expected to work a 35 hour week with flexibility necessary to meet the needs of the student population. Each teacher's schedule will be individually approved by the DCA Principal subject to later modification by the Principal to meet student needs. DCA teachers will be required to participate in collaborative days for professional development and are expected to remain on duty at the DCA school site during minimum days. Teachers at DCA will need to adjust their independent study schedule with students to accommodate for adjustments of time that may result from a minimum day or collaborative day as determined by the DCA Principal upon review of the District's calendar.

In the spring preceding the start of each school year, the Principal will meet with DCA teaching staff to prepare a list of all adjunct duties that are required to meet the unique educational needs of the students served by DCA. All adjunct duties will be approved by the DCA Principal and District Superintendent. At the Principal's discretion, the list of approved adjunct duties shall be subject to revision by the Principal after the start of each new school year in order to meet student needs.

The District will support DCA with, but not limited to, fiscal, legal, and student services support as needed, requested, and/or required. It is within this support that the DCA staff can focus on teaching and learning.

2.6 PARENTAL AND TEACHER INVOLVEMENT

It is essential that parents and teachers have an understanding of what is necessary to prepare students for the next century. To achieve this goal, parents are required and/or highly encouraged to become involved in their child's program through regular and extensive communication with DCA staff and active participation in the DCA's operations. DCA shall, on a regular basis, consult with parents and teachers regarding the DCA's Program.

In a home schooling modality in which the parent or another caregiver is the primary facilitator, the students and parents are required to attend the weekly, scheduled learning session with the teacher. Teachers provide parents with teaching instruction to help them instruct their children. In an independent study modality, the student meets with a teacher an average of one (1) time per week for approximately one (1) hour sessions. Additional instruction is often provided via the telephone or by scheduling additional appointments as needed. Teachers provide students with one-on-one instruction, guidance counseling, and personal encouragement. Parents of both home-schooled and independent study students receive a weekly lesson plan including the required number of minutes to be spent on each subject area.

Parents of all students will be required to attend their child's initial enrollment session in the DCA and to assist in the development of their child's ILP. A printed copy of the DCA's philosophy, goals, and objectives is given to every entering student and to his or her family. The enrolling teacher, student and parent then discuss these documents, the student's ILP and ways in which the parent can actively support the student's learning process. These methods may include keeping the student accountable and giving him or her the time and space needed to complete the course work. An initial student contract, which is signed by each student and his or her parent(s) or primary caregiver, states that students will keep appointments at the designated time and days, that they will complete at least one unit per week, and that they understand the rules of DCA. As part of the student assessment, parents are also asked for feedback about the student's educational program.

2.7 QUALIFICATIONS OF STAFF

The qualifications and duties of the certificated and classified staff employed by the District to work at DCA shall be determined by the District. As the employer, the District shall have decision making authority with respect to hiring, evaluating, disciplining, and releasing of employees working at DCA.

DCA and District recognize that the qualifications and abilities of a professional staff can directly affect the quality of the education and the student outcomes at DCA. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the DCA's administration and the District to recruit and employ the best candidates in order to meet DCA's educational needs. DCA is committed to retaining highly qualified and experienced personnel to ensure the continued delivery of quality educational programs.

Teaching Staff.

All certificated employees hired directly to work at DCA shall be evaluated in accordance with DCA policy. All existing certificated District employees assigned to work at DCA will be evaluated pursuant to the collective bargaining agreement between the District and Denair Unified Teachers Association (DUTA). In addition, all employees are subject to the requirements regarding criminal record checks as provided in Section 3.1 herein below.

To the extent required by applicable law, all teachers at DCA shall be required to hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. These documents shall be maintained on file at DCA and shall be subject to periodic inspection by the District.

DCA is committed to maintaining a discrimination-free work place and to retaining highly qualified and experienced personnel to ensure the continued delivery of quality educational programs.

Classified/Non-instructional Staff.

All classified and non-instructional District staff working at DCA will possess experience and expertise appropriate for their position at DCA and will be required to meet the same standards as other District classified employees.

