

Wildflower Open Classroom Charter Petition

A California Public Charter School

Wildflower Open Classroom
2414 Cohasset Road, Suite 3
Chico, CA 95926

Submitted to Chico Unified School District
December 2012

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Affirmations/ Assurances

As the authorized lead petitioner, I, Tom Hicks, Lead Petitioner/Director of Wildflower Open Classroom, hereby certify that the information submitted in this charter petition for a California public charter school named Wildflower Open Classroom (“WOC” or the “Charter School”), and located within the boundaries of the Chico Unified School District (“CUSD” or the “District”) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that this petition does not constitute the conversion of a private school to the status of a public charter school; and further, agree that Wildflower Open Classroom 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 shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of Wildflower Open Classroom 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 identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code 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)].

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- 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 non-core, non-college preparatory 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 graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the Charter School shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card and health information. [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)]
- 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 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 Section 47612(b), 47610]
- The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of the No Child Left Behind Act.
- The Charter School shall comply with the Public Records Act.
- The Charter School shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
- The Charter School shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- The Charter School shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum of school days.[Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11960]

Tom Hicks, Lead Petitioner

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Founding Group

The founding group of Wildflower Open Classroom are, a well-rounded group of educators and parents committed to providing students with opportunities to flourish through the use of innovative curriculum and instruction that empowers them to reach their innate intellectual, creative, and leadership potentials. The founding group members are teachers and professors, business owners, artists, sales/marketing people, resource specialists, registered nurse, and accountants with expertise and experience in non-profit organizations, charter schools, universities, the sciences and business. The founding group worked with the state's leading law firm, Middleton, Young & Minney, LLP and in addition GCR, LLP and Wendel, Rosen, Black and Dean, LLP as legal consultants to ensure that the Charter School's operations are legally compliant.

The vision of the founding group, parents, teachers, and the administrative team is united in the commitment to meet the needs of the children to ensure a viable, sustainable educational environment at WOC.

In order to found a new charter school within Chico, the founding group consulted with the California Department of Education, California Charter Schools Association and other charter school founders throughout California and within Chico. It is our hope that the Chico Unified School District continues to view WOC as a positive addition to the District.

Ellie Ertle, 2010 Lead Petitioner and Public Relations and Marketing Specialist, has a background specializing in both public relations and marketing and Civic Engagement and education. She is currently a parent of school-age children and a faculty member with the Political Science Department at California State University, Chico ("CSUC"). Ellie has previously worked with the Chico News and Review, Chico Chamber of Commerce and the City of Chico Architectural Review Board. Currently Ellie coordinates and manages a civic engagement program for the CSUC Political Science department. This Town Hall meeting program engages approximately 600 students and 100 community members.

Jonas Herzog, Business and Finance Specialist, has a background as business director of several corporations. Jonas, is the parent of school-age children and has lived and worked locally with the intent to ensure that the Chico community remains a community of choice. Jonas and his wife, Nani Teves, have extensive experience in grant writing and local business development. They have successfully organized educational events and work in all aspects of project management. In addition, Jonas and Nani have experience working with and knowledge in regulatory departments within the state and local governments.

Christina Cassady, Registered Nurse and Risk Management Specialist, is a parent of school-age children and has worked for many years with the Open Classroom model. With a background in civil service and healthcare, Christina brings a committed understanding of collaboration and non-profit organizations to WOC.

Victoria Shumway, Curriculum Specialist, is a parent of school-age children and a BCLAD Certified Teacher, trained in Early Intervention in Reading (a component of Reading Recovery); has been teaching in the North State for over 10 years. Victoria has been a bilingual parent liaison at her school site and is fluent in conversational Spanish. In addition, Victoria has experience teaching English in Oaxaca, Mexico; she has attended many professional development workshops for teaching math and music and the importance of play in early childhood.

Lindsey Serrao, Marketing/ Fundraising Specialist, is a parent of school-age children and has a multiple subject teaching credential and currently works a substitute teacher within Chico. Lindsey has experience teaching special needs students and students within the GATE programs locally. As owner

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and co-owner of local small businesses involved in teaching and construction, Lindsey has expertise and vision for creating diverse opportunities in the Chico Community.

In order to successfully create and then manage an Open Classroom charter school, the Founding Group Members recognized the need to recruit additional consultants and advisors who are specialists in fields specific to needs of Wildflower Open Classroom. The following individuals have been identified and contacted and have agreed to support the Charter School:

Open Classroom Curriculum Consultants:

Susan Hughes, Open Classroom Educational Specialist, author of the *Webbing Way: Integrating the Curriculum through Writing*

Linda Holm, Open Classroom Teacher

Debbie Irick, Open Classroom Teacher

Charlotte Goldsmith, Retired Open Classroom Teacher

Bridgette Rutherford, Teacher of Open Classroom

Charter School Consultants:

Jeff Plotnick, Charter School Administration Consultant

Laura Kerr and Jeff Sands, California Charter Schools Association Consultants

Lisa Speegle, Charter School Finance Specialist

Kent Sandoe, Charter School and Finance Specialist

Legal Consultants:

Middleton, Young & Minney, LLP (www.mymcharterlaw.com/)

Anagha Dandekar Clifford with Wendel, Rosen, Black and Dean, LLP (www.wendel.com/)

Nitasha Sawhney, Esq. with GCR, LLP (www.gcrlegal.com/)

It is to be assumed that additional consultants and advisors will be sought out as the Charter School matures.

In addition to these consultants and advisors, Wildflower Open Classroom Board of Directors will maintain membership with the California Charter Schools Association.

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I. Educational Philosophy and Program

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

Mission

Wildflower Open Classroom envisions an integrated thematic learning environment in which our community strives to create self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners passionately committed to the celebration of diversity, stewardship of the earth, positive interpersonal relationships, appreciation of the arts, and academic excellence. WOC seeks to create a supportive student-centered learning environment that provides a standards-based curriculum¹ where students can work both independently and cooperatively with others. We seek to educate the “whole child” by addressing the cognitive, social, emotional, and physical needs of our students. The mission of WOC is to enable students to flourish through the use of innovative curriculum and instruction that empowers them to reach their innate intellectual, creative, and leadership potentials.

Vision

We are an innovative school that invites children, teachers and parents to collaborate as a community that inspires and celebrates the adventure of learning.

Students served

The priority of Wildflower Open Classroom is to enroll students from the Chico community and surrounding areas.

While we expect our students to represent a broad cross section of the community at large, we specifically target students who desire and/or would benefit from a small learning community. WOC currently serves hands on learners that benefit from an integrated thematic curriculum and will continue to do so. While in the district setting these students have some hands on learning opportunities in classroom settings, WOC offers hands on integrated thematic curriculum predominantly throughout the whole curriculum. With this educational option, students of all learning styles have a variety of opportunities in the greater Chico area. The student population breakdowns for the District and Charter School are as follows:

Demographic	WOC Year 1	WOC Year 2	Chico Unified School District*
Black or African American	6%	4%	4%
American Indian or Alaska Native	5%	3%	2%
Asian	1%	4%	7%
Filipino	0%	0%	1%
Hispanic or Latino	5%	9%	20%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1%	0%	1%
White	82%	80%	64%
Two or More Races	2%	0%	0%
Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	16%	31%	42%

¹ The Charter School recognizes that full implementation of the Common Core State Standards must be accomplished by the 2014-15 school year. The Charter School will adhere to the Common Core State Standards and the required implementation timeline. All references in the charter to adherence with the California State Content Standards will become adherence to the Common Core State Standards, in alignment with directives from the California Department of Education regarding implementation.

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English Learners	0%	0%	11%
Students with Disabilities	6%	6%	11%

WOC attracts K-8 students and families who desire an alternative to traditional schooling for a variety of reasons. We attract students whose families want a rich and multi-dimensional curriculum where their children are challenged and motivated in multi-age classrooms to achieve above and beyond the confines of grade level instruction. WOC educates students with a wide range of learning strengths, styles, and needs, including kinesthetic and social learners who need to touch, explore, talk, move, manipulate, interact with, and actively experience their lessons. WOC provides a rich learning environment, where multiple learning styles are embraced and love of learning is celebrated.

Many WOC students are artistically, musically, or dramatically inclined, preferring a school that celebrates and incorporates the arts as well as academics. Many students are attracted to our global education component, where other countries, cultures, beliefs, lifestyles, and languages are integrated into the curriculum. Some families are drawn to our environmental focus, outdoor learning environment, field trips, and community service projects.

Families seek out opportunities where they can effectively participate in the design and implementation of their children’s education. Many students and their families are drawn to the “community” aspect of our school where lifelong relationships are formed. Numerous students who feel that they do not fit in or who are not thriving in traditional school structures may be well served by the WOC environment. At the same time, the Open Classroom environment may not be ideal for every student. In collaboration with parents and students, WOC staff work to identify and recommend the ideal learning environment to meet each student’s educational needs.

