

**CHARTER**

**OF THE**

**WILLITS ELEMENTARY**

**CHARTER SCHOOL:**

**A CALIFORNIA PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL**



Charter Renewal Petition  
July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2022

**WILLITS ELEMENTARY CHARTER SCHOOL:**  
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## **Affirmations and Assurances**

As Director of Willits Elementary Charter School (“WECS” or the “Charter School”), a California public charter school located within the boundaries of the Willits Unified School District (“WUSD” or the “District”), I, Kara McClellan, hereby certify that the information submitted in this petition for charter renewal is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that the Charter School will follow any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to the Charter School, including but not limited to:

- The Charter School shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Section 60605, 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)]
- The Charter School Association of Willits shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of Willits Elementary Charter School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O)]
- The Charter School shall be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- The Charter School shall not charge tuition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- The Charter School shall admit all students 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. Except as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2), 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. Preference in the public random drawing shall be given as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B). In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of the Charter School in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(C). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(A)-(C)]
- The Charter School shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, 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). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]

- The Charter School shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004.
- The Charter School shall meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)]
- The Charter School 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 noncore teachers. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(l)]
- The Charter School shall at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
- The Charter School 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 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. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(d)(3)]
- The Charter School shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(2)]
- The Charter School shall, on a regular basis, consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School's education programs. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(c)]
- The Charter School shall comply with any applicable jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605-47605.1]

- The Charter School shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment. [Ref. California Education Code Sections 47612(b), 47610]
- The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (“ESEA”), as reauthorized and amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (“ESSA”).
- 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 number of school days for charter schools.[Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11960]

*Kara Elizabeth McClellan*

*9/1/2016*

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Kara McClellan, Director  
Willits Elementary Charter School

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Date

## Introduction

### SUCSESSES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE PRIOR CHARTER TERM: 2012-2017

#### Evaluation of the Educational Program

In addition to standardized testing data, teachers use a wide variety of measures to gauge student involvement and achievement. These evaluations of student progress include review of portfolios, tests and quizzes, homework, discussions, class participation, journals, performances, research assignments, and presentations. Teachers cover the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) through curriculum and a multitude of student projects. Topics have included: local Native American communities, dwellings, simple machines, the life cycle, habitats, the U.S. states, and celebrations world-wide. Some of these projects are inspired by student discovery; other topics are introduced by teachers for students to explore. Teachers use samples of student work to create portfolios to track student progress and achievement. All students participate in the Willits Science Fair.

Part of our strategy to ensure academic excellence is through long school days. The chart below compares the number of State-required annual instructional minutes to the number of annual instructional minutes for students at WECS. By the end of fifth grade, WECS students will have completed the equivalent of more than an additional year of instruction, as compared to their same age peers attending traditional, non-charter public schools.

Comparison of Instructional Minutes		
	State	WECS
Kindergarten	36,000	57,750
Grades 1-3	50,400	59,500
Grades 4-5	54,000	63,000

WECS students are also committed to giving back to the community. Each year, WECS students choose local charities to support. These organizations have included the Rotary Christmas Program (helping families in need during the holidays), the World Land Trust Action Fund, and the Willits Community Services (WCS) and Food Bank. This last year, WECS students contributed 667 pounds of food to WCS—nearly half of the food contributed by all Willits schools combined. Finally, in the fall of 2015, WECS students raised over \$2000 to help victims of the Valley Fire.

In the spring of 2014, WECS participated in an accountability review process through the Charter School Development Center (CSDC). This evaluation meets all criteria

developed by the federally funded *California Public Charter Schools Grant Program* to determine whether federal grant funds have been well spent. This is also an ideal opportunity for charter schools to reflect on their strengths and challenges and to ensure that they have created a sustainable, quality school program. Please see a summary of the report in Appendix A: CSDC Evaluation.

This review process is designed to give an independent, in-depth evaluation of two over-arching questions:

- 1. Is the educational program a success?**
- 2. Is the school a viable organization (i.e. fiscally solvent with sound legal governance and operations)?**

This independent review determined that WECS “**met criteria**” for each one of these areas.

## **Science Fair**

An indicator of the success of our inquiry approach is our students’ participation in the annual Willits Science Fair. Each year, over sixty WECS students participate in the Science Fair at the Willits Community Center; younger students also contribute to a classroom project. Typically, between fifteen and twenty students qualify for participation at the Mendocino County Science Fair. Mendocino County Science Fair winning projects from WECS have included: *Seeing Red Feeling Blue*, *Observing the Growth of Crystals*, *Future Fuel*, *Sensitive Seedlings*, *Native American Art*, *Flexibility Challenge*, *Sun to Fog*, *Up, Up and Away*, *Awesome Soil*, *Where Has All the Water Gone?*, *For the Love of Dog*, *Chirp Chirp*, and *Going the Distance*.

## **CHARTER RENEWAL CRITERIA**

- A. Evidence of Meeting Charter Renewal Standards Pursuant to Education Code Section 47607(b) and the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 11966.4(a)(1)**

Education Code Section 47607(b) requires that a charter school must meet at least one of the following renewal criteria prior to receiving a charter renewal:

- (1) Attained its Academic Performance Index (API) growth target in the prior year or in two of the last three years, both school wide and for all groups of pupils served by the charter school.
- (2) Ranked in deciles 4 to 10, inclusive, on the API in the prior year or in two of the last three years.
- (3) Ranked in deciles 4 to 10 inclusive, in the API for a demographically comparable school in the prior year or in two of the last three years.



- (4) The entity that granted the charter determines that the academic performance of the charter school is at least equal to the academic performance of the public schools that the charter school pupils would otherwise have been required to attend, as well as the academic performance of the schools in the school district in which the charter school is located, taking into account the composition of the pupil population that is served at the charter school.
- (5) Has qualified for an alternative accountability system pursuant to subdivision (h) of Education Code Section 52052.

The following shall serve as documentation confirming that WECS meets the statutory criteria required for renewal as set forth in Education Code Section 47607(b)(4) (Also see Appendix B: Standardized Testing Reports):

Assembly Bill 484 amended Education Code sections 52052(e)(2)(F) and 52052(e)(4) to allow schools that do not have an API calculated to use one of the following criteria to meet legislative and/or programmatic requirements:

- The most recent API calculation;
- An average of the three most recent annual API calculations; or
- Alternative measures that show increases in pupil academic achievement for all groups of pupils schoolwide and among significant groups.

WECS meets the charter renewal criteria established in Education Code Section 47607(b) by demonstrating that WECS was at least equal to the academic performance of the public schools that the charter school pupils would otherwise have been required to attend as well as by utilizing “alternative measures” as allowed per Education Code Section 52052(e)(4)(A), both are further specified below.

## **Standardized Tests**

Like all California schools, WECS participated in the *California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress* (CAASPP) field test in 2013-2014 and the CAASPP tests in 2014-15 and 2015-16. The CAASPP includes the *Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium* (SBAC) test which is based on the Common Core State Standards and the *STAR Science* test. Like all public schools in California, WECS did not receive an API during the last three years.

## **Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)**

WECS 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade students participated in the SBAC in the spring of 2015 and 2016. WECS' reported scores are strong overall and within sub-groups (e.g. economically disadvantaged).

In 2015, we were excited to discover that WECS third graders had the highest math scores and the second highest English language arts (ELA) scores of any school in

Mendocino County. Our fourth graders had the highest ELA scores (out-performing most 5<sup>th</sup> grades in the county) and second highest math scores of any school in Mendocino County. Our 5<sup>th</sup> graders had strong scores in both math and ELA.

In 2016, both WECS third graders and fifth graders had the second highest English language arts (ELA) scores of any school in Mendocino County. Our fourth graders had the highest ELA scores (again out-performing most 5<sup>th</sup> grades in the county). All grades had strong math scores. Please see Appendix B for a more in-depth data analysis of these scores.

## Science, STAR

All 5<sup>th</sup> grade students participate in the STAR Science test. In 2015, WECS students had the third highest mean score in the county for the STAR Science test. All 5<sup>th</sup> grade WECS students participated in an engaging “Science Bootcamp” during the week before this test. We continue to see an increase in the number of students who are proficient in this test each year. 2016 data is not yet available. Please see Appendix B for a more in-depth data analysis and data from previous years.

## Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)

An alternative data-driven assessment WECS uses is through the *Measures of Academic Progress* (MAP) program by **Northwest Evaluation Association** (NWEA). This is an adaptive test. When students answer questions correctly, the difficulty of test questions increases; test question difficulty decreases when students err. We use this test to track student progress three times each year (in the fall, winter, and spring). These reports help teachers track individual student progress and class-wide progress. We also use this data to examine school-wide progress over time.

In particular, we can track progress in the following CCSS aligned areas:

- Operations and Algebraic Thinking
- Number and Operation in Base Ten
- Number and Operations—Fractions
- Measurement and Data
- Geometry
- Literature
- Informational Texts
- Foundational Skills and Vocabulary

One data-driven method used to track school-wide progress is the “Overall Percentage of RIT Met or Exceeded.” The RIT (Rasch unit) is the proprietary scale used by NWEA. RIT is the standardized norm used to track expected student progress. The purpose of this MAP report is to measure growth by examining RIT scores over the course of the

school year. A score of 100% indicates that the grade-level target has been fully achieved. Areas that exceed 100% indicate that classrooms surpassed projected growth. Please see Appendix B for MAP data from previous school years.

<b>Northwest Evaluation Association Achievement Status and Growth Summary Report, 2015- 2016</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>	<b>Average</b>
Overall Percentage of RIT Met or Exceeded, <b>Reading</b>	202%	116%	91%	136%
Overall Percentage of RIT Met or Exceeded, <b>Mathematics</b>	183%	145%	90%	140%
Overall Percentage of RIT Met or Exceeded, <b>Combined</b>	193%	131%	90.5%	138%

## **B. Additional Justification for Charter Renewal**

### Analysis of Charter Renewal Criteria – Student Subgroups

Education Code Section 47607(a)(3) states:

The authority that granted the charter shall consider increases in pupil academic achievement for all groups of pupils served by the charter school (defined as “a numerically significant pupil subgroup, as defined by paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 52052.” EC §47607(a)(3)(B)) as the most important factor in determining whether to grant a charter renewal.

The make-up of student populations in schools are unique. Because we are such a small school, many sub-categories of students are too small to disaggregate. We selected two of our statistically significant sub-groups of students who took the SBAC to examine more closely to be able to compare “apples to apples.” These two sub-groups were “Economically Disadvantaged” (WECS does not have enough students who are *not* Economically Disadvantaged to make up a significant sub-group). We also examined “English Only” students (WECS does not have enough students who are English Language Learners to make up a significant sub-group).

Typically, there is a large gap between the performance of economically disadvantaged students and students who are not economically disadvantaged. The state of California

has reported extensively about this gap and actively seeks ways to address it. We are particularly pleased to report that our economically disadvantaged students seem to be thriving. For example, in 2015 on the STAR Science test, there was only one point difference in average scores between all students and our economically disadvantaged students.

In 2015 and 2016, WECS “English Only” and “Economically Disadvantaged” students out-performed their peers at WUSD across all grade levels on all tests (please note that our “Economically Disadvantaged” sub-group in fifth grade was too small to be statistically significant in 2016).

Often, our economically disadvantaged students not only out-performed their economically disadvantaged peers at WUSD, but the overall grade level. For example, in 2016 WECS economically disadvantaged third graders had a higher ELA mean score than both the third and fourth grade as a whole and the economically disadvantaged fifth graders at WUSD; their math scores were higher than the third grade as a whole at WUSD.

*Data referenced above is from the research files downloaded through the California Department of Education CAASPP Results web page:*

*<http://caaspp.cde.ca.gov/sb2016/ResearchFileList>*

## Element #1: The Educational Program

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

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

### A. Mission and Vision

Our mission is to equip elementary students with the academic and social skills needed to become self-motivated, competent, life-long learners and productive citizens who respect themselves, others, community, diversity, and the environment. Willits Elementary Charter School will promote growth and development by providing all students with a safe and nurturing educational environment.

We aim to instill a love of learning and provide our students with a solid academic foundation by:

- Involving families
- Emphasizing inquiry-based education
- Encouraging creative thinking
- Incorporating problem solving on a regular basis
- Offering small class sizes and individualized attention
- Providing opportunities for all students to excel
- Presenting a well-rounded curriculum which includes foreign language instruction (Spanish), arts, music, physical activity, and outdoor education
- Utilizing varied forms of instruction
- Promoting self-awareness, interpersonal communication, and active listening
- Presenting a global perspective of human society
- Creating opportunities for students to develop an awareness of society’s impact on the natural environment

## B. Description of the Educational Program

Our educational program is designed to honor the developmental milestones and stages of the school-age child. According to the developmental psychologist, Erik Erikson, in elementary school, children are trying to develop a sense of self-worth by refining their skills. This translates into the classroom by creating an environment where progress is measured by comparing each child's learning and growth to themselves over time, rather than all children being expected to achieve the same result at the same time. Especially in the early grades when reading and mathematical skills are being introduced, teachers need to address many skill levels within one classroom. By providing individualized attention, varied forms of instruction to meet the needs of multiple learning styles (auditory, visual, tactile/kinesthetic), and supporting the idea of multiple intelligences, the needs of each individual student are met. As students grasp concepts and master skills, they become more confident and engaged in their learning.

Children participate in a well-rounded curriculum that includes instruction in academic fields such as science, language arts, mathematics, social studies, and foreign language. Arts such as music, drama, dance, drawing, sculpture, painting, crafts, handiwork, and gardening are also an integral part of the curriculum. Practical life skills are integrated into the curriculum. Time for play and physical movement are structured into each school day. Students have opportunities to use technology in the classroom but care is taken to introduce technology in such a way that it supports, not supplants, creativity and the development of academic and interpersonal skills. An effort is made to introduce cultural diversity into all core academic subjects, arts, and physical education.

Spanish is the primary language of focus in second-language instruction because we believe that fluency in Spanish is essential for success in the changing demographics of California. Other languages will be brought into the classroom when appropriate to the cultural heritage of the student body or topics of study.

Our charter school has a strong emphasis on community. Students develop the skills needed to relate to others, listen effectively, and see themselves as part of a larger entity. Students are encouraged to be involved in their school, local, regional, and global communities. Students have opportunities to participate in positive, structured interactions with area middle school students, high school students, college students, professionals, and community members.

Parents are actively involved with their child's education through parent participation hours. WECS recognizes that parents are a student's first teacher and play a vital role in their child's educational progress.. It is with this understanding that WECS parents are encouraged to volunteer.

WECS understands that special circumstances may prevent some families from volunteering their time. *No consequences regarding a student's enrollment or*

*participation in school programs will occur if parent participation hours are not performed.* No student shall be dis-enrolled from WECS due to a parent or guardian's failure to contribute volunteer service hours.

### **Overview of Curriculum Content**

Our curriculum is designed to encourage creative thinking, incorporate problem solving on a regular basis, and provide opportunities for all students to excel. This is accomplished, in part, by students using acquired knowledge to answer their own questions; applying information learned in the classroom to real life situations; an emphasis on group and individual projects; and a hands-on, inquiry-based approach to education.