All classified District employees who are employed by the District to perform work for the DCA shall be evaluated in accordance the collective bargaining agreement between the District and

CSEA, Denair Chapter No. 113.

SECTION 3 - GENERAL PROVISIONS:

3.1 HEALTH AND SAFETY

DCA health and safety procedures are the same as those of the Denair Unified School District. Parking, buildings, and restrooms are accessible to the handicapped. The DCA campus is a tobacco-free zone. A monthly fire drill is conducted. Emergency procedures are specified. The staff is trained in CPR, disease prevention, and other health and safety issues.

DCA shall require that every employee of DCA furnish a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237 of the California Education Code and proof of a medical examination for tuberculosis as described in Education Code section 49406.. The District and DCA shall adhere to existing State laws regarding fingerprinting and tuberculosis testing of employees.

All students of DCA will be required to provide proof of immunization as a condition of attendance to the same extent as would apply if the students attended a non-charter public school.

DCA will provide for the screening of students' vision and hearing and the screening of students for scoliosis to the same extent as would be required if the students attended a non-charter public school.

Insurance.

The District will maintain insurance coverage for DCA and employees in amounts equal to that which would be in place if the DCA's facilities were occupied by another school of the District.

3.2 RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE

DCA maintains a policy of non-discrimination in all areas of its operations. DCA endeavors to achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its students that reflects the District's ethnic distribution. This balance will be maintained by recruitment in various representative areas of the community and by targeting under-represented students, if any. DCA may also work with community-based organizations to accomplish this balance. The District Superintendent is responsible for monitoring the racial and ethnic balance within the Program.

3.3 AUDITS

A. Attendance Audit:

DCA shall cause an annual compliance audit to be conducted by a District-appointed external auditor. The auditor shall substantiate that the stated Average Daily Attendance (ADA) meets the standards regarding charter schools.

B. Financial Audit:

As a dependent charter school of the District, DCA will prepare and submit to the District reports needed for the District to complete an annual audit. DCA will be part of the annual audit of the District. The audit will verify the accuracy of DCA's financial statements, attendance and enrollment, accounting practices, and review the charter school's internal controls. The audit will be conducted in accordance with regulations governing charter school audits and Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (GAAP) applicable to DCA. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope will be expanded to include items and processes specified in any applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars. It is anticipated that the annual audit will be completed by December 15 following the close of the fiscal year.

3.4 STUDENT CONDUCT

Staff makes extensive effort to keep students in DCA. Students are expected to conform to the customary rules of conduct and the normal modes of operation of the facility in which the DCA is located. Teachers and staff of DCA will be present at all times to monitor student behavior. If a problem arises, the teacher will contact the student's family and may request a parent-teacher conference to discuss the matter. A disciplinary situation may determine that mandatory parent supervision become part of the student's requirement during the scheduled student/teacher sessions.

Student suspensions shall be at the discretion of the teacher, in consultation with the DCA lead teacher or administrator. Independent study/community service assignments may be employed in lieu of suspension.

DCA may adopt a Student Conduct Code approved by the District's Governing Board of Education or adopt a separate conduct code for the charter school. DCA will follow student suspension and expulsion policies and/or procedures consistent with student suspension and expulsion policies and procedures adopted by the District Governing Board of Education.

3.5 STAFF RETIREMENT SYSTEM

All certificated District employees working at DCA will be covered by the California State Teachers Retirement System (CalSTRS) to the same extent as other non-charter District employees. Classified District employees working exclusively at DCA or as part of their District work assignments will be covered by the California Public Employee Retirement System (CalPERS) to the same extent as other non-charter District employees. All part-time staff will participate in the federal social security system. The District shall be responsible to ensure that arrangements for coverage are made.

3.6 ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS FOR STUDENTS

No student may be required to attend DCA. Students who reside within the District who choose not to attend DCA 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 DCA will be informed on admissions forms that the students have no right to admission in a particular school of any local educational agency as a consequence of enrollment in DCA, except to the extent that such right is extended by the local educational agency.