We expect the Charter School’s population to reflect the CUSD ethnic and economic diversity. The racial and ethnic composition of the school population is representative of the local community and its public school system. Wildflower Open Classroom serves grades K-8 students in the Chico community and surrounding areas. Grade configuration is multi-age combination classrooms that emphasize small class size as enrollment allows. We anticipate serving up to 110 students in the 2012/2013 school year. Over the next several years WOC will grow with the intent to maintain a small learning community (not to exceed ~250 students).

Current research on small learning communities demonstrates the following educational improvements¹:

- Higher test scores (especially among low income students)
- Greater sense of community for students
- Increase in safety and order
- Reduced truancy and fewer dropouts
- More participation in extracurricular activities
- Greater involvement and satisfaction on the part of parents and community
- Increase in positive attitudes and satisfaction for teachers
- Lower costs

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An Educated Person in the 21st Century, What it means to be

An educated person living in the 21st century has critical thinking skills to analyze the complex relationships that surround us, including the globalization of our world. Students who are educated within the Open Classroom philosophy learn the skills of taking initiative in solving problems creatively, persisting with challenges, and working with others to better our communities. Students at Wildflower Open Classroom learn in a multifaceted approach that allows for directed discussion, academic study, and hands-on learning. For example, students at Wildflower Open Classroom will learn how to take care of their environment through multiple channels including, class discussion, relevant field trips, scientific exploration and hands on activities in the garden at the Charter School (chores) at all grade levels.

To be fully educated and active participants in the 21st century, our students will be exposed to concepts in Math and Science throughout the curriculum. Unfortunately, recent studies have shown weakening skills among U.S. students in Math and Science. A major tenet of the Open Classroom philosophy is to educate the whole child, which places connections between the topics at the forefront of all educational endeavors. Using this approach Wildflower Open Classroom follows the excellent examples established by other Open Classroom charter schools, which incorporates math and science into all thematic units. This inclusion makes math and science more relevant and engaging for the student and also increases the amount of time spent on math and science as a whole. In following this approach Wildflower Open Classroom abides by the State of California standards in Math and Science, while employing the whole-child Open Classroom approach.

To be fully engaged as educated citizens in the 21st century, our students matriculate through a rich curriculum that focuses on communication skills. Teachers at Wildflower Open Classroom also build listening skills through large and small group engagement and mentoring practices. By creating an open-structured, multi-age classroom, the students have to learn to respect each other in conversation and also formulate clear and concise arguments. Wildflower Open Classroom continues the strong Open Classroom emphasis on Reading/Language Arts to achieve this strength.

Integrated emphasis in fine arts supports and supplements academic goals, while helping to develop individuality and creative thinking. This approach, drawing attention to critical thinking, creativity and communication through the curriculum, best educates and engages our students for their roles in the 21st century.

How Learning Best Occurs

The Wildflower Open Classroom philosophy puts the needs of the child first and foremost while integrating a high level of family involvement. Each classroom setting will be unique, reflecting the personalities of the teacher and students and unified by the following philosophies and principles.

- Every person in the learning community – every teacher, parent, and child – plays a role in creating and maintaining a meaningful, purposeful learning environment;
- Teachers will use a combination of collaborative, project based, and direct instruction that can include the whole class, groups (small and large) and individual instruction.
- Teachers use Integrated Thematic Curriculum, organizing learning around themes including all academic areas;

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- Parents assist (“co-op”) in the classroom, which gives students more individualized attention from both parents and teachers;
- Multi-age/ grade or blended classrooms allow time for the following:
 - Opportunities for leadership roles for students;
 - Time to develop student-teacher relationships and academic goals;
 - Allows struggling and less mature students to study in groups and more time and support for growth.
- Every child is seen as an individual, with his or her social, emotional, creative, cognitive and physical growth and development being considered and nurtured, at the same time academic needs are being addressed.

We believe that children learn best when:

- They are cared for in nurturing, safe, and supportive environments;
- They are actively involved in their learning, using hands-on, engaging manipulative materials, and constructing their own understanding;
- They help decide what they learn about based on curiosity, interests, needs, and desires, resulting in intrinsic motivation;
- They are free to learn at their own pace and in their own style;
- Their social and emotional needs are satisfied;
- They are valued for their unique learning abilities and styles;
- They take frequent field trips to the outside world to explore new places and to experience different activities, people, and environments;
- They are mixed with other students of different ages and abilities and can learn from one another

The Open Classroom philosophy is that students learn most effectively when they are immersed in authentic learning experiences where they can:

- Practice self-reliance;
- Assume responsibility for their individual learning;
- Develop positive self-esteem and confidence;
- Experience decision-making opportunities;
- Learn cooperatively in multi-aged settings;
- Identify connections between academic subjects and the outside world through an integrated thematic approach;
- Receive guidance and support from caring, licensed teachers; and from parents who actively participate in classroom activities and program operation.

Goals of the program are:

1. To create a child-centered, parent-supported and teacher-directed public school that emphasizes instruction that builds on students' interests in a collaborative way, where some of the learning activities are planned by children and parents under the guidance of the teacher. Additionally, parents provide enhancement activities to support a teacher-directed, child-centered curriculum.
2. To educate the whole child, addressing individual students' academic, social, emotional, creative, cognitive and physical growth and development.
3. To provide education about local and global environments and sustainability and be involved on and off campus projects.
4. The WOC learning environment is constructed to foster students in becoming:
 - critical thinkers and problem solvers
 - effective communicators

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- cooperative group participants and leaders
- contributors to the community
- quality workers and producers
- self-directed learners

Program Description (Curricular and Instructional)

The curriculum and instruction at Wildflower Open Classroom is set apart not by its content – which follows state core curriculum – but by the way that content is implemented. WOC will implement the Common Core Standards for 2014/2015 school year. A plan will be developed for implementation prior to the 2013/2014 school year.

Explanation of unique teaching/learning strategies

Wildflower Open Classroom is a community of learners. Students, parents, and teachers share the roles of teacher and learner, with teacher guidance.

The diversity of backgrounds and experience that students, parents and teachers bring to the classroom enrich the entire WOC community. Classrooms are not isolated from the learning of the community. Multi-age classrooms collaborate with each other.

Collaboration between students, parents, teachers and other community partners is an essential element of what makes the WOC program unique and strong.

Observing and asking questions are key elements of how students, parents and teachers approach teaching and learning. Open-ended and higher level thinking questions allow learners the opportunity to actively reflect on their learning or behavior, rather than passively receiving information. Students and parents are encouraged and taught to ask questions, make requests, and propose ideas for learning activities that interest them or that they wish for the whole class. Students and parents are encouraged and supported to be active in their learning. Teachers use Integrated Thematic Curriculum as a basis for collaborative, hands-on learning.

- Positive Interpersonal Relationships

Through daily problem-solving opportunities and class meetings, students develop the communication skills needed to resolve social and emotional issues as they arise. Children are encouraged to examine the effects of their actions on themselves and others. Resolving social issues and conflicts is important, not only to help children grow into healthy functioning adults, but to ensure that these issues do not preoccupy their attention and interfere with their learning (DeVries, Haney, & Zan 1991; DeVries, Reese-Learned, & Morgan 1991a). Students and teachers may use conflict resolution strategies and *Six Stages of Moral Development* by Lawrence Kohlberg. WOC students apply the skills necessary to work collaboratively and cooperatively in group and community settings and communicate effectively to solve interpersonal problems. They have ongoing opportunities to learn to establish and maintain successful and satisfying personal relationships with other students, teachers, and adults.

1. Cotton, K. (2001, December). *New small learning communities: Findings from recent literature*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

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- Constructivist Learning

Based on the research of Jean Piaget (*The Psychology of Intelligence*, 1947; *The Construction of Reality in the Child*, 1954), and presented by George Gagnon and Michelle Collay in their book *Constructivist Learning Design: Key Questions for Teaching to Standards* we are able to describe how children learn by connecting new information to prior knowledge and by actively constructing their own understandings. Learning occurs when new information is used to deconstruct and/or reconstruct older understandings. To do this, younger students need to manipulate materials concretely through hands-on experiences. More sophisticated learners are capable of manipulating abstract information in their minds, yet they still require the daily stimulation of concrete experiential learning opportunities to internalize new knowledge. During constructivist learning experiences, students explore ideas and phenomena, tackle familiar and unfamiliar problems, then reflect on and analyze their findings with one another. Teachers closely facilitate this process, encouraging students to inquire and investigate, to analyze, create, develop, describe, reflect on, and finally disseminate understandings. Through these experiences, which occur on a daily basis, students learn to make choices and experience autonomy. Students come to know that their interests, ideas, and abilities are respected and valued. These experiences are carefully integrated with the knowledge, skills, and conceptual understanding identified in the California State content standards.