Inquiry-based education involves a complex process of student-designed questions, investigation, data collection, and conversion of information into useful knowledge. Successful inquiry-based learning provides a context and framework for student-designed questions and allows for opportunities for enhancing and deepening student interactions with curriculum. The goals of inquiry-based learning are to encourage students' curiosity about the world around them, develop problem-solving skills, formulate knowledge that can be widely applied to a variety of situations, and provide a platform for students to develop the habits of mind needed to become life-long learners.

By focusing not only on curriculum itself, but also the process of learning, students come to realize that the knowledge base for academic disciplines is constantly growing and changing. An inquiry-based approach prepares students to actively participate in the creation and acquisition of new knowledge.

Our curriculum is designed to meet and/or exceed state standards and to incorporate an inquiry-based approach wherever possible. California has adopted the Common Core State Standards and the recently adopted *Next Generation Science Standards*. *The term "state standards" reflects these adoptions.* As an overview, our curriculum includes, but is not limited to, the following elements:

### **Reading and Language Arts**

- Reading
- Spelling
- Word study including contractions, noun gender and number, prefixes and suffixes, synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, and etymology
- Handwriting
- Punctuation and grammar
- Parts of speech and sentence analysis
- Figurative speech including metaphor and simile
- Sentence and paragraph structure
- Research skills including the use of dictionaries, encyclopedias, and the Internet

- Note taking and outline skills
- Creative and expository writing
- Literature comprehension, analysis, and appreciation
- Playwriting and performance
- Poetry writing and analysis
- Book reports
- Oral presentations
- Letter writing skills and thank you notes
- Study of literary figures

### ***Mathematics***

- Counting
- Mathematical operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division)
- Decimals
- Fractions
- Money
- Time
- Square roots
- History of mathematics and its applications in science, engineering, technology, and economics
- Data gathering
- Graphing
- Statistical analysis including the study of probability and calculating mean, median, and mode
- Factoring and solving algebraic expressions
- Geometry including the study of plane and solid geometric forms, construction of geometric figures, congruence and similarity, calculation of area and volume, and the study of angles and lines
- Equality and inequality
- Operations with positive and negative integers
- Tessellations
- Symmetry
- Measurement systems including English and metric measurements
- Number systems
- Solving word problems

### ***Social Studies (Geography and History)***

- Concept of time including geologic and historical time
- Map skills including reading maps, constructing maps, compass reading, and directions



- Geography including land and water formations, natural resource distribution, patterns of settlement, location of continents, countries, and individual states
- Study of world cultures including modern cultural diversity
- Study of cultural figures
- Nations and governments
- Human needs through time and culture
- Migration patterns and population growth
- Economics including supply and demand, imports and exports
- Analysis of the needs, culture, technology, and social history of various periods and places

## **Science**

- Spheres of the Earth including the study of lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, and biosphere
- Formation and evolution of the universe, galaxy, solar system, and planet Earth
- Biology including human anatomy and physiology, kingdoms of life, taxonomy, genetics, and evolution
- Botany including the importance, major groups, life cycles, photosynthesis, adaptations, and local identification of plants
- Zoology including the major groups, adaptations, and local identification of animals
- Ecology including food webs, biomes, biogeochemical cycles, habitats, and predator-prey relationships
- Environmental Science including interactions between humans and their environment, global climate change, human population growth, pollution, recycling, and water issues
- Earth Science including landforms, earthquakes, volcanoes, rivers, lakes, and oceans
- Chemistry including study of the periodic table, states of matter, atoms, molecules, compounds, and physical and chemical changes
- Physics including light, electricity, magnetic fields, gravity, mass, and density
- Astronomy including study of the Milky Way Galaxy, our solar system, moons, asteroids, comets, planets, and stars
- Health and nutrition
- Scientific habits of mind
- Lab skills including the use of scientific tools, designing and conducting scientific measurements, metric measurements, data collection, constructing and interpreting graphs, and writing lab reports

### ***Foreign Language (Spanish)***

- Basic conversational skills
- Vocabulary and word acquisition
- Oral and written communications in Spanish
- Exposure to Spanish literature and poetry

### ***Health Education and Practical Life Skills***

- Gardening
- Caring for self, others, and the environment
- Caring for animals and plants
- Cooking and preparing meals
- Making healthy choices in regards to nutrition, physical activity, sleep, and hygiene
- Understanding human reproductive physiology, risks of sexual activity, and safe practices
- Balancing a bank account
- Consumer purchase decisions
- Test-taking strategies
- Study skills and organization
- Identifying and using the table of contents, index, and glossary of a reference book
- Navigating the library to find books of interest
- Working carefully and neatly
- Participating in cleanup and maintenance of own surroundings
- Being a part of a team
- Nonviolent resolution of disagreements and hurt feelings
- Giving others thanks and acknowledging acts of kindness
- Establishing friendships
- Helping others
- Meeting one's own needs through appropriate actions

### ***Arts***

- Visual arts
  - Elements of art (line, color, shape, form)
  - Describing works of art and discussing cultural context
  - Use of texture in two and three dimensional works of art
  - Using tools to create art (crayons, printing, rubbing, collage, stencil)
  - Perspective, value changes, and proportion
  - Creating works of art based on observation of objects
  - Self-assessment of own works of art

- Theatre
  - Vocabulary
  - Improvisation
  - Storytelling and the cultural and geographical origins of stories
  - Costume and prop design
- Music
  - Singing of age appropriate songs
  - Learning to play a musical instrument
  - Learning to read music
  - Basic elements of music, including awareness of beat and tempo, improvisation, pitch, and rhythm
  - Music as a form of communication
- Dance
  - Basic locomotor skills
  - Creative movement and basic choreography
  - Basic features of dance
  - Comparing and performing dance movements
  - Dance as a means of communication
  - Comparing role of performer to role of audience
  - Cultural and social aspects of dance
- Study of famous figures in art, music, drama, and dance (local and regional art)
- Appreciation of art forms from a variety of cultures and time periods

### ***Physical Education***

- Structured time for play
- Team-building activities
- Leadership skills
- Individual activities, games, and sports
- Cooperative games and sports
- Introduction to competitive games and sports
- Development and refinement of hand-eye coordination, gross and fine motor skills
- Safety
- Stretching
- Nutrition

### **C. Whom the School Will Educate**

This charter authorizes the operation of the Willits Elementary Charter School, which shall operate within the geographic boundaries of Willits Unified School District. The target population of WECS is any child, grades K-5, residing within the geographic

boundaries served by Willits Unified School District and/or the surrounding communities. We are a public school, open to all who wish to attend.

Our school will create an alternative for local families, including those who currently commute out of the area or choose home schooling for their child's education. Parents who are interested in sending their child to a school with small class sizes, offers daily Spanish instruction, and participates in inquiry-based instruction may choose WECS for their child. Spanish-speaking families may also be attracted to our school's formal instruction in the Spanish language. We will seek diversity in our enrollment, as diversity is an essential part of a multicultural education.

The specific educational interests, backgrounds, and challenges of our target population are similar to those faced by students within Willits Unified or any rural area of Northern California. All public schools educate students with a variety of skill levels, family backgrounds, and abilities. Our rural location, overall low levels of adults with a college education, and the relatively low median household income can serve to isolate the students of Willits from the broader society. It is our goal to help our students see a larger world that includes but extends beyond Willits, Mendocino County, California, and the United States. We aim to provide a global perspective of human society and help our students see that the choices they make affect the world they live in.

#### **D. Attendance**

Willits Elementary Charter School will align with the Willits Charter School academic calendar, the Willits Unified School District academic calendar, or a close variation of both academic calendars. WECS will meet or exceed the number of instructional minutes required by California Education Code (175 school days).

##### ***Instructional minutes***

- The Willits Elementary Charter School will meet or exceed the instructional minutes required per grade by the state of California. The minimum number of instructional minutes are as follows:
  - Kindergarten: 36,000 minutes
  - Grades 1-3: 50,400 minutes
  - Grades 4-5: 54,000 minutes

### ***Attendance requirements***

- Willits Elementary Charter School believes that regular attendance plays a large and important role in student learning and achievement. WECS recognizes its responsibility under the law to ensure that students attend school regularly. WECS shall abide by all state attendance laws and may use appropriate legal means to address excessive absenteeism or truancy.
- WECS attendance requirements are aligned with WUSD Board Policy 5113(a).
  - Students of WECS shall not be absent from school without the knowledge and consent of parents and guardians except in cases of medical emergency.
  - Absences from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies, or justifiable personal reasons (including religious instruction or participation) as defined by the Charter School Association of Willits Board of Directors.
- Specific policies to address unexcused absences and tardies are found in Appendix C: Absence and Tardy Policies. WECS reserves the right to revise these policies as needed to best meet the needs of the school and its student population.
- All absence and tardy policies will incorporate positive steps to reduce excess absenteeism and tardiness, including but not limited to communication with parents/guardians and the use of student study teams.
- All parents and guardians will receive a copy of WECS attendance policies.

### **E. An Educated Person in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

We believe that an educated person is one who has acquired the physical, emotional, and cognitive skills necessary to function as a productive citizen, life-long learner, and a kind, caring individual. An educated person is curious, creative, responsible, self-motivated, self-disciplined, self-reliant, respectful and compassionate. Educated individuals have not only developed the skills needed to function in a rapidly changing world, they have the ability to positively contribute to society.

Educated persons must be able to read with ease at a minimum of a 6th grade level. They are able to write, express thoughts clearly on paper or electronic format, and demonstrate mastery of basic punctuation and grammar. Educated persons are able to successfully perform basic math functions such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, calculating percentages, and performing operations with fractions. Educated persons must have an understanding of commonly used technology and knowledge of how to operate a computer.

We believe that being educated means more than just academic mastery; it incorporates the ability to solve problems, think analytically and creatively, make decisions, communicate effectively, and demonstrate practical life skills.

The rapid technological changes, increased availability of information, advancements in telecommunications, and the trend towards a greater degree of globalization and interconnectedness that we, as a society, have seen in recent decades will continue on at an even faster pace into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Additionally, today's students are inheriting a world facing the prospects of global climate change, declining biodiversity, and the burdens of an ever-increasing human population. Finding new solutions for issues surrounding energy production, resource use, pollution, conservation, development, sustainability, peaceful cohabitation, and economic stability are just the beginning of the challenges today's youth will face.

Additionally, an educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century can appreciate the diversity of human society and culture and recognize the fragility of natural systems. Educated people have the ability to look beyond themselves and their immediate needs to evaluate how their choices and actions affect society and the environment on a larger scale. Culturally and scientifically literate global citizens who have developed confidence in their abilities to evaluate complex situations and seek their own answers and solutions will be instrumental in the years ahead.

## **F. How Learning Best Occurs**

### ***Overview***

We believe that learning best occurs in a safe, caring, supportive environment where all children are seen as capable individuals with their own zone of proximal development. An environment where students' natural curiosities are encouraged and developed is essential.

Learning involves the understanding and further development of the relationships between one's self, family, community, society, and the environment. Students learn best when they have opportunities to self-reflect, build positive relationships with peers, involve their families in their education, interact with their community in meaningful ways, and participate in activities and projects that connect them to the larger global community and environment.

For young children, providing opportunities for physical movement is imperative. Through play and structured activities such as dance or organized athletics, children develop an awareness of their bodies, enhance their gross and fine motor skills, and increase their coordination. Additionally, playtime encourages creativity, sports and non-competitive games help students learn how to work cooperatively as a team, and participating in dance can further develop an appreciation of different cultures. Participation in any form of physical activity sets the stage for healthy habits and a positive self-image. The overall benefits of physical activity increase the capacity for student performance in the classroom and life in general.

Interactions with the outdoor environment and natural world are also a necessary part of the learning process. Students who regularly interact with nature develop an appreciation for its beauty and complexity and are more apt to evaluate how their actions affect the natural world. The outside classroom provides a place for exploration, discovery, and wonder.

Within the classroom, student learning best occurs when educators are knowledgeable, competent, and embody the ideals that students are expected to achieve. Students thrive in an environment where their teacher's enthusiasm, kindness, and overt love of learning are apparent to them. Highly-skilled educators successfully address multiple learning modalities and ability levels within the classroom, adeptly facilitate the inquiry-based model of education, and proficiently practice positive discipline strategies. Inquiry-based education will encourage students to be vested in their own education and foster the enthusiasm and skills necessary for life-long learning.

Family involvement in the classroom and the school at large further demonstrates to students the value of education and their family's desire to be active participants in their development. Active family involvement helps to foster life-long learning and serves to encourage relationship-building within the community. All members of the school community (students, parents, teachers, and administrators) share the common goals of learning, respect, and human development.

### ***The Physical Setting***

WECS, located at 405 E. Commercial St., is within the geographic boundaries of Willits Unified School District. Instructional activities (including Spanish and elective classes) will mainly take place at the school site in a traditional, classroom-based setting. Field trips, community projects, and community-based activities will provide opportunities for learning beyond the classroom. Small class sizes that incorporate teachers' aides and parent volunteers will provide greater individualized attention for all students. Classes will primarily be organized by grade level. Multi-grade level groupings may occur in elective classes, or in situations deemed appropriate by WECS.

### ***Independent Study Program***

Willits Elementary Charter School will offer an independent study program for students who have demonstrated an ability to succeed in a non-classroom based learning environment. Participation in the independent study program is voluntary. Enrollment is limited to less than twenty percent of the total ADA of WECS. For students on independent study, regular meetings (at least one hour per week) with a supervising teacher will provide guidance and opportunities for direct academic instruction. Independent study students have the option to participate in on-site classes as well as earn credit through community based courses. Students enrolled

in independent study must complete weekly assignments and demonstrate continued academic growth and progress towards meeting state standards.

Student attendance is based on work produced, and accounting is strictly monitored by independent Certified Public Accountant auditors according to specific state guidelines and requirements. WECS complies with all applicable laws related to independent study. (See Appendix D: Independent Study Policies.)

### ***Description of Spanish Language Program***

Spanish language instruction is a key element of the WECS educational program. All students will receive Spanish language instruction on a daily basis as part of the curriculum. Content and language skills taught will be appropriate for the given grade level. Vocabulary and other content covered in Spanish class will be reinforced by teachers of other disciplines. Vocabulary and language skills introduced and learned in previous grades are built upon in each successive grade level. The Spanish Language Program at WECS is implemented by a designated Spanish teacher and is aligned with the California State Content Standards for World Language.

Each grade level will receive Spanish instruction daily for a specified minimum amount of time (See Appendix E: Minimum Number of Minutes of Spanish Language Instruction). Students will be immersed in the target language during designated instructional time. English may be used to lower anxiety, establish routing, or give directions. At the younger grade levels, K-2, the oral experience of language is the primary focus. In grades 3-5, written components of the Spanish language are incorporated to a greater degree.

Instruction will be broken up into thematic units appropriate to age and audience. Songs, dance, poetry, art projects, and literature will be used to reinforce and deepen student understanding throughout the thematic unit.

Spanish thematic units will be coordinated with other core and elective subjects, allowing connections across the curriculum. Teachers of other disciplines will support Spanish language acquisition by routinely incorporating vocabulary and concepts learned in Spanish class.

### ***Description of Inquiry-based Instructional Strategies***

Inquiry-based instructional strategies are a key element of the WECS educational program. Inquiry-based instruction provides opportunities for student-designed questions to be incorporated into core curriculum. With teacher guidance, students investigate the answers to their own questions.