3.7 EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

A. Certificated Employees.

1. Existing Certificated District Employees Assigned to DCA.

All permanent and probationary certificated District employees who are currently working at DCA or offered employment at DCA and choose to be assigned to DCA will be members of the Denair Unified Teachers' Association (DUTA) collective bargaining unit and covered by the collective bargaining agreement between DUTA and the District while working at DCA. Certificated District employees who chose to work at DCA shall retain their employment rights under the Education Code and shall be afforded those rights and benefits specified in the DUTA collective bargaining agreement.

While certificated District employees who obtained permanent status at the time they are voluntarily assigned to work at DCA will continue to have permanency with regards to employment at the District, they will not have any right to a permanent employment assignment at DCA. The District shall have the sole managerial discretion to reassign certificated District employees working at DCA to a non-charter District school.

2. Separately Contracted Certificated Employees.

Certificated employees who are hired by the District to work directly at DCA on an annual or other contract basis (“Separately Contracted Teachers”) will be employees of the District but will not be afforded employment protections set forth in the Education Code or the DUTA collective bargaining agreement. All Separately Contracted Teachers shall be deemed at-will employees. Separately Contracted Teachers will not have any permanency or seniority rights or any other job retention rights or privileges unless afforded individually by the District.

A certificated employee of any school district other than the Denair Unified School District who leaves the employment of said school district to work at DCA shall have no automatic right to reemployment at said school district, or a right to transfer accrued service credit, sick or vacation leave to the District, unless otherwise permissible by said school district's policies and applicable law and applicable collective bargaining agreement provisions.

3. Compensation and Benefits.

Certificated District employees voluntarily assigned to work at DCA will receive compensation and benefits in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement between DUTA and the District.

For Separately Contracted Teachers, the District will strive to set compensation and benefits levels to create a compensation package that is competitive with that being offered to District certificated employees who are part of the collective bargaining agreement between the District and DUTA. This may be in the form of a salary schedule or other method the District may choose. Additional salary increases and bonus compensation may be provided to individual employees to attract and retain a highly qualified instructional staff. The District may offer some

candidates increased compensation in high-demand areas or compensate employees based on outstanding performance.

B. Classified Employees.

All classified District employees who are employed by the District to perform work for DCA, whether exclusively or as part of their individual District work assignments, will continue to be members of the CSEA, Denair Chapter No. 113 classified bargaining unit (“CSEA classified bargaining unit”), and be covered by the collective bargaining agreement between CSEA and the District. These classified employees will be assigned pursuant to District procedures and practices and will receive the same compensation and benefits as other CSEA classified bargaining unit employees of the District.

3.9 PAYMENTS

Payment of Funds to the Charter School: All financial and payroll procedures will comply with District guidelines and Board policy.

3.10 CALENDAR

DCA may have a year-round, multi-track, staggered start calendar or, as necessary, any other calendar that would improve the delivery of instruction to DCA students provided that such calendar complies with applicable law. The calendar shall be established as per DUTA/DUSD bargaining provisions.

3.11 SERVICES TO DISABLED AND SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS

DCA will not be deemed a local educational agency for purposes of compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”). DCA will function as a “public school of the District” for purposes of Education Code section 47646 during the term of this charter. As such, DCA and the District understand and agree that the District shall, in partnership with DCA, ensure that all students with exceptional needs who attend DCA are provided with a free and appropriate public education in compliance with the IDEIA.

The District shall determine how the special education and related services are to be provided. DCA will comply with District policy and practice with respect to the provision of special education and related services.

DCA will 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 IDEA.

DCA agrees to adhere to the policies, procedures and requirements of the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) for special education in which the District operates for special education purposes as a public school of the District.

SECTION 4 - TERMS OF OPERATION:

4.1 NON-DISCRIMINATION

DCA shall be non-sectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and all other operations. DCA shall not charge students tuition and shall not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code. Admission to DCA shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the pupil, or of his or her parent or guardian, within California.