- Blended Classrooms/ Multiage Grouping

Just as Piaget taught that children learn by interacting with people and objects in their environment, the research of Lev Vygotsky (*Thought and Language*, 1962; *Mind and Society*, 1978) elaborated further on the critical social interaction component. In Vygotsky's theory of "Zone of Proximal Development," maturing or developing mental functions must be fostered and assessed through collaborative activities rather than through independent or isolated ones. He emphasized that what children can perform collaboratively or with assistance today they can perform independently and competently tomorrow. Through the social interactions and conversations of students in mixed-age groups, novice and advanced learners develop and share questions, information, thoughts, and ideas, thereby enhancing learning opportunities for all students in the group. Children learn higher-level cognitive and social skills from one another. Multiage grouping helps children develop a sense of community where older children act as models and teachers of younger children. This aids development of personality, collaboration, cooperation, and self-esteem. Wildflower Open Classroom fosters cross-age relationships through multiage classrooms, "special friends" groups for school-wide events, peer and cross-age tutoring, and "reading buddies." Multiage grouping also lends itself well to inclusion of children with special needs into classrooms with typically developing peers.

- Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation refers to the innate propensity for people to engage their interests and exercise their capacities to seek out and master optimal challenges (Reeve, 1996). WOC believes in fostering children's "intrinsic motivation" to learn. According to Alfie Kohn, intrinsic motivation is significantly related to high academic achievement (*Punished By Rewards*, 1983). Our task is to provide an environment that cultivates students' interests and their desire to participate in the educational program. Research further tells us that when students are involved in learning activities that are presented in meaningful and appealing contexts, they show significantly greater amounts of motivation, involvement, and learning. The benefits are further heightened when the activities are also personalized and when the students are allowed choices (Cordova & Lepper, 1996).

DeCharms (1976) conducted a large-scale research project on active education, which involved training teachers to be supportive of the children's autonomy. The project also developed

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instructional materials that promoted constructivist educational practices, such as contextualization and autonomy. The children's intrinsic motivation, self-esteem, and achievement were assessed immediately following the project, then over one year, and finally over two years. Comparisons among the groups of children with different levels of exposure to the experimentally trained teachers were also conducted. The results showed that children in the experimental classrooms not only demonstrated increases in motivation, but also demonstrated increases in their standardized achievement scores in comparison to children in the traditional classrooms. The findings of this matrix of research support the argument for educational practices that are congruent with progressive education or what DeCharms referred to as the "active-education" philosophy (DeCharms, as cited in Ames & Ames, 1985).

- Parents as teachers

Wildflower Open Classroom parents (volunteers) have the opportunity to participate in the classroom under the direct supervision of a certificated employee. This is referred to as "co-oping", and the parents are referred to as "co-ops".

Parent co-oping helps make the WOC program unique. Parents generally commit to spend a specific block of time each week in their child's classroom.

Parents at Wildflower Open Classroom are not given the responsibilities of professional teachers. They are however, integral to the learning environment. They supplement and enrich the curriculum under the direction of the classroom teacher. Many parents have vocational or professional knowledge and talents, which will enrich a classroom and contribute to student learning significantly beyond what the teacher alone would be able to accomplish. Below are some of the activities performed by parents in the classroom under the direct supervision of the teacher:

- Parents plan and teach mini-courses involving small groups of students based on the interest of the students, the talents of the parents and the curriculum requirements envisioned by the teacher.
- Parents facilitate small group learning activities.
- Parents collaborate with teachers to plan, organize and teach curriculum in a variety of ways to meet individual student styles and needs.
- Parents share expertise and professional experience through their roles as co-ops, bringing "real life" experience to the classroom.
- Parents aide in small groups.
- Parents provide homework support, particularly for the upper grades;
- Parents support curricular enrichment, e.g., drama, music and sports.

Parents are trained at the beginning of each school year/ or as needed about the importance of maintaining confidentiality of private information they learn about students as they work in the classroom.

- Students as teachers

Students are also integral to the creation of a unique, child-centered learning environment and often help select the manner in which curriculum is implemented. Under the direction of the teacher and parents, they will supplement and enrich the curriculum. Below are some of the activities in which children will be engaged.

- "Kid Co-oping": Students plan, prepare and facilitate small group activities with their peers. They learn what it is like to be a "teacher" and "co-oper."
- Multi-age mentoring: Students have the opportunity to be leaders as the "older" in a multi-aged classroom and model what they know for the "younger" students. Younger

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students have the opportunity to be coached and learn from their peers through the multi-age experience

- Directing curriculum: Students have a voice in guiding the direction of the curriculum through conversation with the teacher. Teachers learn from the students what their interests and strengths are, and use this information to create student-centered curriculum. Students help to transform the classroom learning so it makes sense to them, and interests them. This occurs throughout the school year.
- Independent learning centers: Students, with their “parents”, design independent learning centers to bring into the classroom. These are student-made, student-friendly activities that students in the classroom can choose to do.

- Teachers as teachers

Teachers meet and exceed the State’s core curriculum but they do this in the unique learning environment and in the teaching style of the Open Classroom philosophy. Below are the responsibilities of Wildflower Open Classroom teachers.

- Teachers encourage students to practice making responsible choices, with the understanding that they will make mistakes as part of the learning process. Emphasis is placed on supporting students finding their own way, rather than telling them what their way should be. This teaching style requires a lot of conversation and dialogue.
- Teachers encourage and support students to take responsibility for their learning. All students have requirements (“commitments”) they are expected to complete each week. Students are taught ways of approaching these expectations and requirements with a goal of becoming self-directed in their learning, problem solvers, responsible with their time, and independent thinkers who can also collaborate with peers and adults.
- Teachers give students the opportunity to help plan and organize parts of their day through the use of daily and weekly planners, individual to each classroom and sometimes to each student.
- Teachers help students work at their own pace and level, through the use of the students’ individual planners, to meet their weekly commitments. This allows each student to take the time he or she needs on a specific task, and it also provides opportunity for students who need more challenges.
- Teachers plan their curriculum and approach to teaching/learning from a whole child perspective and integrated thematic approach- seeking to address the academic, social, emotional, creative, cognitive, physical growth and developmental needs of each student.
- Time that teachers spend addressing the emotional and social needs of students is considered to be as important as time spent on cognitive needs. If students are struggling with a friendship conflicts, the teacher’s attention should be focused on that friendship issue until the conflict is resolved. Wildflower Open Classroom teachers spend time problem solving and teaching students the skills to practice on their own as well. The whole child approach requires flexibility in our daily plans and an understanding that students bring more than their cognitive needs with them to school.
- Because parent co-ops take responsibility for teaching small groups, teachers have more opportunities to meet with small groups of students and with individual students in order to assess/ tailor individual needs, and address specific lessons and curriculum components.

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- The increased opportunities for individual teaching and the multi-age aspects of WOC classrooms allow teachers to consider the developmental needs of students, rather than focusing on strict grade level expectations.
- Teachers play a major role in fostering a sense of community and continuity within the Charter School, e.g., planning annual activities, and supporting new family education.
- Teachers, with the assistance of parents, prepare students for the transition process from Wildflower Open Classroom environment to that of a traditional high school so students are prepared to succeed throughout their academic career.

Teachers are provided the opportunity for ongoing training through the year in order to work collaboratively within Wildflower Open Classroom program philosophies.

Curriculum and Instructional Design

WOC teaching staff develops multi-age classroom level continuum for all areas of the curriculum.

- Curriculum Overview

Wildflower Open Classroom curriculum is developed from state/federal content, current events, teacher-students interests with a specific emphasis on global education, and the arts. Through interactions with their own and other cultures of the past and present, students find meaning in their world. The arts are integrated into the curriculum to allow student's creativity to emerge and flourish. Issues of social and ecological justice will be interwoven throughout the curriculum. Educational goals include self-reliance, social responsibility, artistic expression, and critical and independent thinking, balanced with an awareness of interdependence. Creativity and curiosity are valued and encouraged, and learning are experiential and integrated.

Wildflower Open Classroom integrates course work across the curriculum as a regular part of instructional planning. The book, *The Webbing Way*, by Susan Hughes, outlines major tenets of integrated teaching. When students see how knowledge is connected, they can move away from viewing learning as the accumulation of isolated facts. Integration provides a vehicle for modeling life-long learning habits, by encouraging students to look for the larger meanings in everyday events. It allows them to be open to new areas of inquiry by realizing that new information from other areas can often be helpful in making current understandings more profound. By integrating curriculum around big ideas and themes, students come to understand the relationships among disciplines and how the interconnections of all the parts create "the whole." Therefore, the K-8 curriculum at Wildflower Open Classroom is designed around specific themes developed by WOC teachers. Units of study are interdisciplinary, incorporating reading, language arts, math, science and the arts. California frameworks and model curriculum guidelines also inform unit and lesson design. Areas that receive special emphasis and provide an ongoing sub-structure for WOC curriculum are multicultural awareness; global and environmental studies; the fine, performing and applied arts; and interpersonal communication skills. WOC strives to introduce the foreign language informally in the primary grades through songs, cultural arts, poems, stories, and games. Formal instruction is provided in the upper grades as resources allow.