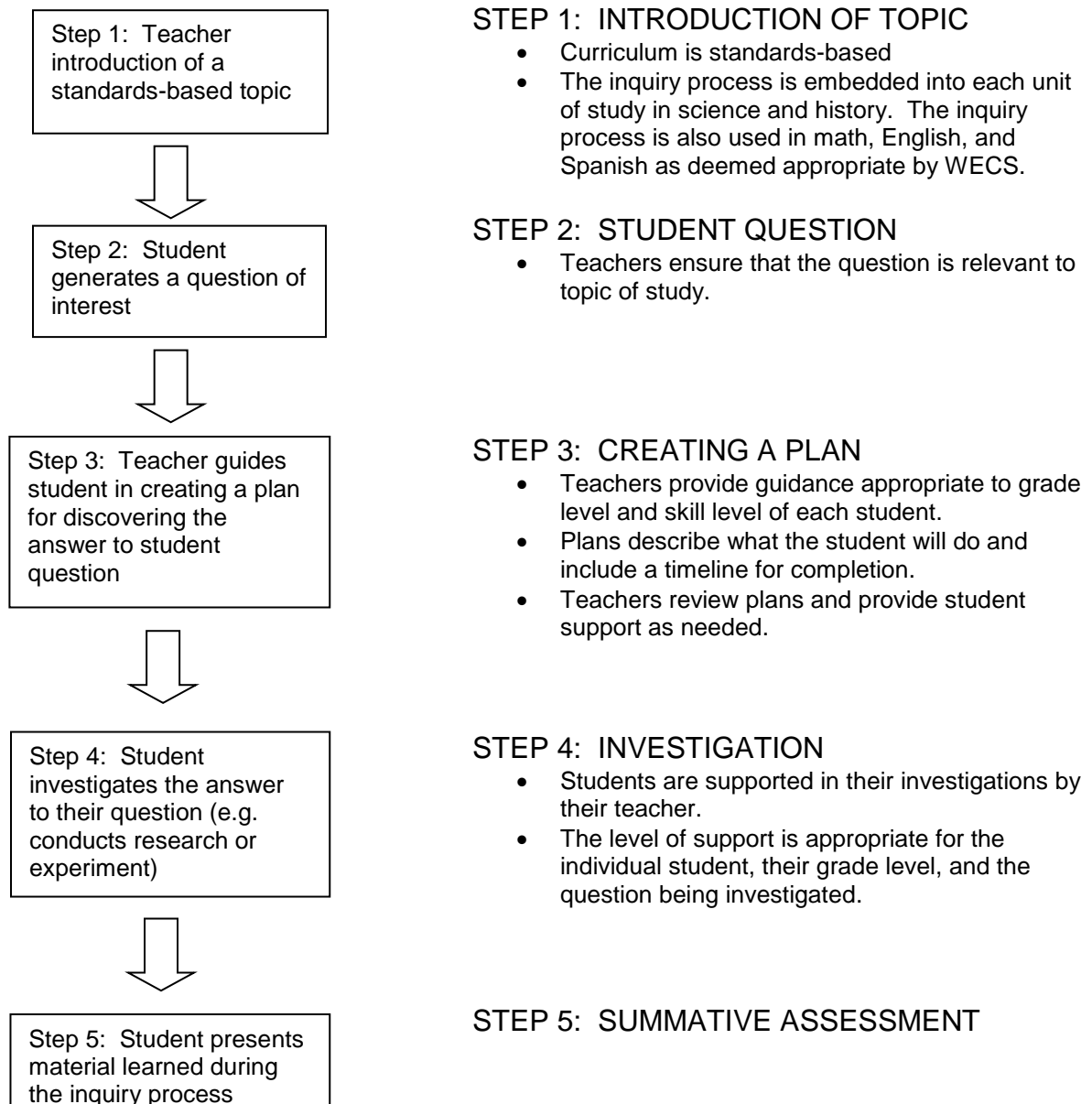
All WECS curriculum is guided by State educational standards. Teachers plan and present material as outlined by these standards appropriate to the given grade level



and content area. The inquiry process is embedded within the standards-based curricular framework. Within each unit, each student proposes a question of personal interest related to the topic of study. Teachers help students develop and carry out a plan to discover the answer to their own question.

The following flow chart serves as an example of the inquiry process used at WECS.

### ***Willits Elementary Charter Inquiry Process***



- The format for presenting learned material will vary by grade level, content area, individual student, skill level, and student question.
- Examples of finished products may include: written or oral reports, discussion with peers or teacher, display boards, art projects, songs, or theatrical presentations.

## ***WECS Inquiry Process and State Academic Standards***

Standards-based topics of study provide a framework for student questions. Students participate in the inquiry process as part of units covering State standards. The information learned by students as they participate in the inquiry process supports and enhances the overall curriculum. Teachers guide students through the inquiry process and ensure that student inquiries are relevant to the topic of study and connect to State standards.

The inquiry process allows students to form deep connections with curriculum and encourages students to take ownership of their own learning, thereby increasing concept mastery.

The following examples serve to illustrate the connection between units of study, content standards, and student-generated questions.

### **Unit taught in classroom: Stars and Constellations**

**Next Generation Science Standard: 1-ESS1-1.** Use observations of the sun, moon, and stars to describe patterns that can be predicted

#### **Possible student questions:**

- What does the night sky look like at my house?
- When and where can I first see the moon?
- What constellations can I see from my house in the winter?
- How does the pattern of the stars change throughout the night?
- Can I see Orion all year long from my house?

### **Unit taught in the classroom: Local Economy**

**California History Content Standard (Grade 3):** Understand that some goods are made locally, some elsewhere in the United States, and some abroad

#### **Possible student questions:**

- Where did the foods I ate this morning come from?
- What types of things are made locally?
- Which of my clothes was made furthest away?
- Are there more local, national, or global items for sale at Safeway?

## ***WECS Curriculum Design and Performance Standards***

### *State performance standards:*

- WECS curriculum is standards-based and reflects the recent adoption of the *Common Core State Standards* and *The Next Generation Science Standards*. All curriculum is guided by State educational standards. Teachers plan and present material as outlined by the State standards appropriate to the given grade level and content area. The inquiry process, as a key part of each unit of study, allows students to interact on a personal level with standards-based curriculum.
- The inquiry process used at WECS serves to encourage student curiosity, enhance research and data collection skills, and develop problem-solving skills. These important aspects of learning benefit students as they work towards mastering State designated academic content and overall student competency.

### *School-wide performance standards:*

- The inquiry process used at WECS provides a platform for students to develop the habits of mind needed to become life-long learners, a key aspect of WECS' mission and vision and definition of "an educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century."
- The inquiry process is also directly related to several of the key outcomes of our educational program, as described below. Key outcomes for the WECS educational program are listed below:

<b><i>KEY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OUTCOME</i></b>	<b><i>ROLE OF INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING</i></b>
For each student, learning will become a life-long, internally motivated activity resulting in a willingness to participate actively in the present functioning and future direction of our society and our planet.	The inquiry process encourages problem solving and critical thinking skills. Students become adept at asking questions and finding solutions. The inquiry process is student driven, encouraging ownership and internal motivation of learning.
Students will become confident, independent learners who have mastered the necessary tools and skills to pursue knowledge and move effectively, creatively, and responsibly onward to their next stages of development.	An inquiry-based approach prepares students to actively participate in the creation and acquisition of new knowledge. Creativity and curiosity are integral parts of the inquiry process. Students become adept at asking their own questions and finding solutions to their own problems.
Each student will be able to demonstrate: practical skills, decision-making, problem solving, effective communication, goal setting and attainment, analytical and imaginative thinking.	Participation in the inquiry process (see flow chart on page 26) provides an opportunity for students to practice and demonstrate all aspects of this key outcome.

## **G. Special Learning Populations**

### **Students with Disabilities**

#### **Overview**

Willits Elementary Charter School shall comply with all applicable State and Federal legislation regarding 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 Willits Elementary Charter School will operate as a "public school of the local education agency that granted the charter" for purposes of providing special education and related services pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b). Special education students shall be identified, assessed, and provided services in accordance with their individualized education plans (IEPs), Willits Unified School District policies, Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) policies, and applicable laws.

The District shall be designated as the Local Educational Agency ("LEA") serving Charter School students. The Charter School reserves the right to make written verifiable assurances that 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 LEAs as a consortium.

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 responsible for its compliance with Section 504 and the ADA. The facilities to be utilized by the Charter School shall be accessible for all students with disabilities.

#### ***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 Charter School.

A 504 team will be assembled by the Director and shall include the parent/guardian, 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 IDEIA but found ineligible for special education instruction or related services under the IDEIA, those evaluations may be used to help determine eligibility under Section 504. The student evaluation shall be carried out by the 504 team, which 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:

- Tests and other evaluation materials that have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and are administered by trained personnel.
- Tests and other evaluation materials including those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need, and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient.
- Tests are selected and administered 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 along with the procedural safeguards available to them. If, during the evaluation, the 504 team obtains information indicating possible eligibility of the student for special education per the IDEIA, the 504 team will make a referral for assessment under the IDEIA.

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 school's professional staff.

The 504 Plan shall describe the Section 504 disability and any program accommodations, modifications or services 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 at least once per year to determine the appropriateness of the Plan, needed modifications to the Plan, and continued eligibility.

### ***Services for Students Under the IDEIA***

The Charter School shall 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 remain, by default, a public school of the District for Special Education purposes pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b).

As a public school of the District, solely for purposes of providing special education and related services under the IDEIA pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b), in accordance with Education Code Section 47646 and 20 U.S.C. 1413, the Charter School seeks services from the District for special education students enrolled in the Charter School in the same manner as is provided to students in other District schools. The Charter School will follow the District and SELPA policies and procedures, and shall utilize SELPA forms in seeking out, identifying and serving students who may qualify for special education programs and services, for responding to record requests and parent complaints, and maintaining the confidentiality of pupil records. The Charter School will comply with District protocol as to the delineation of duties between the District central office and the local school site in providing special education instruction and related services to identified pupils. An annual meeting between the Charter School and the District to review special education policies, procedures, protocols, and forms of the District and the SELPA will ensure that the Charter School and the District have an ongoing mutual understanding of District protocol and to help facilitate ongoing compliance.

As long as the Charter School functions as a public school of the District solely for purposes of providing special education and related services under the IDEIA pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b), a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") has been developed between the District and the Charter School which spells out in detail the responsibilities for provision of special education services and the manner in which special education funding will flow to the students of the School. (See Appendix F: Memorandum of Understanding.)

The Charter School acknowledges the importance of cooperating with the District so that the District can provide special education services to Charter School students. The Charter School agrees to promptly respond to all District inquiries, to comply with reasonable District directives, and to allow the District access to Charter School students, staff, facilities, equipment and records as required to fulfill all District obligations under this Agreement or imposed by law. The Charter School believes that the allocation of responsibility for the provision of services (including but not limited to referral, identification, assessment, case management, Individualized Education Plan ("IEP") development, modification and implementation) shall be divided in a manner consistent with their allocation between the District and its school sites.

## **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 mandatory District in-service training relating to special education.

The District 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 District policies as they apply to all District schools for responding to implementation of special education services. The Charter School will adopt and implement District policies relating to notification of the District for all special education issues and referrals.

The Charter School shall follow District policies as they apply to all District schools for notifying District personnel regarding the discipline of special education students to ensure District 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 District administrative policies relating to disciplining special education students.

## **Identification and Referral**

The Charter School shall have the responsibility to identify, refer, and work co-operatively 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 District and 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.

The Charter School will follow District 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.

It is the Charter School's understanding that the District shall provide the Charter School with any assistance that it generally provides its schools in the identification and referral processes, and will ensure that the Charter School is provided with notification and relevant files of all students who have an existing IEP and who are transferring to the Charter School from a District school. The District shall have unfettered access to all



Charter School student records and information in order to serve all of Charter School's students' special needs.

## **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 District will determine what assessments, if any, are necessary and arrange for such assessments for referred or eligible students in accordance with the District's general practice and procedure and applicable law. The Charter School shall work in collaboration with the District to obtain parent/guardian consent to assess Charter School students. The Charter School shall not conduct special education assessments unless directed by the District.

## **IEP Meetings**

It is the Charter School's understanding that the District 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 meetings or as otherwise agreed upon by the District and Charter School: the Director 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. It is the Charter School's understanding that the District 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 a notice of parental rights.

## **IEP Development**

The Charter School understands that the decisions regarding eligibility, development of goals and objectives, program, services, placement, and exit from special education shall be the decision of the IEP team, pursuant to the District'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 District and of the SELPA and State and Federal law.

The Charter School shall promptly notify the District of all requests it receives for assessment, services, IEP meetings, reimbursement, compensatory education, mediation, and/or due process whether these requests are verbal or in writing.

## **IEP Implementation**

Pursuant to District policy and how the District operates special education at all other public schools in the District; the District shall be responsible for all school site implementation of the IEP. The Charter School shall assist the District in implementing IEPs, pursuant to District and SELPA policies in the same manner as any other school of the District. The District and Charter School will need to be jointly involved in all aspects of the special education program, with the District holding ultimate authority over implementation and supervision of services. As part of this responsibility, the Charter School shall provide the District and the parents with timely reports on the student's progress as provided in the student's IEP at least as frequently as report cards are provided for the Charter School's non-special education students. The Charter School shall also provide all home-school coordination and information exchange unless directed otherwise by the District. The Charter School shall also be responsible for providing all curriculum, classroom materials, classroom modifications, and assistive technology unless directed otherwise by the District. The Charter School shall comply with any directive of the District as it relates to the coordination of the Charter School and District 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 Charter School will notify the District of relevant circumstances and communications immediately and act according to District 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 District and the Charter School shall conduct an IEP meeting within thirty days of enrollment. Prior to such meeting, and pending agreement on a new IEP, the District and the Charter School shall implement the existing IEP at the Charter School, to the extent practicable or as otherwise agreed between the District and parent/guardian.

## **Non-Public Placements/Non-Public Agencies**

The District 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 not hire, request services from, or pay any non-public school or agency to provide education or services to special education students without the prior written approval of the District. The Charter School shall immediately notify the District 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 Regarding Special Education**

The Charter School shall follow District policies as they apply to all District schools for responding to parental concerns or complaints related to special education services. The Charter School shall instruct parents/guardians to raise concerns regarding special education services, related services and rights to the District unless otherwise directed by the District. The Charter School shall immediately notify the District of any concerns raised by parents. In addition, the Charter School and the District 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 District's designated representative, in consultation with the Charter School's designated representative, shall investigate as necessary, respond to, and address the parent/guardian concern or complaint. The Charter School shall allow the District access to all facilities, equipment, students, personnel, and records to conduct such an investigation.

The Charter School and the District shall timely notify the other 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 District, as the LEA, shall be ultimately responsible for determining how to respond to parent concerns or complaints, and the Charter School shall comply with the District's decision.

The Charter School and the District 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.

### **Due Process Hearings**

The District may initiate a due process hearing or request for mediation with respect to a student enrolled in the Charter School if the District determines such action is legally necessary or advisable. The Charter School agrees to cooperate fully with the District in such a proceeding. In the event that the parents/guardians file for a due process hearing, or request mediation, the District and the Charter School shall work together to defend the case. In the event that the District determines that legal representation is needed, the Charter School agrees that it shall be jointly represented by legal counsel of the District's choosing.

The Charter School understands that the District shall have sole discretion to settle any matter in mediation or due process. The District shall also have sole discretion to file an appeal from a due process hearing or take other legal action involving any Charter School student necessary to protect its rights.