4.2 TERM OF CHARTER

This Charter for DCA shall be for the term of five years subject to approval of the California State Board of Education. The Charter may be renewed for subsequent five (5) year terms by the Denair Unified District's Board of Education. The District Board will act upon a renewal petition up to twelve (12) months prior to expiration of the Charter.

4.3 CLOSURE PROCEDURES

If DCA ceases to operate for any reason, the District shall be the “responsible entity” to conduct closure-related activities pursuant to Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations section 11962. Closure of DCA will be documented by official action of the District’s Governing Board. The District will ensure that the notification to the parents and students of DCA of the closure provides information to assist parents and students in enrolling in their school of attendance or suitable alternative education programs within the District or otherwise. This notice will be provided promptly following the Board’s decision to close DCA.

The District will develop a list of pupils in each grade level and the classes they have completed at DCA. The District will provide parents and students with copies of all appropriate

student records and will 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. All records of DCA, including, state assessments results, special education records, and personnel records will be maintained by the District in accordance with applicable law.

On closure of DCA, all assets of the school, Average Daily Attendance apportionments, and other revenues generated by students attending, remain the sole property of the District and shall be distributed in accordance with the law. The District may use the amounts budgeted for DCA’s reserves normally maintained for contingencies and emergencies, if any, to fund closure proceedings.

4.4 AMENDMENTS

This Charter may be amended by the District Board. All such amendments shall have final approval from the District Board.

4.5 INTERPRETATION

Headings at the beginning of each paragraph and subparagraph are solely for the convenience of the parties and are not a part of this petition. Whenever required by the context of this petition, the singular shall include the plural. This petition shall be construed to give the fullest autonomy to DCA to fulfill its primary goal of teaching all its students, including at-risk students, academically low achieving students, community day, independent study or home schooled students.

4.6 PARTIAL INVALIDITY

The provisions of this Charter are severable, and in the event that any one or more provisions shall be determined to be judicially unenforceable, in whole or in part, the remaining provisions shall nevertheless be binding and enforceable.

4.7 OTHER DISTRICTS

It is the intent of DCA to reach other students by setting up satellite schools in other districts in Stanislaus County under the provisions of charter school law. The models will endeavor to meet the needs of the parents and students where these satellites are established.

4.8 NOTICES

Any and all notices, demands or other communications required is to be given as hereinafter set forth.

To Denair Charter Academy:

Denair Charter Academy

3460 Lester Road

Denair, CA 95316

Phone: (209) 634-0917 Facsimile: (209) 669-9282

Attention: Michelle Bush, Principal

To the District:

Denair Unified School District

3460 Lester Road

Denair, CA 95316

Phone: (209) 632-7514 Facsimile: (209) 632-9194

Attention: Superintendent

Any party hereto may change his address for the purpose of receiving notices, demands and other communications as herein provided by a written notice given in the manner aforesaid to the other party or parties hereto.

4.9 GOVERNING LAW AND CONSTRUCTION

This Charter shall, in all respects, be governed by the laws of the State of California applicable to agreements executed and to be wholly performed within the State of California. Nothing contained herein shall be construed so as to require the commission of any act contrary to law.

4.10 ENTIRE AGREEMENT

This Charter constitutes the entire agreement of the parties with respect to the subject matter hereof and supersedes any and all other written or oral negotiations, understandings or agreements among the parties with respect to the rights and obligations assumed herein and contains all of the

covenants and agreements among the parties with respect to such rights and obligations, including, but not limited to, any and all prior charter school petitions entered into between the parties hereto.

4.11 WAIVER

The failure of either party to insist on strict compliance by the other party with any of the terms, conditions, or covenants of this Charter renewal shall not be deemed a waiver of that term, covenant, or condition, nor shall any waiver or relinquishment of any right or power at any one time or times be deemed a waiver or relinquishment of that right or power for any other time.

4.12 COUNTERPARTS

This Charter renewal may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument.

4.13 EXCLUSIVE EMPLOYER

Educational Employment Relations Act: The Denair Unified School District shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act.