- Environment and Sustainability

A major focus of the curriculum is on the environment, to help students understand the issues and to take action with various environmental problems.

Students participate in the following:

- Gardening projects that connect to nutritional projects

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- Animal husbandry
 - Recycling program (recycle, reduce, re-use)
 - Pollution Awareness Projects
 - Worm farm/ composting
 - Research and project based learning on alternative energy resources
 - Support and encourage alternative transportation methods
 - Local and global environmental issues and events
 - A wildflower preservation project
 - Maintaining an onsite green house
 - School-wide participation the in Chico Wildflower Century bike ride
- Global Education

It is our goal to prepare students to think, speak, and write about political, economic, environmental, social and cultural developments in the world with confidence and who value democratic rights and responsibilities, freedoms and obligations. Learning about the history, cultures, and belief systems of people who share the globe engenders respect and understanding.

The Open Classroom elementary curriculum explores themes such as those used in the Primary Years Programme (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2002): *Who we are; Where we are in place and time; How we express ourselves; How the world works; How we organize ourselves; and How we share the planet.*

The 7-8th grade curriculum integrates global and international studies with the California Core Standards and explores themes such as those outlined in the American Forum for Global Education guidelines, which include:

- Global Challenges: political, economic, and belief systems; resources, energy, and the environment; race and ethnicity; and sustainable development;
 - Culture and World Areas: major geographic and cultural areas of the world; how history and geography affect culture; how cultures change; and commonalities and differences among cultures;
 - Global Connections: the interconnections among local, regional, and global issues; the relationship between students' personal lives and global events (*Guidelines for Global and International Studies Education: Challenges, Culture, Connections*, H. Thomas Collins, 1995).
- The Arts

The WOC Arts curriculum is an integral part of the general education and includes frequent exposure to dance, drama, music, visual, and applied arts. WOC provides students with opportunities to view and experience the arts and to recognize their historical and cultural significance.

By studying the arts, students develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Brain research and Multiple Intelligence theory provide evidence to support the arts in a balanced, integrated curriculum. Work by Eric Jensen (*Arts with the brain in mind*, 2001), for example, shows that when children are exposed to music, critical neural pathways are developed in their brains. Students who play musical instruments develop strong pattern extraction abilities that are essential to higher brain functions in logic, math, and problem solving. Motor skills are enhanced when students dance or play percussion instruments; and when children sing, they further develop their language skills.

All students at Wildflower Open Classroom have frequent opportunities to engage in a wide variety of fine, performing, and practical arts. Music, dance, drama, needlework, drawing,

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printmaking, ceramics, graphic arts, sculpture, and painting are interwoven throughout the curriculum as artistic responses to literature, multicultural studies, and thematic instruction. Woodworking, photography, computer graphic design, and filmmaking are also provided as curriculum projects and electives for older students. As the arts are integrated in the curriculum funding for all materials are incorporated including art instruction is included in the budget under teaching materials and instruction.

- English Language Arts Curriculum

In alignment with the California Standards, WOC develops each student's strengths as a reader, writer, researcher, listener, speaker, and collaborator. Highly motivating and engaging literature and language arts lessons enhance learning, with reading and writing skills taught both through whole language and through phonemic awareness and explicit phonics instruction to create a balanced approach to literacy.

The language arts curriculum is a strong literature-based program that includes a balance of oral and written language. Reading instruction is meaning based and encompasses systematic and explicit emergent literacy skills including attention to the four cueing systems, spelling and vocabulary development, a wide range of comprehension strategies, and critical thinking skills to interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. Students with special needs are also given ample opportunities to participate in communicative and interactive learning activities, which enhances their language acquisition, social, interpersonal, and academic skills in a language and print rich environment. The strengths of the WOC language arts program lie in the integration of the literacy instruction across all areas of the core curriculum, incorporating multicultural literature and multimedia, building upon an abundance of life experiences and the reservoir of knowledge students of diverse backgrounds bring to school. In addition, all students are encouraged to read, write, and share their work daily through various practices. For example, such practices might include daily-sustained silent reading, readers' and writers' circles and workshops, on-going literacy clubs by interest groups, and access to classroom and public libraries. Finally, the language arts program is presented via a spiraled curriculum (i.e., curriculum in which students repeat the study of a subject at different grade levels, each time at a higher level of difficulty and in greater depth), offering students the opportunity to go both deep and broad over the course of their years in WOC.

- Reading Instruction

Wildflower Open Classroom teachers and parents strongly believe that a balanced literacy approach best serves the needs of emerging readers. Using resource books by experts in comprehensive literacy instruction such as Patricia Cunningham (*Phonics They Use*, 2004: *Classrooms that Work: They Can All Read and Write*, 2002), Gail E. Tompkins (*Literacy for the 21st Century: A Balanced Approach*, 1996), and Donald R. Bear, et.al. (*Words Their Way*, 1996), we will seek to educate children in a meaning-based, print and language rich environment. Children are assessed throughout the school year using a variety of sound/symbol recognition, phonemic awareness, phonics, sight word, and reading comprehension formative assessments. Students who are struggling receive differentiated and small group instruction and/or direct intervention services designed for their literacy needs.

As students progress from "learning to read" to "reading to learn," they are exposed to greater amounts of informational reading through nonfiction texts in content areas across the curriculum. Using the California Standards as a roadmap, teachers plan daily reading practice with a variety of instructional materials that support the WOC interdisciplinary approach. Students are involved in shared and guided reading, reading workshops, teacher "read-alouds", partner reading, daily independent reading, and literature circles, which exemplify the following components:

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- Reading: Students participate in a variety of modeled, shared, interactive, guided, and independent reading experiences using trade books, reading textbooks, content-area texts, and self-selected books. Resources could include thematic based non-fiction and fiction.
 - Phonemic Awareness and Phonics: Students have many opportunities to gain phonemic awareness through songs, poems, big books, rhyming, and word play. They learn to use the sound/symbol relationship and the alphabetic code to apply explicit phonics skills to decoding words. They also learn other reading skills such as sight word recognition, syllabication, prefixes and suffixes on base words, and use of reference materials.
 - Vocabulary: Students learn the meanings of words through wide reading and context clues as well as by posting key words from books and thematic units on word walls and participating in vocabulary building activities, such as, playing word games, use of dictionaries and multimedia and reading logs.
 - Comprehension: Students choose appropriate reading materials; activate background knowledge and vocabulary; consider the structure of the text; make connections to their own lives, to the world, and to other literature; and apply reading strategies to ensure that they understand what they are reading.
 - Literature: Students read and respond to a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts, prose, poetry, and multicultural literature in numerous genres, as part of literature focus units, author studies, literature circles, and reading workshops.
 - Content-Area Study: Students use their reading skills to learn about all content-area units. They read content-area texts, primary sources, historical fiction, and factual information, learn to take notes and conduct research, and prepare projects to apply what they have learned.
 - Speaking and Listening: Students participate in oral language development as they practice reading with accuracy, fluency, and expression. They develop speaking skills through choral reading, small group interactions, classroom discussions, and instructional conversations, as well as through presentations such as Reader's Theater, plays, and oral reports. They learn listening skills through enjoying teacher read-alouds, participating in the give-and-take of peer interactions, receiving instruction through learning centers, lessons and mini-lessons, and observing a variety of oral presentations, performances, and projects.
- Writing Development

Wildflower Open Classroom use the writers' workshop style of writing instruction, based on the teachings of Lucy Calkins (*The Art of Teaching Writing*, 1994) and the Six Trait model developed by Northwest Educational Laboratory (1999). Using the California Standards as a guide, teachers plan mini-lessons and create writing assignments and projects that align with grade level standards and that are also a central part of many interdisciplinary studies. Students are involved in writing activities such as journals, quick-writes, guided writing, language experience, key words, pen-pals, and individual and class book-making. As their writing skills develop, students have instruction and practice in all the writing genres, including descriptive, expository, narrative, and persuasive as well as poetry, journal, and letter writing. Wildflower Open Classroom writing workshops will adhere to the following guiding principles:

- Provide California Standards-based Instruction in writing strategies, writing applications, and written and oral language conventions. Teachers use the standards to plan writing projects and lessons to teach explicit skills in writing conventions and strategies. The

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students demonstrate their learning in ongoing formative assessments of their daily writing and in benchmark writing assessments that are tied to the interdisciplinary study.