## **SELPA Representation**

It is the Charter School's understanding that the District shall represent the Charter School at all SELPA meetings and report to the Charter School of SELPA activities in the same manner as is reported to all schools within the District.

## **Funding**

The Charter School understands that it will enter into a MOU with the District regarding Special Education funding, and cannot at this time unilaterally dictate the funding relationship between the District 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 District shall retain all state and federal special education funding allocated for Charter School students through the SELPA Annual Budget Plan, and shall be entitled to count Charter School students as its own for all such purposes.

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

The Parties acknowledge that the District may be required to pay for or provide Charter School 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. When such programs or services are provided at District expense, the District shall be entitled to receive from the Charter School the pro-rata share of all funding received for such student, including, without limitation, all ADA funds, based on the number of instructional days or minutes per day that the student is not at the Charter School site.

### Contribution to Encroachment

The Charter School shall contribute its fair share to offset special education's encroachment upon the District's general fund. Accordingly, the Charter School shall pay to the District a pro-rata share of the District's unfunded special education costs ("Encroachment"). At the end of each fiscal year, the District shall invoice the Charter School for the Charter School's pro-rata share of the District-wide Encroachment for that year as calculated by the total unfunded special education costs of the District (including those costs attributable to Charter School) divided by the total number of District ADA (including Charter School students), and multiplied by the total number of Charter School ADA. The Charter School ADA shall include all Charter School students, regardless of home district.

## **Students not Meeting Pupil Outcomes – Academically Low-Achieving Students**

At WECS, student progress is measured and reported to parents in terms of individualized academic goals and achievements. Students not meeting pupil outcomes are identified and receive support and intervention.

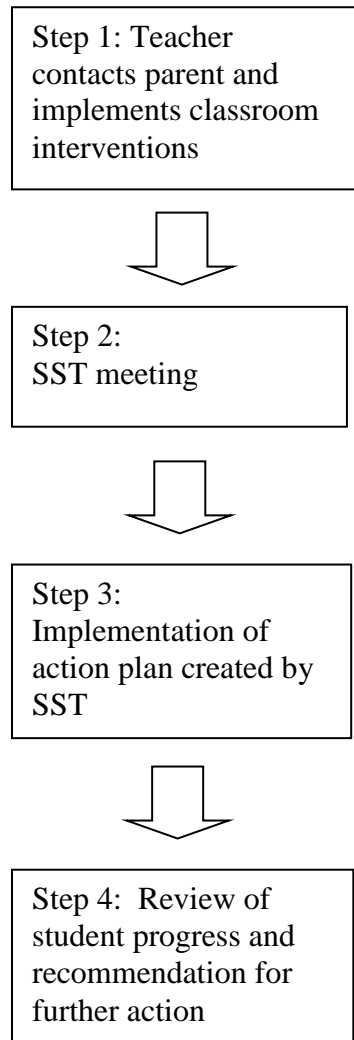
### *Examples of classroom-based interventions to support struggling students:*

- One-on-one interactions with teacher or instructional aide
- Frequent communication with parents/guardians regarding student progress
- Frequent checks for understanding
- Clarification of directions
- Shortened or modified assignments
- Additional time to complete assignments
- Distraction reduced setting during tests
- Targeted instruction to address gaps in understanding
- Use of a planner
- Flexible grouping strategies
- Mentoring/tutoring

### *School-wide strategies to support struggling students:*

- Small class sizes and teachers' aides increase student access to individualized attention
- Early intervention
- Inquiry process used at WECS inherently provides differentiation of curriculum

The following flow chart describes the general process used to support struggling students. The steps taken to support each student may vary in response to the specific challenges faced by the individual.



#### STEP 1: CLASSROOM INTERVENTION

- When a student is having emotional, academic, or behavioral difficulties that are affecting his/her ability to meet pupil outcomes, the teacher implements intervention strategies.
- Parents/guardians are informed of perceived difficulties and classroom interventions.

#### STEP 2: STUDENT STUDY TEAM (SST)

- If insufficient progress is made through classroom interventions, a Student Study Team consisting of parents/guardians and school personnel meets and discusses the strengths of and concerns about the student. An action plan is developed and a follow up date is scheduled.

#### STEP 3: ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

- The recommendations of the SST action plan are implemented within the classroom.

#### STEP 4: REVIEW OF STUDENT PROGRESS

- SST reconvenes to determine effectiveness of action plan.
- Successful interventions remain in place.
- If interventions have been unsuccessful or have revealed other areas of concern, the student may be referred for a more in-depth assessment or review of needs (e.g. Special Education team, counseling, speech/language specialist, school psychologist).

## **Serving English Learners**

### **Overview**

WECS will meet all applicable legal requirements for English Learners (“EL”) as they pertain 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 requirements. The Charter School will implement policies to assure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding ELs and the rights of students and parents.

### **Home Language Survey**

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

### **Primary Language Assessment**

The Charter School will utilize the Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM) to assess English Learners within the first ninety days of enrollment in a California school.

### **CELDT Testing<sup>1</sup>**

All students who indicate that their home language is other than English will be CELDT tested within thirty days of initial enrollment<sup>2</sup> and at least annually thereafter between July 1<sup>st</sup> and October 31<sup>st</sup> 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 the publisher. The CELDT shall be used to fulfill the requirements under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act for annual English proficiency testing.

### **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:

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<sup>1</sup> All references in the charter petition to the CELDT will be understood by the Charter School and the District to mean the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (“ELPAC”), when it replaces the CELDT.

<sup>2</sup> 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 based upon the date last tested at the prior school of enrollment.

- Assessment of language proficiency using an objective assessment instrument including, but not limited to, the California English Language Development Test (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.
- WECS will notify and help parents and guardians understand and participate in the language 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.
- The Student Oral Language Observation Matrix will be used by teachers to measure progress regarding comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar usage.

### **Strategies for English Learner Instruction and Intervention**

Every student designated as an English Learner (EL) will receive English Language Development (ELD) until reclassified as Fluent English Proficient (FEP). The goal of the ELD program at WECS is to teach English learners to understand, speak, read, and write English and to provide students with explicit instruction in English Language Development necessary to develop academic proficiency and mastery of the English Language Arts/ELD standards.

WECS staff and families will work together to create an individualized ELD plan for each EL student. Plans will be based on the needs of the student. WECS staff will regularly monitor student progress towards fluency and adjustments to a student's ELD plan will be made as needed.

Teachers of EL students will have or obtain the appropriate certification (e.g. Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development (CLAD) or Bi-lingual Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development (BCLAD)).

Aspects of the WECS ELD program are summarized below.



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>WILLITS ELEMENTARY CHARTER SCHOOL</b>  <b>ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM</b></p>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is customized for each EL student in order to address the needs of the individual</li> <li>• Targets instruction to each student's English language proficiency level (as determined by CELDT scores)</li> <li>• Follows a developmental scope and sequence of language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing)</li> <li>• Includes specific instruction in the syntactical and grammatical aspects of language</li> <li>• Is provided to all English Learners (including those at the advanced levels)</li> <li>• May utilize the grouping of students of similar proficiency levels for language instruction</li> <li>• Assesses student progress in English proficiency on an ongoing and regular basis</li> <li>• Aligns ELD instruction to specific academic standards and expected outcomes</li> </ul> |
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*Specially designed academic instructional strategies for English learners:*

- Building connections to prior knowledge encourages vocabulary building and conceptual development. This is accomplished in part by the following:
  - Direct, open-ended questioning and conversation
  - Emphasizing content vocabulary
  - Helping students to personalize the definitions of new words
  - Using visuals
  - Structured student interactions (cooperative learning activities, partners) allow students to explore previous experiences and thoughts while connecting new language and ideas
- Academic language scaffolding supports student participation in content-area instruction. Explicitly teaching academic language includes, but is not limited to, the following steps:
  - Identifying academic vocabulary
  - Defining academic vocabulary using activities and visuals
  - Practicing academic vocabulary
  - Teacher monitoring for understanding
  - Review of academic vocabulary

- Explicit teaching of content vocabulary enhances student understanding of key concepts. Content vocabulary instruction may include:
  - Writing key words on board, chart, or card
  - Teacher pronunciation of vocabulary word and students chorally repeating word
  - Student generated definitions of vocabulary
  - Students creating nonlinguistic representations of vocabulary
  - Presenting activities that add to vocabulary knowledge
  - Student discussion of vocabulary
  - Periodic review of vocabulary using games or activities
- Enunciating clearly and elaborating speech
- Developing and maintaining routines
- Repeating and reviewing information
- Checking frequently for understanding
- Presenting new information in the context of the known
- Presenting information in a variety of ways
- Providing frequent summarization of material
- Using cognates (words that sound alike, have similar spelling, and have a similar meaning in both English and Spanish)

*School-wide strategies that support Spanish-speaking English learners:*

- School culture places value on speaking multiple languages. Spanish is a core subject. Spanish-speaking students at all levels of English proficiency are academic leaders within Spanish classes, promoting positive self-image and academic success.
- Spanish language acquisition is part of the WECS educational program coordinated by a Spanish teacher who provides other classroom teachers with strategies to support students in making connections between subject areas and material learned in Spanish class. This underlying language objective serves to assist Spanish-speaking EL students with English acquisition. Using Spanish language in the content areas allows Spanish-speaking EL students to make connections with material and increases their ability to discuss topics being covered.
- Small class sizes and teachers' aides increase student access to individualized attention.
- Bilingual and Spanish-speaking staff are available to assist Spanish-speaking EL students as needed.
- Frequent communications (in English and/or Spanish) with parents/guardians keep families abreast of their student's progress and provide ideas on how families can support English-language acquisition.

**High-Achieving Students**

All students benefit from the opportunity to challenge themselves and participate in learning activities above and beyond the required curriculum. Curriculum differentiation

is inherent within the inquiry process used at WECS and provides a platform for the curricular enrichment and challenge necessary for high-achieving students. The following table describes classroom strategies and adaptations for high-achieving students and their relationship to the WECS inquiry process.

<b>Strategies &amp; Adaptations for High-Achieving Students *</b>	<b>Relationship to WECS Inquiry Process</b>
Providing an exploratory, interdisciplinary curriculum	Students generate questions of personal interest, related to standards-based curriculum. The inquiry process is used in a variety of content areas and student generated questions may be interdisciplinary in nature. Students investigate the answers to self-generated questions.
Emphasis on thinking strategies, problem solving, creative solutions, and decision making within the context of subject specific subject areas.	The inquiry process involves thinking strategies, problem solving, creative solutions, and decision-making. The inquiry process used at WECS occurs within each unit of study in Science and History and as applicable in Math, English, and Spanish.
Open-ended, self-paced assignments	With teacher guidance, students develop a plan for investigating the answer to their question. High-achieving students will be encouraged to develop investigations that involve multiple types of skills and thought processes. Students work with their teacher to develop a realistic timeline for completion of their investigation.
Students setting their own high, yet realistic, outcomes for assignments that vary in complexity for each student	Students develop their own question and plan for investigation. Teachers help to facilitate the investigation by providing guidance and support. The method for presenting a finished project varies by student, content area, and question being asked.
Use of outside resources to help students develop their talents <sup>3</sup>	High-achieving students will be encouraged to use community resources and technology during the inquiry process.

*Additional strategies and supports for high-achieving students may include:*

- Flexible grouping strategies to allow high-achieving students to work together
- Leadership roles within the classroom
- Small class sizes and teachers' aides increase student access to individualized attention
- Enrichment opportunities such as extended reading, research, art projects, community service projects, and field trips
- Utilizing learning materials that are of higher levels of complexity and interest to the student
- Providing incentives for undertaking challenging tasks

<sup>3</sup> \*Strategies and adaptations are excerpted from: Vaughn, S., Bos, C., Schumm, J. 2003. Teaching Exceptional, Diverse, and At-Risk Students in the General Education Classroom. Pearson Education, Inc.

- Communicating frequently (in English and/or Spanish) with parents/guardians to keep families abreast of their student's progress and provide ideas on how families can support their high-achieving student

#### **H. Charter School Goals and Actions to Achieve the Eight State Priorities (LCAP Compliance)**

WECS will comply with all requirements pursuant to California Education Code § 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii) including developing annual goals, for all pupils (i.e. schoolwide) and for each subgroup of pupils as identified in California Education Code § 52052, for each of the eight (8) state priorities identified in California Education Code § 52060(d).

Please refer to Element 2: Measurable Pupil Outcomes for the schoolwide goals and outcomes for relevant sub-groups and corresponding assessments. WECS will comply with all elements of the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) and reserves the right to establish additional, school-specific goals and corresponding assessments throughout the duration of the charter.

WECS shall annually update and develop the LCAP in accordance with Education Code Section 47606.5 and shall use the LCAP template adopted by the State Board of Education. WECS shall submit the LCAP to the District and County Superintendent of Schools annually on or before July 1, as required by Education Code Section 47604.33.

The LCAP and any revisions necessary to implement the LCAP shall not be considered a material revision to the charter, and shall be maintained by WECS at the school site.

WECS' current LCAP is on file with the District and is also available in Appendix G.

## **Element #2: Measurable Pupil Outcomes**

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

WECS will pursue the following school-wide and subgroup outcome goals, as measured by multiple and varied benchmark assessments that are aligned to state and federal standards (including the new Common Core) and reflect proficiency measures required by the CAASPP, as well as state priorities detailed in California Education Code § 52060(d) that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school. For purposes of measuring achievement of these goals, a numerically significant pupil subgroup is one that consists of at least 30 pupils, each of whom has a valid test score, or for a subgroup of pupils who are foster youth or homeless youth, a numerically significant pupil subgroup is one that consists of at least 15 pupils. (Education Code Section 52052(a)(3).)

The following delineates WECS’ school-wide and subgroup outcome goals and performance targets aligned to the state’s priorities that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the Charter School, methods for measuring progress and the individual(s) with primary responsibility for each, all aligned with the state’s priorities defined in Cal. Ed. Code Section 52060(d). As the State and District finalize new standardized assessment tools (e.g., CAASPP) and new school performance measures (e.g., API), WECS will work with the District to ensure that it creates and updates its plans and goals accordingly. The LCAP shall not be deemed part of the charter, and therefore, annual amendments to the LCAP shall not be considered a “material revision to the charter” as defined in Education Code Section 47607. Actions intended to ensure that the school meets these goals and targets are delineated throughout this charter petition (e.g., Element 1: Educational Program; Element 4: Governance and parental involvement; etc.).

### **ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #1— BASIC SERVICES**

*The degree to which teachers are appropriately assigned (E.C. §44258.9) and fully credentialed, and every pupil has sufficient access to standards-aligned instructional materials (E.C. § 60119), and school facilities are maintained in good repair (E.C. §17002(d)). Please see Elements #1, 5 and 6*

### **ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #2— IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS**

*The Charter School will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as district schools regarding the implementation of Common Core State Standards, including how*

*EL students will be enabled to gain academic content knowledge and English language proficiency, Please see Elements #1 (particularly section G), 2 and 3*

### **ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #3— PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

*The Charter School will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as district schools for parental involvement, including efforts to seek parent input for making decisions for the school, and how the school will promote parent participation. Please see Elements #4*

### **ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #4— STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

*The Charter School will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as district schools for pupil achievement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:*

- A. CA Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)*
- B. The Academic Performance Index (API)*
- C. Percentage of pupils who are college and career ready*
- D. Percentage of ELs who make progress toward English language proficiency as measured by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) and EL reclassification rates*

*Please see Elements #1 (particularly section G), and 3*

### **ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #5— STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**

*The Charter School will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as district schools regarding pupil engagement, as measured by all of the following:*

- A. School attendance rates*
- B. Chronic absenteeism rates*

*Please see Elements #1 (particularly section D), and Appendix G*

### **ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #6— SCHOOL CLIMATE**

*The Charter School will meet the same accountability standards as district schools regarding school climate, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:*

- A. Pupil suspension rates*
- B. Pupil expulsion rates*
- C. Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness.*

*Please see Elements #3 and 10*

### **ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #7— COURSE ACCESS**

*The Charter School will meet the same standards district schools are held to regarding the extent to which pupils have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study, including programs and services developed and provided to unduplicated students (classified as EL, FRPM-eligible, or foster youth; E.C. §42238.02) and students with exceptional needs.*

“Broad course of study” includes the following, as applicable:

Grades 1-6: English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, health, physical education, and other as prescribed by the governing board.

(E.C. §51210)

*Please see Elements #1, 2, 3 and 8*

### **ACHIEVEMENT GOAL #8— STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

All students will demonstrate appropriate developmental or age/grade level mastery of State and National standards (see <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/> and [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)). Individual performance goals will be established for each student at the beginning of each year based on his/her baseline benchmark assessments, past academic performance, special needs/IEP, and other available data as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

A. Internal Assessment

B. Growth

C. Social Responsibility

*Please see Elements #3*

### **Student Progress**

We acknowledge that each child is a unique and whole individual, constantly developing, changing, and acquiring skills throughout his/her life. The goal of our school is to facilitate this natural process by providing developmentally appropriate opportunities for learning and growth. Since individuals progress at varying rates and according to their unique, innate potentials, each pupil's outcomes will reflect their own measured growth. Teachers will adhere to state standards, while encouraging each child to mature academically, socially and personally. Student progress towards meeting and achieving state standards will be measured by CAASPP test scores, classroom performance, and the use of a value added assessment system (see Appendix H: Value Added Assessment Systems).

At the end of each trimester, student goals and objectives will be reviewed. Student progress, which is continually assessed, will be summarized in a progress report. Modification of the goals and objectives may be made at the trimester review as needed.

According to individual capacities, key outcomes of our program will include the following:

- For each student, learning will become a life-long, internally motivated activity resulting in a willingness to participate actively in the present functioning and future direction of our society and our planet.
- Students will become confident, independent learners who have mastered the necessary tools and skills to pursue knowledge and move effectively, creatively, and responsibly onward to their next stages of development.

- Each student will be able to demonstrate: practical skills, decision-making, problem solving, effective communication, goal-setting and attainment, analytical and imaginative thinking.
- Each student will develop a positive self-image and awareness of his/her own feelings, sensitivity and consideration of others, and awareness of his/her effects on others.
- Students will gain an awareness of the interrelationships between humans, and the interdependence of individuals, nature, and society; along with a sense of responsibility for cultivating peacefulness and cooperation within the ecological and societal whole of which they are a part.
- Students will gain an overview of the development of the universe, the solar system, the Earth, life forms, and human civilizations.
- Students will develop effective study and research skills.
- Growing children will develop healthy bodies whose movements are mastered and controlled to the best of their capabilities.
- Parents will gain an understanding of stages of children's development and how they can best help their children in their unique, developmental process.
- Families will network to support and encourage each other in creating a meaningful and enjoyable school community.
- Adult staff will continue to develop personally and professionally in order to increase sensitivity and responsiveness to each child's needs.

The following Core Academic Exit Outcomes will be used to determine a student's completion of 5<sup>th</sup> grade and readiness for middle school:

### ***English***

- Students will demonstrate strong reading comprehension, writing, listening, speaking, and presentation skills, appropriate to the setting and audience.
- Students will demonstrate a growing vocabulary with understandings of word origins and word relationships.
- Students will demonstrate proper spelling, punctuation, and sentence and paragraph structure.
- Students will listen actively to presentations and discussions.
- Students will participate orally in cooperative groups and discourses.
- Students will read poetry, fiction and non-fiction and write their own works in these genres, publishing them among their peers.
- Students will analyze a range of international issues and events, questioning what they read, view and hear in the media
- Students will demonstrate the ability to research and compose a written research project using different types of resources including encyclopedias, books, periodicals, interviews, and the Internet.
- Students will continue to develop their personal reading interests, responding to the suggestions of others for widening their choice of reading materials and genres, as well as making suggestions to others.

### ***Mathematics***



- Students will display mastery of basic mathematical skills: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.
- Students will be able to perform operations with whole numbers, fractions, and decimals.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to reason logically and to understand and apply mathematical processes and concepts, including those within arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and other mathematical subjects, which the staff and CSAW Board of Directors deem appropriate.
- Students will be able to use and apply the metric and English systems of measurement and be able to convert between the two systems.
- Students will understand and use bearings.
- Students will follow a chain of mathematical reasoning, spotting inconsistencies.
- Students will carry out mathematical tasks in which the information given leaves an opportunity for choice of operation and approach.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to understand and solve word problems.
- Students will apply mathematical skills to analyze and interpret word problems and solve real life situations.

### ***Geography***

- Students will describe and explain patterns of settlement and migration, population and economic activity at local, regional, national and global levels.
- Students will select and use a range of geographical sources as a means of communicating about the interaction of peoples and environments.
- Students will have an understanding of interdependencies of human beings in society.
- Students will be able to identify the location of continents, countries, individual states, and land and water formations of North America.
- Students will have completed at least one in-depth study of economic geography of a country or region and understand the fundamental needs of humans and how they are met in various cultures around the world.
- Students will identify on globes and maps local places, places that are in the news and other areas they are studying and identify the political and physical features of those areas.
- Students will be able to identify land and water formations as well as demonstrate an understanding of how they were formed and how they influence human settlement.

### ***History***

- Students will demonstrate knowledge of the past and its relationship to the present and future by focusing on particular features of past societies.
- Students will account for the development of different beliefs and attitudes of different groups and cultures in different societies.
- Students will develop an understanding of the historical, geographical, cultural, social, economic, and scientific contributions of countries around the world.
- Students will have completed at least one in-depth study project of past and present civilizations.

- Students will acquire a basic understanding of the place of religion in the world and its relevance to personal, social and cultural issues.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of geologic time, the development of life on earth, the development of human beings and civilizations throughout history and modern times.
- Students will have knowledge of American history including early humans, exploration, colonization, western expansion, presidents, social problems and solutions, California history, and government.

### **Science**

- Students will successfully utilize scientific research and inquiry methods to understand and apply the major concepts underlying various branches of science, including physics, chemistry, biology, ecology, astronomy, and earth sciences.
- Students will relate scientific knowledge and understanding to familiar phenomena and to things that are used every day.
- Students will present qualitative and quantitative data clearly, using graphs where appropriate.
- Students will discuss the benefits and drawbacks of scientific and technological development in the environment locally, regionally and globally.
- Students will make careful observations, record and describe experimental results, use scientific tools and technology correctly, and make accurate scientific measurements.
- Students will have completed at least one in-depth science research project.
- Students will design, perform, and interpret their own experiments.

### **Health Education and Practical Life Skills**

- Students will demonstrate an understanding about the relationship between diet, exercise, sleep, and health, and the effects that these factors have on physical and mental well-being.
- Students will have an understanding of the effects of socioeconomic and cultural influences on lifestyle and health.
- Students will understand the human reproductive system, menstrual cycle, fertilization, pregnancy, and birth.
- Students will be aware of the emotional and physical changes which take place during puberty and show sensitivity to differences in maturation.
- Students will understand how labeling and stereotyping has negative effects on mental health.
- Students will understand the responsibilities and risks of sexual activity, including pregnancy and the possibilities of contracting sexually transmitted diseases.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of safety and accident prevention, first aid skills, and stress-management techniques.
- Students will have acquired basic housekeeping skills, including care of animals and plants, simple sewing repairs, planning and preparation of a balanced meal, and maintenance of a clean environment.
- Students will be able to use a map and public transportation to get to a location in town.

## **Arts**

- Students will listen, describe and compare music from different times, places and cultures; using musical knowledge and vocabulary to express their tastes, opinions and ideas of the music heard.
- Students will have the ability to read basic music in order to participate vocally and instrumentally in a variety of musical styles.
- Students will have knowledge and appreciation of famous artists, artwork, and artistic periods, including both two-dimensional and three-dimensional art, music, architecture, and performance.
- Students will demonstrate artistic techniques in two and three dimensions using a variety of media.
- Students will understand and experience dance forms of many cultures.

## **Foreign Language (Spanish)**

- Students gain proficiency in speaking, reading, writing, and listening comprehension in Spanish.
- Students will communicate and socialize in Spanish while studying core curriculum.
- Students will have a foundational vocabulary for future study.

## **Alignment of Student Outcomes to California State Standards**

The student outcomes listed and described above reflect what students are expected to achieve after completing our educational program (end of 5<sup>th</sup> grade). Each student outcome is measurable and examples of assessments used to measure student success can be found in Element #3 (Methods to Assess Pupil Progress towards Meeting Outcomes) of the Charter Petition. The student outcomes are summative and reflect the cumulative learning that occurs over the course of Kindergarten through Grade 5.

## **Benchmarks to Monitor Progress Toward Exit Outcomes**

The benchmarks to monitor progress toward exit outcomes are the California State standards for a particular grade level aligned with each exit outcome. Assessments described in Element #3 (Methods to Assess Pupil Progress towards Meeting Outcomes), including student CAASPP scores, provide measurable data on a student's progress towards meeting benchmarks and, thereby, the WECS exit outcomes.

## **School-wide Performance Goals**

- *Academic goals:* It is the goal of Willits Elementary Charter School to have its students show measurable progress towards meeting the WECS exit outcomes each academic year, as evidenced by scores on the state CAASPP tests and/or other assessments included in a year-end portfolio. School-wide measurable progress is defined as at least 75% of WECS students attaining 75% of associated grade level benchmarks. The minimal level of performance to be considered “attainment” is described in Element #3, under the section “Frequency of Assessing Student Progress.”
- *Attendance goals:* It is the goal of Willits Elementary Charter School, on average, to meet or exceed the District average for student attendance.
- *Academic Performance Index:* It is the goal of Willits Elementary Charter School to meet its Academic Performance Index (API) growth targets on an annual basis (or its equivalent, as may be determined by the State Board of Education).

### **Review and Modification of Exit Outcomes and Performance Goals**

- In order to best serve our students and community, WECS will continue to examine and refine its list of student outcomes and school-wide performance goals over time to reflect the school’s mission and any changes to state or local standards.

If changes to the student outcomes or performance goals are made, WECS will provide WUSD with a description of the changes as an amendment to the charter.

### Element #3: Methods by Which Student Outcomes Will be Measured

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

Overall school-wide performance shall be analyzed and reported via CAASPP, API (or its equivalent), and WECS-developed assessments. Individual student progress in meeting outcomes and benchmarks shall be measured throughout the year (in all grade levels) using a wide variety of methods which may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Portfolios
2. Writing Assignments
3. Oral Presentations
4. Class Participation
5. Discussions
6. Projects
7. Tests and Quizzes
8. Student Goal Book
9. Student Notebooks
10. Performances
11. Research Assignments
12. Lab Work
13. Lab Reports
14. Staff Observations and Assessment
15. Self-Evaluation
16. Standardized Tests (Including CAASPP, California State Physical Fitness Test (PFT) and the CELDT/ELPAC)

Levels of student performance on portfolios, writing assignments, oral presentations, class participation, discussions, projects, student goal books, student notebooks, performances, research assignments, lab work, and lab reports will be defined by holistic rubrics. Levels of student performance on tests and quizzes will be defined by the percent correct. Staff observation and self-evaluation will consist of objective, observable data.

The grade level California State Standards that are aligned with each exit outcome serve as benchmarks for student progress. Student attainment of a benchmark is measured by the assessment tools listed above. WECS will also utilize a value-added assessment system (see Appendix H) to track academic growth of individual students.

KEY OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT
For each student, learning will become a life-long, internally motivated activity resulting in a willingness to participate actively in the present functioning and future direction of our society and our planet.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16

Students will become confident, independent learners who have mastered the necessary tools and skills to pursue knowledge and move effectively, creatively, and responsibly onward to their next stages of development.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15
Each student will be able to demonstrate: practical skills, decision-making, problem solving, effective communication, goal setting and attainment, analytical and imaginative thinking.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15
Each student will develop a positive self-image and awareness of his/her own feelings, sensitivity and consideration of others, and awareness of his/her effects on others.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15
Students will gain an awareness of the interrelationships between humans, and the interdependence of individuals, nature, and society; along with a sense of responsibility for cultivating peacefulness and cooperation within the ecological and societal whole of which they are a part.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15
Students will gain an overview of the development of the universe, the solar system, the Earth, life forms, and human civilizations.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16
Students will develop effective study and research skills.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16
Growing children will develop healthy bodies whose movements are mastered and controlled to the best of their capabilities.	4, 6, 10, 14, 15, 16
Parents will gain an understanding of stages of children's development and how they can best help their children in their unique, developmental process.	1, 4, 5, 14, 15
Families will network to support and encourage each other in creating a meaningful and enjoyable school community.	5, 6, 10, 15
Adult staff will continue to develop personally and professionally in order to increase sensitivity and responsiveness to each child's needs.	2, 5, 11, 14, 15

ENGLISH OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT
Students will demonstrate strong reading comprehension, writing, listening, speaking, and presentation skills, appropriate to the setting and audience.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16
Students will demonstrate a growing vocabulary with understandings of word origins and word relationships.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16
Students will demonstrate proper spelling, punctuation, sentence and paragraph structure.	1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16
Students will listen actively to presentations and discussions.	4, 5, 14, 15
Students will participate orally in cooperative groups and discourses.	3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 14, 15
Students will read poetry, fiction and non-fiction and write their own works in these genres, publishing them among their peers.	1, 2, 6, 9, 14, 15
Students will analyze a range of international issues and events, questioning what they read, view and hear in the media.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 14, 15
Students will demonstrate the ability to research and compose a written research project using different types of resources including encyclopedias, books, periodicals, interviews, and the Internet.	1, 2, 6, 11, 14, 15
Students will continue to develop their personal reading interests, responding to the suggestions of others for widening their choice of reading materials and genres, as well as making suggestions to others.	4, 5, 14, 15

MATHEMATICS OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT
Students will display mastery of basic mathematic skills: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 14, 15, 16
Students will be able to perform operations with whole numbers, fractions, and decimals.	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 14, 15, 16
Students will demonstrate the ability to reason logically and to understand and apply mathematical processes and concepts, including those within arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and other mathematical subjects, which the staff and CSAW Board of Directors deem appropriate.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16

Students will be able to use and apply the metric and English systems of measurement and be able to convert between the two systems.	4, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16
Students will understand and use bearings.	1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 14, 15, 16
Students will follow a chain of mathematical reasoning, spotting inconsistencies.	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16
Students will carry out mathematical tasks in which the information given leaves an opportunity for choice of operation and approach.	4, 5, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16
Students will demonstrate the ability to understand and solve word problems.	1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 14, 15, 16
Students will apply mathematical skills to analyze and interpret word problems and solve real life situations.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15