- Provide multiple times each week for children to work on their writing.
During writer's workshop, children rehearse, plan, draft, revise, and edit writing on topics that are usually chosen by the child. During the year in a writing workshop, the children work on a variety of age appropriate writing, including personal narratives, essays, or feature articles, short fiction, poems, procedural (or how- to) writing, and other nonfiction pieces of various sorts. During the writing workshop, children do not usually write about books, but, instead, they write their own books. At the end of a unit of study, children's writing is "published." Publishing can be as simple as having classes of older children meet with younger children to read aloud their finished work. However, it will incorporate taking a draft through the phases of the writing process until it is in keeping with Standard English grammar and spelling as appropriate for the grade level.
- Explicitly teach children habits and strategies of writing, and then coach them so they can apply those strategies during independent writing. Explicit instruction usually be provided through the mini-lesson, which occurs during the writer's workshops. Teachers are encouraged to design mini-lessons in which they demonstrate a strategy and provide children with assisted practice using that strategy.
- Assess and guide writers through individual, small group and whole class conferences. Teachers move among children during the writing workshops, holding conferences, small group meetings, as students write and reflect on their writing. Teachers and /or parents work one-on-one with student writers on the final editing of their work. In this way, instruction on the content, conventions/mechanics of writing is personalized and meaningful.

- **Mathematics**

Wildflower Open Classroom students are provided a mathematics program that allow them to develop the necessary computation, application, and problem solving skills to be proficient in the California Standards, while developing a deep conceptual understanding of math principles and operations. WOC seeks to balance skill instruction with conceptual learning and problem solving. It is the goal to help students develop a sense of confidence about their ability to understand and apply mathematics in their everyday lives. Math is taught via a spiraled curriculum (i.e., curriculum in which students repeat the study of a subject at different grade levels, each time at a higher level of difficulty and in greater depth). WOC incorporates the following five strands into mathematics instruction, using a variety of methods, materials, and manipulatives:

- Number Sense: understand numbers, ways of representing numbers, relationships among numbers, and number systems; understand meanings of operations and how they relate to one another; compute fluently and make reasonable estimates;
- Algebra: understand patterns, relations, and functions; represent and analyze mathematical situations and structures using algebraic symbols; use mathematical models to represent and understand quantitative relationships; analyze change in various contexts;
- Geometry: analyze characteristics and properties of two and three-dimensional geometric shapes and develop mathematical arguments about geometric relationships; specify locations and describe spatial relationships using coordinate geometry and other representational systems; apply transformations and use symmetry to analyze

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mathematical situations; use visualization, spatial reasoning, and geometric modeling to solve problems;

- Measurement: understand measurable attributes of objects and the units, systems and processes of measurement; apply appropriate techniques, tools, and formulas to determine measurements;
- Data Analysis and Probability: formulate questions that can be addressed with data and collect, organize, and display relevant data to answer them; select and use appropriate statistical methods to analyze data; develop and evaluate inferences and predictions that are based on data; understand and apply basic concepts of probability.

- Social Studies

Students in all grades study history and social sciences through an integrated, literature-enriched curriculum that draws upon students' experiences and incorporate goals that promote cultural knowledge and understanding, democratic principles and civic values, and the academic and social skills necessary for effective participation in diverse societies. This curriculum is aligned with the State framework. The teaching of history is integrated with geography, the humanities, and other social sciences through the focus on global education. Activities and lessons are correlated with language arts, science, and the visual and performing arts. Teachers build upon students' curiosity about themselves and their world by presenting history as an exciting and dramatic series of events and issues. Students engage in problem solving as they acquire, evaluate, and use information in a variety of ways. Frequent opportunities exist for all students to share their language, cultures, customs, and heritage, thereby providing multicultural dimensions to the curriculum. The foreign languages and cultures are infused into the curriculum whenever appropriate. The teachers provide equal access to the core curriculum for all students through a variety of appropriate instructional materials and strategies.

- Science

Students discover and learn about the natural world by using the methods of science as extensions of their own curiosity and wonder. Students acquire knowledge of science concepts through a balanced integrated curriculum, which include building on their prior understandings to learn about the logic of the scientific method and the applications of science to the world around them. Students develop the critical thinking skills of science: observing, comparing, organizing, inferring, relating, and applying. All students have access to the science core curriculum and will be exposed to life, earth, and the physical sciences in alignment with the California Standards.

- Physical Education

Wildflower Open Classroom students develop an understanding of the importance of physical exercise and physical fitness, healthy nutrition and positive life choices for physical and mental well being. Exercise, sports, dance, and games provide necessary physical outlets and athletic expression for WOC students. Physical fitness as a lifelong endeavor and the importance of recreational activity are stressed through the physical education curriculum. Cooperative games, skill instruction, and sportsmanship are emphasized. Students enjoy competitive and noncompetitive physical activities. Health shall be taught in a holistic manner. Cooking, especially with organic fruits, and vegetables from the WOC garden, provides a motivating vehicle for learning about health and nutrition. Nutritional whole food snacks are provided daily to encourage healthy eating habits. Knowledge of health, safety and life promoting choices for personal behavior provide a foundation for positive lifelong habits.

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Teaching Methods

The principles, theory, and research of progressive education from the past, present, and future underlie Wildflower Open Classroom innovative and evolving instructional methods. Founding theorists of the past include John Dewey, Dunn & Dunn, Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, and Maria Montessori. Influential theorists and researchers of the present include Howard Gardner, William Glasser, Mel Levine, and Alfie Kohn. WOC staff strives to remain informed about innovative progressive education practices throughout the world.

Just as WOC students are provided with a variety of choices regarding interest areas in the curriculum, they are also exposed to a variety of teaching and learning methods. Hands-on, experiential learning is integral in a WOC setting. Children learn best when they are actively involved with what they learn. Stimulating learning centers, manipulative math activities, balanced literacy programs, with reading and writing workshops, integrated visual and performing arts experiences, and shared inquiry methods facilitate the “learn-by-doing” instructional focus.

Cooperative learning groups, social interaction, multi-age grouping, and cross-age tutoring assist students in learning from one another. WOC acknowledges that students learn by actively constructing knowledge, weighing new information against their previous understanding, comparing and contrasting, and coming to new understandings. WOC teachers, parents, and students continue to engage in a dynamic cycle of reflection and action. In constructivist classrooms at WOC, students are given numerous opportunities to explore ideas and phenomena, utilize manipulative materials, conjecture and share hypotheses with others, and revise their original thinking.

The Multiple Intelligence Theory (MI) of Harvard cognitive psychologist Howard Gardner is integrated into instruction in K-8 grades. In addition to focusing on the linguistic and logical-mathematical domains, WOC’s teaching methods incorporate multiple learning styles. Students who have strengths in other intelligences (such as the artists, architects, musicians, naturalists, designers, dancers, therapists, visionaries, philanthropists, entrepreneurs, historians, and others who enrich the world with their humanity and diversity of culture, thought, and expression) are acknowledged and valued at WOC. Learning opportunities is presented in a variety of ways to allow students to study in ways harmonious with their own unique learning style.

An inquiry-based, project approach is also utilized, which is a model for classroom activity that shifts away from the classroom practice of short, isolated, teacher-centered lessons and instead emphasizes learning activities that are long-term, interdisciplinary, student-centered, and integrated with real-world issues and practices (Dewey, Katz). Project based learning provides opportunities for students to pursue their own interests and questions and make decisions about how they will find answers and solve problems. This approach is focused on using and learning content as a means of developing an awareness of learning processes, information-processing, and problem-solving skills. It is student-centered, with the teacher serving as a facilitator or guide. Inquiry classrooms are open systems where students are encouraged to search and make use of resources beyond the classroom. For example, technology can connect students with local and world communities. Learning how to learn is emphasized at WOC. Higher order thinking skills are developed through well-designed inquiry learning activities. School-wide and/or individual class celebrations may culminate units of study.

Materials

School-wide curriculum materials are chosen by teachers and the Director. WOC utilizes a variety of materials such as: textbooks in the content areas, a classroom library of picture books, trade books, big books, chapter books, anthologies, multi-cultural folk and fairy tales, world mythology and information books for shared and guided reading, independent reading, read a-louds, and reading workshops; multiple copies of novels, historical fiction, biographies, and non-fiction at various reading levels for teachers to offer small groups during Literature Circles; writing materials, such as paper of all types, book

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binding materials, and a laminator for writing and displaying books composed by student authors; art supplies; math and science manipulatives, tools and instruments; numerous reference books and materials, maps and globes, primary sources and books about various countries, cultures, ethnicities, and religions, along with stories of important men and women from all backgrounds for studying history, world geography, social studies, and science.