GEOGRAPHY OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT
Students will describe and explain patterns of settlement and migration, population and economic activity at local, regional, national and global levels.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16
Students will select and use a range of geographical sources as a means of communicating about the interaction of peoples and environments.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16
Students will have an understanding of interdependencies of human beings in society.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16
Students will be able to identify the location of continents, countries, individual states, and land and water formations of North America.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16
Students will have completed at least one in-depth study of economic geography of a country or region and understand the fundamental needs of humans and how they are met in various cultures around the world.	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16
Students will identify on globes and maps local places, places that are in the news and other places that they are studying and identify the political and physical features of places they study.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16
Students will be able to identify land and water formations as well as demonstrate an understanding of how they were formed and how they influence human settlement.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16



HISTORY OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT
Students will demonstrate knowledge of the past and its relationship to the present and future by focusing on particular features of past societies.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16
Students will account for the development of different beliefs and attitudes of different groups and cultures in different societies.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16
Students will develop an understanding of the historical, geographical, cultural, social, economic, and scientific contributions of countries around the world.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16
Students will have completed at least one in-depth study project of past and present civilizations.	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15
Students will acquire a basic understanding of a place of religion in the world and its relevance to personal, social and cultural issues.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16
Students will demonstrate an understanding of geologic time, the development of life on earth, the development of human beings and civilizations throughout history and modern times.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16
Students will have knowledge of American history including early humans, exploration, colonization, western expansion, presidents, social problems and solutions, California history, and government.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16

SCIENCE OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT
Students will successfully utilize scientific research and inquiry methods to understand and apply the major concepts underlying various branches of science, including physics, chemistry, biology, ecology, astronomy, and earth sciences.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16
Students will relate scientific knowledge and understanding to familiar phenomena and to things that are used every day.	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15
Students will present qualitative and quantitative data clearly, using graphs where appropriate.	1, 4, 5, 6, 12, 13, 14
Students will discuss the benefits and drawbacks of scientific and technological development in the environment locally, regionally and globally.	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 13, 14

Students will make careful observations, record and describe experimental results, use scientific tools and technology correctly, and make accurate scientific measurements.	1, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16
Students will have completed at least one in-depth science research project.	6, 11
Students will design, perform, and interpret their own experiments.	6, 9, 12, 13, 14

HEALTH EDUCATION & PRACTICAL LIFE SKILLS OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT
Students will demonstrate an understanding about the relationship between diet, exercise, sleep, and health and the effects that these factors have on physical and mental well-being.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15
Students will have an understanding of the effects of socioeconomic and cultural influences on lifestyle and health.	2, 4, 5, 6, 14
Students will understand the human reproductive system, menstrual cycle, fertilization, pregnancy, and birth.	4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 14, 15
Students will be aware of the emotional and physical changes, which take place during puberty and show sensitivity to differences in maturation.	4, 5, 14, 15
Students will understand how labeling and stereotyping has negative effects on mental health.	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 14, 15
Students will understand the responsibilities and risks of sexual activity, including pregnancy and the possibilities of contracting sexually transmitted diseases.	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11
Students will demonstrate knowledge of safety and accident prevention, first aid skills, and stress-management techniques.	4, 5, 6, 14, 15
Students will have acquired basic housekeeping skills, including care of animals and plants, simple sewing repairs, planning and preparation of a balanced meal, and maintenance of clean environment.	4, 5, 6, 8, 14, 15
Students will be able to use a map and public transportation to get to a location in town.	4, 6, 14, 15

ARTS OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT
Students will listen, describe and compare music from different times, places and cultures; using musical knowledge and vocabulary to express their tastes, opinions and ideas of the music heard.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15
Students will have the ability to read basic music in order to participate vocally and instrumentally in a variety of musical styles.	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15
Students will have knowledge and appreciation of famous artists, artwork, and artistic periods, including both two-dimensional and three-dimensional art, music, architecture, and performance.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15
Students will demonstrate artistic techniques in two and three dimensions using a variety of media.	1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 14, 15
Students will understand and experience dance forms of many cultures.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15

FOREIGN LANGUAGE OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT
Students gain proficiency in speaking, reading, writing, and listening comprehension in Spanish.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15
Students will communicate and socialize in Spanish while studying core curriculum.	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 14, 15
Students will have a foundational vocabulary for future study.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15,

WECS shall adhere to all provisions of AB 484 and any revisions of Education Code that are applicable to charter schools. As established in the previous section, WECS will be utilizing diverse assessments that are aligned with the curriculum and instructional program, compliant with state expectations. They will be administered according to the assessment cycle below.

### ***Frequency of Assessing Student Progress***

- Student progress is assessed on an ongoing basis.

- *Daily:* Many of the assessment tools such as class participation, writing assignments, discussions, and staff observations and assessment occur on a daily basis within the classroom.
- *Weekly/Monthly/Quarterly/Trimesterly:* Many of the assessment tools such as writing assignments, oral presentations, projects, tests and quizzes, student goal books, student notebooks, performances, research assignments, lab work, lab reports, and self-evaluation are used on a regular basis within the classroom. Value-added assessments are used to provide assessment on a trimesterly basis.
- *Yearly:* Standardized tests, value-added assessments, and student portfolios are used to measure yearly progress.

### ***Minimal Required Performance Level to Attain Each Benchmark***

- Benchmarks towards meeting exit outcomes are the grade level California State Standards aligned with each exit outcome.
- “Attainment” of a particular benchmark is defined as a score of “standard met or exceeded” or above on the associated content strand of the California Standards Test and/or grades of L3 or better on assignments evaluated using holistic rubrics and/or grades of 80% or better on tests and quizzes.
- WECS will honor all Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), which may include standardized testing accommodations, modifications, or alternatives. See Appendix I for a description of alternative standardized tests.

### ***Plan for collecting, analyzing/utilizing, and reporting performance***

- *Student performance*
  - Role of value-added assessments
    - Value-added assessments are used to collect data and analyze each student’s individual learning progress.
    - Information collected is provided to teachers and families.
  - Role of standardized testing
    - SBAC tests are used to collect data regarding student progress towards attaining state standards and key outcomes of the WECS educational program.
    - SBAC test scores and reports are shared with parents and teachers.
  - Role of student portfolios
    - Student portfolios are used to assess yearly progress towards mastering the grade level performance standards associated with key outcomes of the WECS educational program.
    - Student portfolio assessment is reported to students, parents, and future teachers.
  - Role of teachers
    - Teachers collect student work and analyze according to grading criteria.

- Teachers use assessment data (e.g. student grades, standardized tests, value-added assessment information) to help guide planning.
- Teachers develop a series of student goals and objectives for each student at the end of each trimester.
- Student grades and progress towards meeting student goals and objectives are summarized in a written report on a quarterly and/or trimesterly basis.
- *School performance*
  - Overall school-wide performance will be collected, analyzed, and reported via CAASPP, API (or its equivalent) and the LCAP process.
  - A School Accountability Report Card (SARC) report will be prepared annually and made available on the WECS website.
  - School performance data will be reported to WUSD as part of the Annual Performance Audit.

### ***Annual Performance Audit***

The Willits Unified School District agrees to receive and review the annual fiscal and programmatic audit and annual performance report as specified in procedures mutually agreed upon by the Charter School and charter-granting agency. Within two months of this annual review, the charter-granting agency must notify the Charter School Association of Willits Board of Directors if it considers the Willits Elementary Charter School to not be making satisfactory progress relative to the goals specified by this charter. This annual notification will include the specific reasons for the charter-granting agency's conclusions.

Annual performance audits may include the following:

- Review of charter for compliance
- Review of state and federal student assessment data and reports
- Summary of newly established major decisions/policies
- Data regarding parent involvement in governance and operation of school
- Summary data from annual student/parent satisfaction survey
- Data regarding number of staff, their qualifications, and verifications of credentials
- Copy of health/safety procedures and summary of any major changes
- Review copies of all required documents (e.g. budget reports, financial projections, insurance, etc.)
- Overview of admission practices and current enrollment
- Site visit by WUSD
- Determination of the suitability of the facility in terms of health and safety
- Determination of the suitability of the facility in terms of educational utility
- The number of students on waiting lists
- Information regarding suspensions and expulsions
- Review of internal/external dispute resolutions

## **Element #4: Governance**

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

The Willits Elementary Charter School (WECS) shall be operated by the Charter School Association of Willits (CSAW), a California non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, in accordance with California law. The school shall be governed by the CSAW Board of Directors pursuant to the by-laws adopted by CSAW, as subsequently amended pursuant to the amendment process specified in the By-laws.

WECS shall operate autonomously from the District, with the exception of the supervisory oversight as required by statute and other contracted services as negotiated between the District and the Charter School. Pursuant to California Education Code Section 47604(c), the District shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of the Charter School, operated by a California non-profit benefit corporation or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the Charter School as long as the District has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

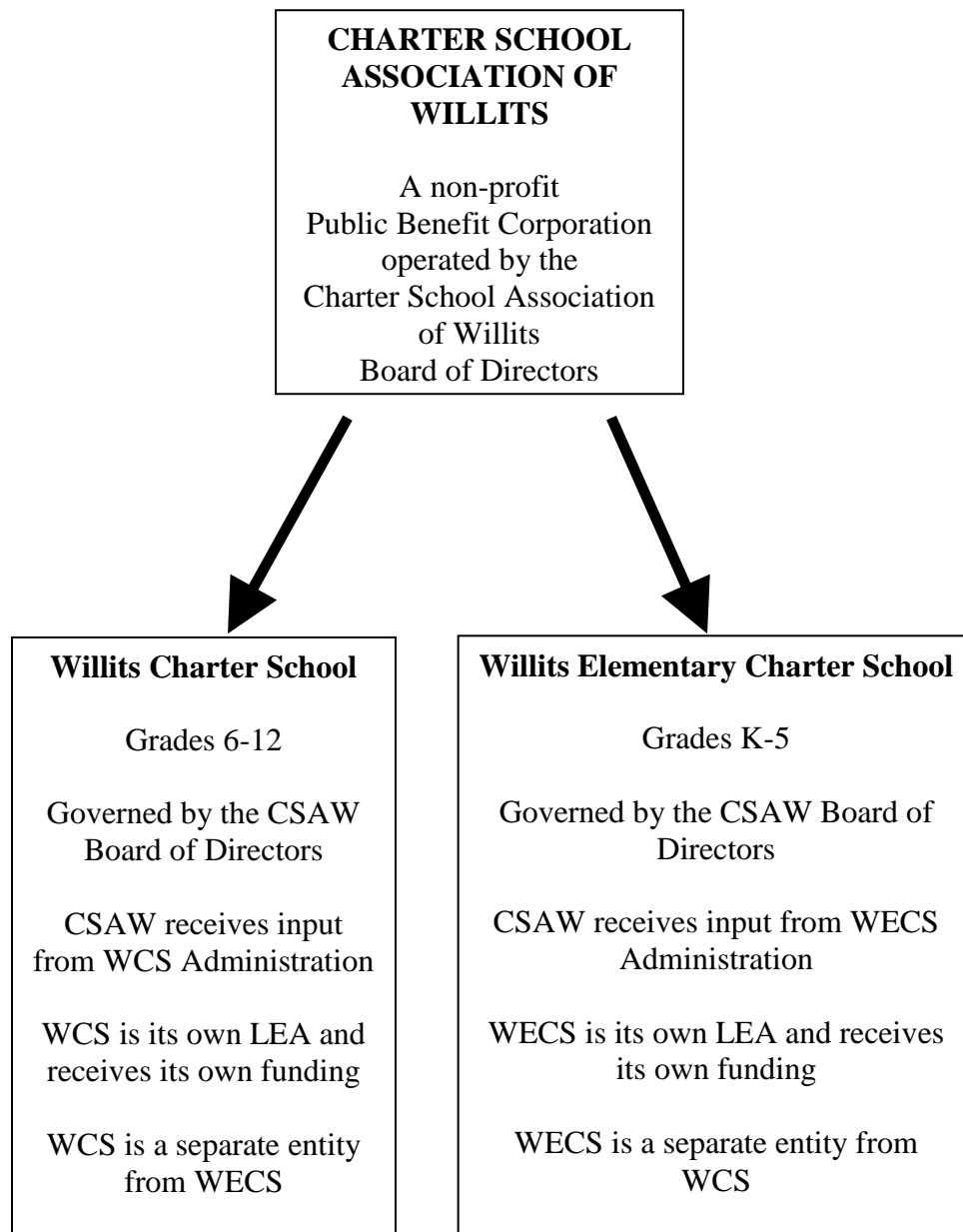
Attached, as Appendices J and K, please find the CSAW Articles of Incorporation and Corporate By-laws.

Article 2.1 of the CSAW By-laws states: The primary objectives and purposes of this corporation shall be to manage, operate, guide, direct, and promote independent charter schools within WUSD boundaries, and such other educational activities as the Board of Directors may define.

Article 5.2 of the CSAW By-laws states: The Corporation shall have such other committees as may from time to time be designated by resolution of the Charter School Association of Willits Board of Directors. Such other committees may consist of persons who are not also members of the Board of Directors. These additional committees shall act in an advisory capacity only to the Board of Directors and shall be clearly titled as “advisory” committees.

WECS will be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. We will not charge tuition and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, or upon any of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220. WECS will comply with the Brown Act, the Public Records Act, and Conflict of Interest Policy.

The following flow chart describes the relationship between CSAW, WCS, and WECS.



### ***Board Meetings and Duties***

The CSAW Board of Directors shall meet regularly, at least once a month (except during the summer) and in accordance with the Brown Act. The Board of Directors is fully responsible for the operation and fiscal affairs of the Charter School including, but not limited to, the following:

- Hire, supervise, evaluate, discipline, and dismissal of the Director of the Charter School;
- Hire, promote, discipline and dismiss all employees of the Charter School after consideration of a recommendation by the Director;
- Approve all contractual agreements;
- Approve and monitor the implementation of general policies of the Charter School. This includes effective human resource policies for career growth and compensation of the staff;
- Approve and monitor the Charter School's annual budget and budget revisions;
- Act as a fiscal agent. This includes, but is not limited to, the receipt of funds for the operation of the Charter School in accordance with applicable laws and the receipt of grants and donations consistent with the mission of the Charter School;
- Contract with an external independent auditor to produce an annual financial audit according to generally accepted accounting practices;
- Establish operational committees as needed;
- Regularly measure progress of both student and staff performance;
- Involve parents and the community in school related programs;
- Execute all applicable responsibilities provided for in the California Corporations Code;
- Engage in ongoing strategic planning;
- Approve the school calendar and schedule of Board meetings;
- Review requests for out of state or overnight field trips;
- Participate in the dispute resolution procedure and complaint procedures when necessary;
- Approve charter amendments as necessary and submit requests for material revisions as necessary to the District for consideration;
- Approve annual independent fiscal audit and performance report;
- Act as a hearing body and take action on recommended student expulsions.

The Board may initiate and carry on any program or activity or may otherwise act in a manner which is not in conflict with or inconsistent with or preempted by any law and which are not in conflict with this charter or the purposes for which schools are established.

WECS has adopted a conflicts code which complies with the Political Reform Act, Corporations Code Conflicts of Interest rules, and which shall be updated with any charter school specific conflicts of interest laws or regulations.



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 of WECS any of those duties with the exception of budget approval or revision, approval of the fiscal audit and performance report, and the adoption of Board policies. 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 of Directors 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 Board members.