The following are specific examples of books in content areas, reading materials and other curriculum specific resources WOC may incorporate and use as a part of their integrated thematic instruction:

Language Arts

- Great Books Program (The Great Book Foundation)
- The Wright Group Reading Programs- Phonics Programs & Guided Reading.
- Newberry & Caldecott Award Winners
- Versatiles - ETA Cuisenaire
- Zoo Phonics
- Sunshine Books
- McCracken Spelling
- Reading Zone - Nancy Atwell
- Trade Books
- Reading Recovery
- The Art of Teaching Writing - Lucy Calkins
- The Art of Teaching Reading – Lucy Calkins
- Webbing Way - Susan Hughes

Mathematics:

- Everyday Math
- Mastering Math Facts – Otter Creek Institute
- AIMS
- Math Land - Creative Publications
- Math Solutions - Marilyn Burns
- Speed Math
- Versatiles - ETA Cuisenaire
- Hands On by Creative Publications
- Math Their Way - Center for Innovation in Education

Social Studies:

- AIMS
- Interact-Simulations.com
- CUSC Resources include R.I.S.E

Science:

- Versatiles - ETA Cuisenaire
- GEMS
- FOSS
- Nature Scope - Natural Wildlife Federation
- GROW - Kids in the Garden
- Thematic Trade Books

Sample of possible middle school materials:

- Discovering Mathematics Common Core - Singapore Math Program
- Middle Level Literature Anthologies - Heath Publications
- Big Ideas of Science - Pearson DK
- Science Explorer - Prentice Hall Discovery School

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- Vocabulary Workshop - Sadlier Oxford

Technology

- WOC's goal for technology is to educate our students to participate fully in the information age. We are committed to providing a learning environment that promotes logical thinking, curiosity, global awareness, and self-directed, independent learning. Teachers model effective integration of technology into instruction. WOC students learn the keyboard to enhance writing capabilities in basic word processing programs. They do Internet research for reports and will later progress to networking and collaborating with student peers around the world on educational projects. Students have the opportunity to become media literate by developing their own multi-media presentations.
- Technology is fully integrated and utilized in interdisciplinary projects and learning activities throughout the grades. Technology is implemented at all grade levels. In addition to becoming media literate, students will learn the basics of professional graphics programs and create multi-media productions and power points presentations, which may include websites, computer animation, and short videos. We strive to have middle school students integrate core curriculum with multimedia technology through digital storytelling. In this process, students focus on cultural, personal, educational, and fictional stories, placing a strong emphasis on mastery of state standards. Digital storytelling may provide a powerful way for students to engage in and personalize their learning. Multimedia projects such as this encourage students to make decisions about how to communicate their particular message and give students with diverse learning styles multiple ways to demonstrate their learning.

Description of educational environment and classroom structure

Educating the "whole child" is the tenet that drives the environment within each classroom and allows for the academic, social, emotional, creative, aesthetic and physical growth and development of each student.

The WOC classrooms are all similar in a variety of ways, part of the "common thread" that aligns the WOC classrooms with the Open Classroom philosophy.

Classrooms are, at all times, "kid friendly" and developmentally appropriate. Classrooms are warm and welcoming. They always display student art work, writing, and on-going as well as completed projects in a variety of curriculum disciplines. These student artifacts provide evidence of past, current, and sometimes future learning.

Each classroom has a large, open space for gathering, where the entire classroom's learning community (students, parents, and teacher) gathers several times each day. Everyone is seated together on the floor, for a wide variety of activities: planning and organizing, business and announcements, sharing, problem solving, curriculum discussions, whole class lessons, read aloud, guest speakers, and presentations by students, parents or guests.

Classrooms have a separate space (e.g., a loft) which allows students the opportunity to work alone or with others in a smaller, more intimate work space. Rooms may have sofas, comfortable over-stuffed chairs, rocking chairs, and unusual furniture items that add to the kid-friendly environment of the learning space. Classrooms have a variety of tables that support small group learning. In addition, each classroom has independent work spaces for either individual or partner work to occur. Because collaboration is a vital and key element of the Open Classroom philosophy, students move throughout the classroom, working with others and seeking help and support as needed. Each classroom provides teachers and parents' space, for announcements, literature, scheduling, curriculum supplies, and community materials.

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Blended grade classrooms (multi-age) are an important element in our school. Educational research shows that multi-aged learning environments facilitate individualized instruction where teachers focus on each student's needs rather than grade level expectations. They also broaden the social peer group for children, offering a wider possibility of friendship choices.

In tune with the Open Classroom philosophy of being a "community of learners", all classrooms have items that support this sense of community. Classrooms may not have individual desks and students benefit from working around shared tables and spaces within the class. Supplies (paper, crayons, rulers, scissors, compasses, staplers, etc.) are all located in a shared, community space, to be used as needed by anyone. Ideally, each classroom supports a large area, or "kitchen", for cooking and nutrition, science learning, and art. Each student has frequent and easy access to the computers. Students may have a personal mailbox for messages and notes, as well as an individual "cubby", file box, tote tray, or locker for personal books or learning materials. Many times during a school day small groups of students may work outside their own classroom under direct certificated employee supervision (meeting all safety measures/policies), sometimes needing more space to spread out, sometimes needing privacy to produce a play or work on a readers' theater workshop. This space is considered part of the WOC learning environment. Charter petitioners are prepared to negotiate a memorandum of understanding to address the unique needs of this program with the District.

Students and co-ops may meet in small groups in other public spaces in the school, or outside (e.g., the hallways, garden or playgrounds). Also, many WOC learning opportunities take place off campus. This is facilitated by the presence of parents and other community partners who can assist in planning off-campus activities and in transporting and managing groups of students at a variety of learning venues.

Wildflower Open Classroom students produce a variety of projects throughout the school year, as supported by the Open Classroom philosophy that children learn by being actively involved in the learning process. WOC requires large spaces to store on-going learning projects until projects are completed and shared with classmates, parents, and frequently other classrooms. Parents also need room to store their teaching and curriculum supplies. WOC will strive to always have a large and extensive children's library, with multiple copies of books for literature studies. WOC also has a growing parent resource library, supporting parents learning about the Open Classroom philosophy of education, curriculum and co-oping. In addition, WOC has "overall program" storage for large or periodically used items (e.g., End-of-year-celebrations, carnival and faire costumes/props and play props and decorations).

Finally, it is expected that the upper grades will have a common area where they can meet together to organize their day using planners or other tools, work on current projects they have going on, catch up on homework, seek tutoring or mentoring from adult facilitators, and socialize.

Compatibility with State Core Curriculum

The State Core Curriculum provides the basis for all instruction at Wildflower Open Classroom. Because WOC uses multi-grade classrooms, some elements of the Core Curriculum are addressed in two-year cycles. This means, for example, that a student may be taught some subjects from the fourth grade curriculum in his or her third grade and taught from the third grade curriculum in his or her fourth grade. For curricula that are subject to testing, WOC assures those subjects are learned in the appropriate year.

Supporting research base and data

Wildflower Open Classroom relies on the active involvement of the students, parents and teacher in the WOC learning environment. In this community of learners the student, parents and teacher engage in learning activities in a collaborative way, with varying but coordinated responsibilities. Among researchers there is growing interest in the community of learners' philosophy. These researchers

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observe that in a community of learners' environment, children are more emotionally stable, improve academically and are more self-directed. The research includes the following:

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The Open Classroom philosophy was inspired by the works and theories of John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York: MacMillan, 1916), and Lev Vygotsky, *L.S. Vygotsky, Mind in Society: the Development of Higher Psychological Processes* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978).

Plan for Students who are Academically Low Achieving

WOC's integrated curriculum is based on high interest content using a variety of teaching methods designed to bridge California standards and student learning in ways that are more effective for students who need extra academic support. Our small and flexible groupings, multi-sensory teaching methods, and differentiated instructional approaches are designed to support their success. Students who are low-achieving are identified with the use of classroom /teacher based assessments and the Performance Series Assessment. The Performance Series is a computer-adaptive test that pinpoints the proficiency level of students, across a range of subjects and corresponds with the specific California Content Standards (see attached WOC Student Achievement & Instructional Improvement Plan). For those students who need more individual assistance, intervention teachers provide tutoring and small group help in basic literacy and math skills to improve achievement. Parents of at-risk or low achieving students are contacted and included in a student study team meeting for the development of strategies to meet the specific needs of the student. Further support for at-risk students includes intervention programs beyond the classroom and school day. If necessary, additional learning opportunities will be made available as a measure to ensure retention.

Along with teacher observation, parent conferences, and assessing student performance a school student study committee will review, discuss and make a recommendation for student placement. If the team recommends that retention based on test scores, teacher observations and/or parental concerns, we will hold a Student Study Team meeting. If the team agrees that this is in the best interest of the child, then all measures will be taken to ensure that this will be a positive experience for the student. These measures include: holding a meeting with the team and the student; creating an accepting environment in the class; creating many opportunities for success for the student; and ensuring that the student receives the necessary assistance and support to ensure future promotion. Specific times will be allocated to provide the opportunity for teachers to discuss and share concerns related to student progress before students matriculate to the next grade.

Plan for Students who are Academically High Achieving

WOC's thematically based curriculum provides ample opportunities for students above grade-level to be challenged. Individual and group projects allow self-directed learners to explore areas in-depth by providing an inquiry framework based on three interrelated questions: *What do we want to learn? How best will we learn? How will we know what we have learned?* Using this framework, students acquire and develop the skills necessary to conduct purposeful, constructive research that allows high achieving students not only to develop critical and creative thinking skills, but also supports their natural curiosity and sustains their love of learning.

Students who are high-achieving are identified with the use of classroom /teacher based assessments and the Performance Series Assessment. The Performance Series is a computer-adaptive test that pinpoints the proficiency level of students, across a range of subjects and corresponds with the specific California Content Standards. Differentiated skill instruction along with constructivist inquiry, advanced level instructional materials and supplies provide additional learning opportunities for high achieving students. Projects, technology (web quest, power point, and photo-story), problem solving math games, peer tutoring, and/or community service will challenge and meet the needs of these students.

Plan for English Learners (See Section III, EL for more detail)

Wildflower Open Classroom meets all applicable legal requirements for English Learners ("EL") as it pertains to annual notifications to parents, student identification, placement, program options, EL and

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core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, re-classification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing requirement. The Charter School will implement policies to assure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding ELs and the rights of students and parents. (See Section III, EL for more detail)

Home Language Survey

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

CELDT Testing

All students who indicate that their home language is other than English will be California English Language Development Test ("CELDT") tested within thirty days of initial enrollment² and at least annually thereafter between July 1 and October 31st until re-designated as fluent English proficient.

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

Reclassification Procedures

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

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

WOC has strategies for serving English Learners, which are research based, supported by the Open Classroom resources, and evaluated annually for effectiveness. WOC complies with all applicable federal laws in regard to services and education of EL students. WOC has developed, and maintains

² 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.

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policies and procedures for the provision of services to English Learners in accordance with guidelines published by the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education.

English learners receive instruction utilizing the techniques of phonics, sheltered English, cooperative learning groups, and experiential activities. Wildflower Open Classroom will serve English Learners at the school site through a sheltered English immersion program. Students will be enrolled in an English-speaking classroom with a BCLAD or CLAD credentialed, highly qualified teacher.

Teachers, paraeducators, parent volunteers, or other students will provide primary language support. WOC, where possible, will hire personnel and recruit bilingual community support and services to meet the primary language needs of English Learners.

Many of the innovative features of WOC curriculum and instruction provide enriched learning opportunities for EL students. Frequent social interactions in small group settings, peer collaboration and peer tutoring, oral expression during performances, reports, songs and presentations, and multi-sensory teaching methods and learning activities all support English Language Development and Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Program Effectiveness

The evaluation for the program effectiveness for ELs in the Charter School will include:

- Adhere to Charter School-adopted academic benchmarks by language proficiency level and years in program to determine adequate yearly progress.
- Monitoring of teacher qualifications and the use of appropriate instructional strategies based on program design.
- Monitoring of student identification and placement.
- Monitoring of parental program choice options.
- Monitoring of availability of adequate resources.

Plan for Serving Students with Disabilities

Overview

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

WOC is categorized as a "public school" within the District in conformity with Education Code Section 47641(b). As described below, WOC complies with the Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") between the District and WOC related to the delineation of duties between the District and WOC.

WOC complies with all state and federal laws related to the provision of special education instruction and related services and all SELPA policies and procedures; and utilize appropriate SELPA forms.

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

Services for Students under the "IDEIA"

WOC intends to provide special education instruction and related services in accordance with the IDEIA, Education Code requirements, and applicable policies and practices of the Special Education Local Plan

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Area (“SELPA”). WOC shall remain, by default, a public school of the District for purposes of Special Education purposes pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b). However, WOC reserves the right to make written verifiable assurances that WOC 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.

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, WOC seeks services from the District for special education students enrolled in WOC in the same manner as is provided to students in other District schools. WOC will follow the District and SELPA policies and procedures, and shall utilize SELPA forms in seeking out and identifying and serving students who may qualify for special education programs and services and for responding to record requests and parent complaints, and maintaining the confidentiality of pupil records. WOC 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 WOC and the District to review special education policies, procedures, protocols, and forms of the District and the SELPA and District protocol, will ensure that WOC and the District have an ongoing mutual understanding of District protocol and will facilitate ongoing compliance.

The District shall be designated the Local Educational Agency (“LEA”) serving WOC students. Accordingly, WOC shall be deemed a public school of the District pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b) and 47646(a). WOC agrees to adhere to the requirements of the Local Plan for Special Education and to District policies. 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, WOC seeks services from the District for special education students enrolled in WOC in the same manner as is provided to students in other District schools.

WOC acknowledges the importance of cooperating with the District so that the District can provide special education services to WOC students. WOC agrees to promptly respond to all District inquiries, to comply with reasonable District directives, and to allow the District access to WOC students, staff, facilities, equipment and records as required to fulfill all District obligations under this Agreement or imposed by law. WOC 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.

Referral

WOC shall ensure that its staff receives training to identify students who may have exceptional needs and a Student Study Team will determine whether alternative interventions in the regular school setting will appropriately serve the needs of the student. WOC shall make any necessary referrals of students who are believed to be eligible for special education and related services. WOC shall notify CUSD of any referrals.

Evaluation

Once a student is referred, CUSD shall assume responsibility for identifying and providing for any school administered evaluations or assessments. CUSD shall consult with WOC staff when selecting and conducting assessments.

Individualized Education Plan Development

CUSD assumes responsibility for developing written individualized education plans (“IEP”) for all students with exceptional needs. The IEP team shall have all legally mandated members and shall include a

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representative of WOC. The plan shall be developed collaboratively with an effort to respect the Charter School's instructional design, mission and charter, and WOC shall make available any necessary staff to facilitate the IEP process. Each IEP will be tailored only to the extent that it is consistent with state and federal law. CUSD shall provide advance notice to WOC regarding all IEPs, and CUSD shall assume the responsibility for ensuring appropriate documentation of the IEP process and for ensuring all parent and student rights. CUSD Director of Pupil Personnel Services ("DPPS") will be notified by the WOC Director of all IEP meetings via email, written notice, or a phone call. The DPPS will be invited to attend all IEPs and WOC and will serve as the Administrator of Record unless this is designated by the DPPS to the WOC Director or designee.

Placement

The IEP team shall have primary responsibility for determining the most appropriate placements and services for students with exceptional needs in accord with applicable laws. All services shall be delivered in the least restrictive environment and shall be consistent with WOC's instructional philosophy, mission, charter and program.

Delivery of Special Education and Related Services

The charter schools' students shall participate in state and federal funding for special education in the same manner as any other public school of the District pursuant to Education code Section §47646. WOC shall cooperate fully with the delivery of such services, which shall, to the maximum extent feasible within the law, be consistent with WOC's instructional philosophy, mission, charter, and operational policies.

CUSD will be allocated all special education funds that are generated by WOC students. CUSD will be responsible for all of the financial costs of services and responsible for the delivery of special education services described herein, including any and all costs associated with a due process or judicial proceeding.

Relationship with SELPA

WOC shall be able to participate in SELPA activities as needed and on a basis comparable with other District schools. CUSD shall notify WOC of any proposed changes to SELPA policies or practices regarding charter schools.

Funding

CUSD shall receive funding from the SELPA associated with ADA generated by the Charter School. WOC shall agree to pay the District its share of the special education per pupil encroachment upon submission of the calculation of the costs by CUSD and, in return, CUSD will provide all needed and appropriate special education services for WOC students, as they would for any other student within CUSD and in accordance with all applicable State and Federal laws. The exact formula to determine costs of encroachment is illustrated in the memorandum of understanding between the District and WOC.

Staffing

CUSD agrees to employ and provide to WOC all needed and appropriate personnel for special education services at no additional charge than the premium previously set forth. Should the employees serving WOC listed above be different in following years, CUSD agrees to consult WOC on employee placement whenever possible and in good faith. WOC also reserves the right to request the reassignment of any member of CUSD's special education staff assigned to WOC if the WOC Director has concerns that they are not performing the responsibilities of his/her position satisfactorily and in accordance with this MOU. It is understood that all individuals in the special education team are employees of CUSD and this agreement will not obstruct the rights of the personnel employed by CUSD set forth in CUSD's collective

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bargaining agreements. WOC will provide the CUSD employees with appropriate workspace and working conditions.