The CSAW Board of Directors will attend an annual in-service for the purposes of training individual board members on their responsibilities with topics to include at minimum Conflicts of Interest, and the Brown Act.

### ***The Director***

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

The Director will perform assigned tasks directed from the Charter School Board of Directors and is required to undertake some or all of the tasks detailed below. These tasks may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Ensure the Charter School enacts its mission;
- Supervise and evaluate teachers and staff;
- Communicate and report to the CSAW Board of Directors;
- Oversee school finances to ensure financial stability;
- Participate in and develop professional development workshops as needed;
- Serve or appoint a designee to serve on any committees of the School or Board;
- Interview and recommend employee hiring, promotion, discipline, and/or dismissal;
- Ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and help secure local grants;
- Communicate with parents, recruit new families and students, and assure families of academic growth;
- Take responsible steps to secure full and regular attendance at school of the students enrolled in accordance with policies established by the Board of Directors;

- Complete and submit required documents as requested or required by the charter and/or CSAW Board of Directors and/or the District;
- Identify the staffing needs of the school and offer staff development as needed
- Maintain up-to-date financial records;
- Ensure that appropriate evaluation techniques are used for both students and staff;
- Establish and maintain a system to handle organizational tasks such as student records, teacher records, teacher credentialing information, contemporaneous attendance logs, purchasing, budgets, and timetables;
- Hire qualified substitute teachers as needed;
- Ensure the security of the school building;
- Promote the Charter School in the community, promote positive public relations and interact effectively with media;
- Encourage and support teacher professional development;
- Attend District Administrative meetings as requested by the District and stay in direct contact with the District regarding changes, progress, etc.;
- Attend meetings with the Chief Financial Officer of the District on fiscal oversight issues as requested by the District;
- Provide all necessary reports as required for proper attendance reporting;
- Develop the School annual performance report, the LCAP, and the SARC;
- Manage student discipline, participate in the suspension and expulsion process as necessary;
- Participate in IEP meetings as necessary.

The above duties, with the exception of personnel matters, may be delegated or contracted as approved by the Board of Directors to a business administrator of the School or other appropriate employee or third party provider.

### ***Parent Involvement***

The CSAW Board of Directors shall actively seek input from parents and guardians. The school shall work with parents to develop and adopt a set of parent involvement policies and strategies. Parents can choose to pursue joining the CSAW Board of Directors and be directly involved with governance. WECS shall also openly involve any parent who wishes to volunteer and assist in the operations of the school whether it be janitorial, office help or classroom aide.

A description of opportunities for parents to volunteer at WECS can be found in the Description of the Educational Program (Element 1, Part B).

## **Element #5: Employee Qualifications**

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

Individuals employed by the school should be models of those characteristics we wish to nurture in our students. They will display a continuing love of learning and strive for excellence in their chosen field. They will be intelligent, flexible, open to the process of personal growth, and skilled in communication. They will share the common vision and educational philosophy of the school. Teachers should be trained in, or obtain training in, inquiry-based education and positive discipline. All staff must possess a willingness to work and communicate with parents and must have the ability to provide guidance while allowing the freedom of choice and independent discovery crucial to our program. All staff must demonstrate the utmost respect and caring for students, parents, and fellow employees.

In addition to the general qualities listed above, the following key staff positions require additional qualifications.

- *Teachers*
  - Willits Elementary Charter School shall retain or employ teaching staff who hold appropriate California teaching certificates, permits, or other documents issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(l). A copy of credentialing documents will be on file at WECS and registered with the County.
  - Teachers should be trained in, or obtain training in, inquiry-based education and positive discipline.
- *Elective Instructors*
  - Elective instructors in all disciplines must have the skills required for the tasks they are to perform.
  - Elective instructors need not be credentialed teachers but must have demonstrated experience within their field.
  - WECS provides a variety of art electives but chooses not to designate art as a core subject for credentialing purposes (see Appendix L: Defining “Core” Teachers).
- *Instructional Aides*
  - Instructional aides must have the skills required for the tasks they are to perform.

- *Director*
  - The Director must have experience with/knowledge of educational systems, educational leadership, and current charter and educational legislation.
  - The Director must have strong leadership, administrative, and communication skills.
  - The Director must be able to collaborate with students, teachers, parents, CSAW board members, Willits Unified School District staff, and governmental representatives.
  - The Director is expected to participate in professional development opportunities to ensure that he/she remains abreast of all relevant changes in laws or other operational requirements.
  
- *Business Manager*
  - The Business Manager must have knowledge of, and experience with, creating budgets, financial planning, bookkeeping, and general accounting.
  - The Business Manager must have proficient computer skills and strong organizational skills.
  - The Business Manager must have (or be able to obtain) specific knowledge of the funding and money management of independent charter schools.
  - The Business Manager is expected to participate in professional development opportunities to ensure that he/she remains abreast of all relevant changes in laws or other operational requirements.
  
- *Office Personnel*
  - Office personnel must have strong organizational, communication, computer, and public relations skills. Knowledge of general office equipment is helpful.
  - Office personnel must have the ability to multitask and work independently.

Job descriptions for key staff positions can be found in Appendix M.

A staff recruitment and development plan can be found in Appendix N.

## Element #6: Health and Safety Procedures

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

Employees and contractors of WECS shall be required to submit to a criminal background check and to 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 Director of WECS shall monitor compliance with this policy and report to the CSAW Board of Directors. 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.

Records of student and staff immunizations against appropriate diseases shall be maintained pursuant to Health and Safety Code Sections 120325-120375, and Title 17, California Code of Regulations Sections 6000-6075, and WECS shall follow the requirement of Education Code Section 49406 in requiring tuberculosis risk assessments and examinations (if necessary) of all employees.

Willits Elementary Charter School has adopted and implemented a comprehensive set of health, safety, and risk management policies. These policies were developed in consultation with the school’s insurance carriers and approved by the CSAW Board of Directors. At a minimum, these policies include the following procedures:

1. A requirement that all enrolling students and staff provide records documenting immunizations to the extent required for enrollment/employment
2. Policies and procedures for training and response to natural disasters and emergencies, including fires and earthquakes as outlined in National Incident Management System (NIMS), School Emergency Preparedness Plan and Standard Emergency Procedures for Schools
3. Requiring that instructional and administrative staff receive training in emergency response, including appropriate “first responder” training or its equivalent
4. A policy that the school will be housed in facilities that have received Fire Marshall approval and that have been evaluated by a building inspector who has determined that the facilities present no substantial seismic safety hazard and conform to Uniform Building Codes. It is understood by both parties that WECS, as a charter school, is not required to comply with Field Act requirements. WECS shall conduct regular, ongoing inspections of its facilities and equipment pursuant to established risk management guidelines. Defective or dangerous conditions discovered through these inspections shall be promptly corrected. WECS shall keep written records of these inspections on file for at least one year after the date of the inspection.

5. Requiring parent or legal guardian to grant permission and sign an assumption of risk form for all field trips, excursions or off-campus extracurricular activities
6. Requiring WECS employees and parent volunteers provide proof of automobile liability insurance coverage and a valid driver's license prior to driving on Charter School business or activities
7. Policies and guidelines (outlined in the Employee Handbook and Personnel Policy manual) regarding termination of employees, handling sexual harassment complaints, conducting business in a non-discriminatory manner, and the legal responsibilities of being a mandated reporter
8. Training for staff and students relating to preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens
9. Identification of specific staff who will be trained in the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines
10. A policy establishing that the school functions as a drug-free, alcohol-free and tobacco-free workplace
11. Students will be screened for vision and hearing. WECS will adhere to Education Code Section 49450, *et seq.*, as applicable to the grade levels served by the Charter School.

## **Element #7: Means to Achieve Racial/Ethnic Balance Reflective of District**

Governing Law: *“The means by which the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the district to which the charter petition is submitted.” Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(G).*

Willits Elementary Charter School, as a charter school located within the Willits Unified School District, shall admit students according to a policy of non-discrimination against any student on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender expression, gender identity, 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 school is nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and all other operations.

WECS shall implement a student recruitment strategy that includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following elements or strategies to promote a racial and ethnic balance among students that is reflective of WUSD:

- 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 major racial and ethnic groups represented in the District
- The development of promotional and informational materials in Spanish to appeal to limited English proficient populations
- The distribution of promotional and informational materials to a broad variety of community groups and agencies that serve the various racial, ethnic, and interest groups represented in the District

## **Element #8: Admission Requirements**

Governing Law: “Admission requirements, if applicable.” Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(H).

WECS will actively recruit a diverse student population from the District and surrounding areas who understand and value the school’s mission and are committed to the school’s instructional and operational philosophy. Admission to WECS shall be open to any resident of the State of California. Prospective students and their parents or guardians will be briefed regarding the school’s instructional and operational philosophy and will be given a copy or summary of the school’s student-related policies.

WECS shall admit all pupils who wish to attend the Charter School. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into WECS. WECS will comply with all laws establishing minimum and maximum age for public school attendance in charter schools. Admission, except in the case of a public random drawing, shall not be determined by the place of residence of the pupil or his or her parent or legal guardian within the state.

After enrollment and prior to attendance, students and parents may be expected to satisfy the following post-enrollment activities, intended to create informed participants who are committed to the school’s program and philosophy. Non-participation in these post-enrollment activities does not exclude students from enrollment as the activities occur after students are enrolled.

### *Post-enrollment Activities*

- Attendance at a group information meeting
- Participation in an interview and family orientation with school Director
- Completion of enrollment packet
- Completion of a site-developed assessment to ensure appropriate placement
- Signing of a school agreement that specifies the responsibilities of all parties involved

### **Enrollment procedures and timeline**

- WECS will hold an open enrollment period each year according to the following schedule:
  - *Open enrollment period ends: April 30<sup>th</sup>*
- If, during the enrollment period, enrollment exceeds capacity for a particular grade level, final enrollment for each level that is over-enrolled will be determined by a random, public lottery.
- If enrollment does not exceed capacity, all students will be enrolled.

Existing students are exempt from the random, public lottery. Existing students must submit a re-enrollment form by the end of the enrollment period to receive a lottery exemption for the coming year.



Admission preferences in the case of a public, random drawing shall be given to the following students in the following order:

1. Siblings of admitted students who reside in the District
2. Siblings of admitted students who reside outside the District
3. Children of Charter School Association of Willits employees who reside in the District
4. Children of Charter School Association of Willits employees who reside outside the District
5. Children of Board members
6. All other residents of the District
7. All other applicants

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, all students who were not granted admission due to limited capacity shall be given the option to put their name on a wait list according to their draw in the lottery. This wait list will allow students the option of enrollment in the case of an opening during the current school year.

## **Element #9: Financial Audit**

Governing Law: “The manner in which annual, independent, financial audits shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering authority.” Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(I).

### **A. Fiscal Issues**

Willits Elementary Charter School will receive its funding in accordance with California Department of Education charter school direct funding model or any legislative successors. WECS and Willits Unified School District will work together to review and renew a mutually agreeable Memorandum of Understanding that will accomplish the following:

- Compensate the sponsoring district for the value of any direct services requested by the charter school and provided by the sponsoring district
- Address funds transfer and fiscal overview procedures
- Enable WECS and the Special Education Local Planning Area to jointly and cooperatively address the needs of special needs students and share in the costs and revenues associated with serving such students

WECS will develop and implement sound budgetary monitoring and overview processes, including the development of balanced budgets approved by the CSAW Board of Directors prior to each fiscal year (which include sufficient budgeted reserves and cash flow plans). WECS will receive its funding under the direct funding process developed by the California Department of Education.

### **B. Annual Financial Audit**

An annual independent financial audit of the books and records of WECS will be conducted as required by Education Code Sections 47605(b)(5)(I) and 47605(m). The books and records of WECS will be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and as required by applicable law and the audit will employ generally accepted accounting procedures. The audit shall be conducted in accordance with applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller’s K-12 Audit Guide.

CSAW shall retain an independent auditor for WECS using a request for proposals format and shall select and retain an auditor having a CPA, significant education audit experience who is listed on the State Controller’s Office list of education auditors.

The CSAW Board of Directors will review an annual audit of Willits Elementary Charter School’s financial affairs, prepared and completed by an independent, certified public accountant familiar with education finance. The WECS Financial Audit will include items and processes specified in any applicable Office of Management and Budget

Circulars and shall comply with Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 19850-19854. Such an audit will, at minimum, verify the accuracy of the school's financial statements, revenue-related data collection (including average daily attendance) and reporting practices, and examine the school's internal controls. The annual audit will be completed and forwarded to the District, the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and to the CDE by the 15th of December each year or within 30 days of receipt.

If the audit includes exceptions or deficiencies, the Auditors may provide the CSAW Board of Directors with recommendations as to how the deficiencies can be resolved.

The CSAW Board of Directors will review any exceptions or deficiencies and the recommendations of the District fiscal office. As directed by the CSAW Board of Directors, the School Director and Business Manager will resolve any deficiencies to the satisfaction of the District and the CSAW Board of Directors within 60 days. Any exceptions to the audit are not subject to the Dispute Resolution System. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel ("EAAP") in accordance with applicable law.

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

## Element #10: Pupil Suspension and Expulsion

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

Student discipline policies have been developed for WECS and approved by the CSAW Board of Directors with input from the Director and staff. Consistent with the efforts to share the governance of the school, specific suspension and expulsion procedures are printed and available online as part of the school's student handbook. The handbook shall clearly describe the school's expectations regarding attendance, mutual respect, behavior, substance abuse, violence, safety, and work habits.

The purpose of the suspension and expulsion procedures is to ensure a safe and effective learning environment. Procedures provide for due process and are specific and concrete. WECS has adopted the Suspension Policies of the Willits Unified School District (Board Policy 5144.1 adopted 8/7/2013 or any newly revised policy) as it aligns with the California Department of Education Code (Section 48900 A-L). We follow the Expulsion Policies of the California Education Code (Section 48915a). WECS shall notify the District of any expulsions within five school days and will include suspension and expulsion data in its annual performance report.

While suspension and expulsion are to be regarded as a last resort, pupils may be suspended or recommended for expulsion for any of the acts enumerated in Education Code 48900 or 48915 which the Director determines the student has committed. The following list is a summary of these offenses.

1. The threat, causation or attempted causation of physical injury to another person or willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense
2. Possession of a weapon (e.g. firearms, knives, dangerous object, and explosives)
3. Unlawful possession, use, sale, offer, or being under the influence of any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant
4. Robbery or attempted robbery or extortion of private or school property
5. Significant damage or attempt to damage school property
6. An obscene or offensive act or habitual profanity/vulgarity/hate violence
7. Disruption of school activities/willfully defying school personnel in the performance of their duties
8. Committed sexual offense, sexual harassment, or intimidation
9. And other grounds for suspension as specified in Ed. Code Sections 48900, 48900.2-.4, and 48900.7.

See Appendix O for specific descriptions of offenses as listed in Education Code.

## ***Suspension***

The Director may suspend a student for any of the reasons in Education Code Section 48900 upon a first offense if the director determines the student violated subdivision (a) through (r) of Section 48900, made terrorist threats against school officials (48900.7), committed sexual harassment (48900.2), participated in hate violence (48900.3) or that the student's presence causes a danger to persons or property, or threatens to disrupt the instructional process. (Education Code 48900.4, 48900.5, and 48911(a))

Step-by-step procedures for suspending students are outlined as follows (excerpted from WUSD Board Policy 5144 adopted 9/4/02):

- *Informal Conference:* Suspension shall be preceded by an informal conference conducted by the Director and, whenever practicable, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the Director. At the conference, the student shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him/her; the student shall be given the opportunity to present his/her version and evidence in support of his/her defense. (Education Code 48911(b))
  - This conference may be omitted if the Director 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. The conference shall be held within two school days, unless the student waives his/her right to it or is physically unable to attend for any reason. In such case, the conference shall be held as soon as the student is physically able to return to school. (Education Code 48911(c))
- *Administrative Actions:* All requests for student suspension are to be processed at the time of the misbehavior.
- *Notice to Parents/Guardians:* At the time of the suspension, a school employee 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 (Education Code 48911).
  - This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student. (Education Code 48900.8)
  - 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 add that state law requires the parent/guardian to respond to such requests without delay.

- *Parent/Guardian Conference:* Whenever a student is suspended, school officials may meet with the parent/guardian to discuss the causes and duration of the suspension, the school policy involved and any other pertinent matter. (Education Code 48914)
  - While the parent/guardian is required to respond without delay to a request for a conference about a student's behavior, no penalties may be imposed on the student for the failure of the parent/guardian to attend such a conference. The student may not be denied readmission solely because the parent/guardian failed to attend. (Education Code 48911)
- *Extension of Suspension:* If the CSAW Board of Directors is considering the expulsion of a suspended student, the Director may, in writing, extend the suspension until such time as the Board has made a decision. (Education Code 48911(g))

### ***Expulsion***

Expulsion, except for single acts of a grave nature, is usually reserved for application where there is a history of misconduct and where other forms of discipline, including suspension, have failed.

The CSAW Board of Directors may expel any student found to have committed certain offenses listed in Education Code 48915 (see Appendix O). The Board of Directors may also order a student expelled for committing any of the acts listed in Education Code 48900 upon recommendation by the Director based on finding either or both of the following (Education Code 48915 (b) and (e)).

1. That other means of correction are not feasible or have repeatedly failed to bring about proper conduct
2. That due to the nature of the violation, the presence of the student causes a continuing danger to the physical safety of the student or others.

Step-by-step procedures for expelling students are outlined as follows (summarized from WUSD Board Policy 5144 (adopted 9/4/02):

- The WECS Director will recommend a student for expulsion if that student has committed any of the acts listed in Education Code 48915(a) or Education Code 48915(c).
- A hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled shall be held within 30 school days after the Director determines that one of the acts listed under "Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion" has occurred. (Education Code 48918(a)).
- Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least 10 calendar days before the date of the hearing. (Education Code 48900.8, 48918(b)).

- An expulsion hearing is conducted and a final decision regarding student placement is made by the expulsion panel, comprised of the CSAW Board of Directors.

### ***Rights of the Student***

- *All students*
  - WECS shall provide for the fair and equitable treatment of students facing suspension and expulsion by affording them their due process rights under the law.
  - WECS shall comply with procedures for notices and appeals as specified in administrative regulation and law. (Education Code 48911, 48915, 48915.5)
  - A student may not be suspended for more than five consecutive school days (Education Code 48911(a)) or twenty total schooldays (except under conditions described in Education Code 48903 and 48911(g)).
- *Students with disabilities*
  - WECS will follow state and federal law and WUSD Board Policy in regards to suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities.
  - A student with previously identified disability who has an IEP may be suspended upon a first offense with a determination by an IEP team that the misconduct was not caused by the student's identified disability or if the pupil's presence causes a danger to persons or property or threatens to disrupt the instructional process. The IEP team meeting must occur no later than 10 school days after the behavior subject to disciplinary action. (Education Code 48915 (b) and/or (d))
  - Students with a disability may be suspended for up to five school days for a single incident of misconduct, and for up to 20 school days in a school year.
  - If the student poses an immediate threat to the safety of himself/herself or others, the Director may suspend the student for up to, but not more than, 10 consecutive school days if the student's parent/guardian agrees or a court order so provides. (Education Code 48911)
  - A student with a disability may be placed in an appropriate interim alternative educational setting, as determined by the student's IEP team, for up to 45 days (or until the conclusion of any due process hearing proceedings requested by parent/guardian) if he/she commits any of the acts listed in 20 USC 1415(k)(1).

## **Element #11: Retirement Program**

Governing Law: *“The manner by which staff members of the charter schools will be covered by the State Teachers’ Retirement System, the Public Employees’ Retirement System, or federal social security.” Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(K).*

Willits Elementary Charter School allows eligible school faculty and staff to participate in the State Teachers Retirement System (“STRS”) or the Public Employees Retirement System (“PERS”). The District will cooperate, if needed, to facilitate participation in these retirement systems.

To the extent allowed by law, and subject to majority decisions of the CSAW Board of Directors regarding retirement funds, employees of WECS shall be able to participate in any and all teacher and employee retirement funds for which they would be eligible if they were teaching in a non-charter public school.

Certificated, classified, and other staff members at WECS shall retain all previously vested rights in their respective retirement systems, including, but not limited to, STRS, PERS, and the Social Security system. The WECS Business Manager shall be responsible for ensuring that all required contributions are made.



## **Element #12: Attendance Alternatives**

Governing Law: *“The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools.” 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 shall 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.

### **Element #13: Employee Rights**

Governing Law: *“The rights of an employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school.” Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(M).*

No public school district employee shall be required to work at the Charter School. Employees of the District who choose to leave the employment of the District to work at WECS shall have no automatic rights of return to the District after employment by WECS unless specifically granted by the District through a leave of absence or other agreement. WECS employees shall have any right upon leaving the District to work in the Charter School that the District may specify, any rights of return to employment in a school district after employment in the school that the District may specify, and any other rights upon leaving employment to work in the Charter School that the District determines to be reasonable and not in conflict with any law.

All employees of WECS shall be considered the exclusive employees of the Charter School Association of Willits and not of the District, unless otherwise mutually agreed in writing. 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 Association of Willits provides no rights of employment at any other entity, including any rights in the case of closure of the Charter School.

## **Element #14: Dispute Resolution**

*Governing Law:* “The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to the provisions of the charter.” Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(N).

The Charter School Association of Willits Board of Directors has adopted policies and procedures for resolving internal and external disputes

### ***Disputes between WECS and WUSD***

The Charter School and the District will be encouraged to attempt to resolve any disputes amicably and reasonably without resorting to formal procedures.

In the event of a dispute between the Charter School and the District, Charter School staff, employees and Board members of the Charter School and the District agree to first frame the issue in written format (“dispute statement”) and to refer the issue to the District Superintendent and Director of the Charter School, or their respective designees. In the event that the District Board of Trustees believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter in accordance with Education Code Section 47607, the Charter School requests that this shall be noted in the written dispute statement, although it recognizes it cannot legally bind the District to do so. However, participation in the dispute resolution procedures outlined in this section shall not be interpreted to impede or act as a pre-requisite to the District’s ability to proceed with revocation in accordance with Education Code Section 47607 and its implementing regulations.

The Director and Superintendent, or their respective designees, shall informally meet and confer in a timely fashion to attempt to resolve the dispute, not later than five (5) business days from receipt of the dispute statement. In the event that this informal meeting fails to resolve the dispute, both parties shall identify two Board members from their respective boards who shall jointly meet with the Superintendent and the Director of the Charter School, or their respective designees, and attempt to resolve the dispute within fifteen (15) business days from receipt of the dispute statement.

If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the Superintendent and the Director, or their respective designees, shall meet to jointly identify a neutral third party mediator to engage the parties in a mediation session designed to facilitate resolution of the dispute. The format of the mediation session shall be developed jointly by the Superintendent and the Director, or their respective designees. Mediation shall be held within sixty (60) business days of receipt of the dispute statement. The costs of the mediator shall be split equally between the District and the Charter School. If mediation does not resolve the dispute, either party may pursue any other remedy available under the law. All timelines and procedures in this section may be revised upon mutual written agreement of the District and the Charter School.

### ***Internal Complaints***

The following steps outline the general procedure for resolving internal complaints:

1. An attempt will be made by the involved parties to resolve the issue through discussion.
2. If the involved parties are unable to resolve the issue, they may elect to participate in a mediation process. School personnel, CSAW Board of Directors members, or other mutually agreed upon persons can serve as mediators for internal complaints.
3. If internal complaints are unable to be resolved through direct mediation, issues can be brought before the CSAW Board of Directors for a binding decision.

Other complaint procedures, including a Uniform Complaint Policy and Procedures are implemented by WECS in accordance with policies adopted by the CSAW Board of Directors.

## **Element #15: Employer Status and Collective Bargaining**

Governing Law: *“The petition does not contain a declaration of whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act (Chapter 10.7 (commencing with Section 3540) of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code).” Education Code Section 47605(b)(6).*

The Charter School Association of Willits shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for the purposes of the Education Employment Relations Act (“EERA”). The Charter School Association of Willits shall comply with the EERA.

## Element #16: Closure Procedures

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

Closure of WECS will be documented by official action of the CSAW 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 WECS, the District, the Mendocino County Office of Education, the Charter School’s SELPA, the retirement systems in which WECS 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.

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 WECS.

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, WECS 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 Charter School will ask the District to store original records of WECS students. All student records of WECS shall be transferred to the District upon WECS closure. If the District will not or cannot store the records, WECS 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, WECS will prepare final financial records. The Charter School will also have an independent audit completed within six months after closure.

WECS will pay for the final audit. The audit will be prepared by a qualified Certified Public Accountant selected by WECS 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 WECS.

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

On closure of WECS, all assets of WECS, including but not limited to all leaseholds, personal property, intellectual property and all ADA apportionments and other revenues generated by students attending WECS, remain the sole property of the CSAW nonprofit public benefit corporation. Upon the dissolution of the CSAW non-profit public benefit corporation, all net assets shall be distributed to another public school that satisfies the requirements of paragraphs (a) through (e) of section III.A of Notice 2015-07 issued by the Internal Revenue Service and the Treasury Department entitled "Relief for Certain Participants in § 414(d) Plans" or any final regulations implementing 26 U.S.C. § 414(d) or to a State, political subdivision of a State, or agency or instrumentality thereof. Any assets acquired from the District or District property will be promptly returned upon WECS 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, CSAW shall remain solely responsible for all liabilities arising from the operation of the Charter School.

As WECS is operated by the CSAW, a non-profit public benefit corporation, should the corporation dissolve with the closure of WECS, the CSAW 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.

As specified by the Budget, WECS will utilize the reserve fund to undertake any expenses associated with the closure procedures identified above.

## **Element #17: Miscellaneous Clauses**

### ***Severability***

The terms of this charter contract are severable. In the event that any of the provisions are determined to be unenforceable or invalid for any reason, the remainder of the charter shall remain in effect, unless mutually agreed otherwise by the WUSD and the Charter School Association of Willits Board of Directors. The District and WECS agree to meet to discuss and resolve any issues or differences relating to invalidated provisions in a timely, good faith manner.

### ***Communications***

All official communications between the Willits Elementary Charter School and WUSD charter-granting agency will be sent via First Class Mail or other appropriate means to the following addresses:

Willits Unified School District  
1277 Blosser Lane  
Willits, CA 95490

Willits Elementary Charter School  
Attn: Director  
405 E. Commercial St.  
Willits, CA 95490

### ***Budget and Financial Reporting***

*Governing Law:* *“The petitioner or petitioners shall also be required to provide financial statements that include a proposed first-year operational budget, including startup costs, and cash flow and financial projections for the three years of operation.”*  
*Education Code Section 47605(g).*

Attached, as Appendix P, please find the following documents:

- Budget Assumptions
- Three year operating budget
- Three year cash flow

These documents are based upon the best data available to WECS at this time. The plan is based on many key assumptions, including the following:

- WECS will enroll approximately 140 students in grades K-5.
- The percent of students attending on an average day is 93%.
- WECS will be funded pursuant to the charter school block grant system. The school will qualify for special-purpose funding programs that are not specifically included in the block grant, including class size reduction funding, Title I and Title



II Federal funding, SB 740 Charter School Facility Funding and any other programs the school is eligible to apply for.

The Charter School shall provide reports to the District as follows, and may provide additional fiscal reports as requested by the District.

1. By July 1, a preliminary budget for the current fiscal year.
2. By July 1, an annual update (LCAP) required pursuant to Education Code Section 47606.5.
3. 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 District, State Controller, State Department of Education and County Superintendent of Schools.
4. By March 15, a second interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through January 31.
5. By September 15, a final unaudited report for the full prior year. The report submitted to the District 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. Coverage amounts shall be based on recommendations provided by the District and the Charter School's insurer. The District Board of Education shall be named as an additional insured on all policies of the Charter School. The Charter School shall provide evidence of the above insurance coverage to the District.

## **Administrative Services**

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

WECS shall be operated by the Charter School Association of Willits, a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation, and shall be governed by the CSAW Board of Directors as described in the WECS charter. The school Director shall be responsible for administering the school under policies adopted by the CSAW Board of Directors. WECS shall provide or procure most of its own administrative services independent of WUSD. WECS anticipates purchasing some services from WUSD including special education programs. The school will seek to define the specific terms and cost for these

services in an annual memorandum of understanding. In addition, WUSD shall be required to provide oversight and performance monitoring services, including monitoring school and student performance data, reviewing the school's audit reports, performing annual site visits, engaging in any necessary dispute resolution processes, and considering charter material revision and renewal requests.

## **Facilities**

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

WECS does not intend to request the use of District-owned facilities and does not anticipate having any material effect on the District's facility needs. Currently, WECS is housed at 405 E. Commercial St. Willits, California 95490.

Currently, the facilities occupied by WECS consist of an outdoor space for a playground, one classroom per grade level, two student restrooms, a multi-purpose room, a resource room, and an office. All buildings comply with Uniform Building Codes and Disability Access.

## **Transportation**

The Charter School shall not provide transportation to and from school, except as required by law, including but not limited to students with disabilities in accordance with a student's IEP.

## **Impact on the Authorizer**

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

WECS shall be operated by the Charter School Association of Willits, 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 23701(d).

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. WECS shall work diligently to assist the District in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including meetings, reporting, or other District-requested protocol to ensure the District shall not be liable for the operation of the Charter School.

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

The corporate by-laws of the Charter School Association of Willits shall provide for indemnification of the Charter School Association of Willits Board, officers, agents, and employees.

The insurance amounts shall be determined by recommendation of the District and the Charter School's insurance company for schools of similar size, location, and student population. If a different insurance carrier from the District is used, the District shall be named an additional insured on the general liability insurance of the Charter School.

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

### ***Term of Renewal Charter***

The term of this renewal charter will be for five years from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2022.

### ***Amendment of Charter***

Any amendments to this charter must be approved by the CSAW Board of Directors. Any material revision to this charter may be made only with the approval of the CSAW Board of Directors and the Willits Unified School District Board of Trustees.

## **Conclusion**

By renewing this charter, the District will be fulfilling the intent of the Charter Schools Act of 1992 to improve pupil learning; 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. WECS plans to continue to work independently, yet cooperatively, with the District to establish the highest bar for what a charter school can and should be. To this end, WECS pledges to work cooperatively with the District to answer any concerns over this document and to present the District with the strongest possible proposal requesting renewal of our charter for a five-year term from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2022.