Payment for Special Education Encroachment

CUSD will invoice WOC quarterly for Special Education Encroachment costs. The memorandum of understanding between WOC and the District provides the formula by which each year's Special Education encroachment is calculated. It also provides the calculation, which determines the WOC share of the annual encroachment. Encroachment will be calculated and billed in the budget year based on the prior year Estimated Actuals. CUSD will bill WOC 1/4 of the annual amount each quarter of the budget year, i.e., September 30th, December 31st, April 30th and June 30th of each year.

CUSD will close its books in early October of each year at which time reconciliation will be completed determining the actual amount of the Special Education encroachment. The amount that was billed to WOC during the preceding year will be deducted from the actual amount of the WOC share to determine the net adjustment. The net amount will be added to or subtracted from the December quarterly billing for the budget year.

WOC and CUSD agree to use the Dispute Resolution Process outlined in Element 14 of the WOC Charter to reach agreement over any contested charges if there are any.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

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

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

The final determination of whether the student will or will not be identified as a person with a disability is made by the 504 team in writing and notice is given in writing to the parent or guardian of the student in

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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 IDEA, a referral for special education assessment will be made by the 504 team.

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

The 504 Plan shall describe the Section 504 disability and any program modification that may be necessary. All 504 team participants, parents, guardians, teachers and any other participants in the student's education, including substitutes and tutors, must have a copy of each student's 504 Plan. The site administrator will ensure that teachers include 504 Plans with lesson plans for short-term substitutes and that he/she review the 504 Plan with a long-term substitute.

A copy of the 504 Plan shall be maintained in the student's file. Each student's 504 Plan, will be reviewed at least once per year to determine the appropriateness of the Plan, needed modifications to the Plan, and continued eligibility.

Teacher Roles and Responsibilities, Explanation of

The primary role of Wildflower Open Classroom teachers is to collaborate with students and parents to create a rich learning environment that supports and enhances students' interest in learning. Teachers and parents collaborate with each other to make program decisions, solve problems and develop policies that are consistent with the WOC vision for education. Teachers are responsible for teaching all requirements in the state core curriculum and for carrying the mission of WOC.

Wildflower Open Classroom Teachers:

- support the philosophy of the Open Classroom
- are the classroom leaders
- promote engagement in authentic, purposeful learning
- develop and oversee the curriculum for his/her classroom, ensuring that it is consistent with WOC goals, state standards, and the individual needs of the children in the classroom
- lead students to come together, form a community, share decision-making, and ask questions
- empower students to take the initiative, think for themselves, and assume responsibility for their own learning
- encourages dialogue for the purpose of understanding and constructing meaning
- engage in discussions with students regarding the curriculum
- engage learners in evaluating aspects of classroom life
- celebrate individual and classroom successes
- choose to think, act, and speak positively
- follow through and keep commitments
- act as a guide for other learners through discussion of learning and structure in the classroom, by modeling effective strategies and by providing learning experiences in which all learners of the community participate
- recognize and uses teachable moments
- reframe mistake making
- invite responsible choice-making
- focus on learner self evaluation
- value and encourages risk-taking
- are themselves learners who foster learning with and from peers
- help learners set realistic goals
- support and guide parent co-ops

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Program Evaluation and Program Improvement Plan

Wildflower Open Classroom evaluates its program every year. Teachers, parents, and students are asked to reflect on ways WOC could be improved. Instruments used to facilitate this process may include:

- student surveys
- parent surveys
- staff and teacher surveys
- teacher self-study materials
- test scores
- periodic review by independent evaluators

Every year, information collected by these means are used to develop a plan for program improvement (also called a strategic plan). The final document will be approved by WOC Board of Directors and presented to the members of Wildflower Open Classroom community and serves as a guide for on-going program improvement.

Volunteer/Parent Roles, Responsibilities, Accountability, and Training

Parents at WOC are required to volunteer a minimum of 75 hours per year (a parent volunteer hours waiver will be available). Parents of WOC students may be involved in the program in four ways: attendance at monthly Wildflower Community Council ("WCC") meetings, periodic classroom/grade level gatherings, "co-oping" in the classroom, and participation on a WCC committee.

Attendance at Monthly Wildflower Community Council Meetings

Parents are encouraged to attend monthly WCC meetings. General business will often take place at the WCC meeting, including information from the Board of Directors, discussions about proposals, reminders of upcoming events, committee reports and activities, etc. The WCC meetings provide an opportunity for parents to get to know the teachers and other parents and to develop a deeper understanding of the WOC program. Another purpose of these meetings is to give parents an opportunity to learn about and discuss policies, procedures, and curriculum. Part of each monthly WCC meeting will be devoted to review, seeking feedback from parents about these matters. Concerns and suggestions raised in the monthly WCC meetings are brought to the WOC Board of Directors for consideration. Each classroom has a parent representative assigned to attend, provide information, ask questions and act as general classroom liaison. All parents are expected to attend three mandatory Wildflower Community Council meetings during the year.

Participation at Periodic Classroom/Grade Level Community Gatherings

Parents have the opportunity to participate in parent centered classroom/grade level community gatherings. Depending on workload issues these gatherings will occur periodically. They are coordinated by the classroom/ grade level teacher(s) and a few parents to create an inviting forum for parents to hear about classroom activities/ events, curriculum, classroom needs and in general get to know each other and their classroom/ grade level community. These are informal forum with food and music.

Co-oping

Parents in Wildflower Open Classroom can also participate in the classroom. This is referred to as "co-oping", and the parents are referred to as "co-ops". In the lower grades at WOC, co-ops have traditionally worked in the classroom, under the direction of the classroom teacher.

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Generally “co-op” in the classroom each week, or participate on staff school committees, or attend monthly classroom/ grade level meetings. This allows parents to see for themselves how the curriculum is working for their students. This level of involvement in turn fosters parental involvement in curriculum matters. Parent participation provides important resources to the Charter School. It also keeps the parents informed about their child’s education. We have also found that elementary aged children thrive on having a parent or other adult they know in the classroom helping them and their friends.

Parents who experience special hardships in fulfilling/ participating in the described co-oping/ parent involvement options can work with their classroom teacher or the Wildflower Community Council to find other positive ways for the parent(s) to be involved in the Charter School and their child’s education.

Participation in Wildflower Open Classroom Committees

Parents participate on standing Wildflower Open Classroom’s WCC committees or perform a specified task(s) that supports the program. The time requirement for committees and tasks vary. Some parents serve on a committee for an entire year while others choose to participate in two tasks.

Parent/ Volunteer Training

While most Wildflower Open Classroom parents are not trained as professional teachers, they are integrally involved in the curriculum and they do interact regularly with students. Therefore, it is necessary that parents have training opportunities available to them.

WOC parents and faculty advisors provide more concentrated training for WOC parents in their first year at WOC. After that, on-going training is organized by the WCC Parent Education committee. In addition to the parent training that has been traditionally provided at WOC, we arrange for parents to receive training on the needs of young adolescents, the unique curriculum provided in the upper grades, and how to best carry out the different co-oping roles in the upper grades (e.g., effective ways to serve on a graduation committee).

As a vital part of the Open Classroom philosophy, parent’s participation as instructional partners in the program and their support of the program’s philosophy are critical. Wildflower Community Council provides support for academic programs by organizing volunteer and service activities. These activities should focus on fostering community spirit, facilitating the transition of new families into the Charter School, promoting the Charter School in the larger community, and fundraising.

Communication with parents of their opportunities for involvement

Communication with parents regarding their opportunities for involvement is extensive and multi-layered. Following are descriptions of some of the more significant methods:

- The application process itself begins a family’s orientation. Tours, evaluations, and agreements assure that parents understand their opportunities for involvement and alternatives available to them. If parents are not able to volunteer or co-op weekly or for a long period of time alternatives are arranged for that particular family.
- In school year 2012-2013 the Wildflower Open Classroom Handbook will be developed and provided to parents near the beginning of the school year and annually each subsequent school year. The handbook outlines the general expectations and opportunities for parents to participate in school governance and committees. The handbook includes a section entitled “Being Heard and Getting Involved at Wildflower Open Classroom”.

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- New family orientation meetings are given for each new family welcomed to Wildflower Open Classroom. These orientations include information about program policies, co-oping, committees, and other opportunities to participate.
- Weekly kid faxes/logs – papers sent home with students weekly (e.g., Mondays or Fridays) – provide information about upcoming activities, including meetings and committee work.
- Bulletin boards at WOC provide some of the same information that is in the kid faxes/logs.
- E-mail discussion groups provide some of the same information that is in the kid faxes/logs. Web pages and discussion group archives also provide information.
- The Wildflower Open Classroom e-Newsletter is provided to parents electronically or by paper. The newsletter is distributed weekly; the newsletter contains information about WOC, including Board of Director activities, upcoming events, and examples of WOC's core values.
- Regular parent meetings allow for discussion of this information.
- Phone trees may be used when information must be shared quickly.
- Whole school email/ phone directory (by permission of parent/ guardian).

Parent Complaints: procedures for receiving and responding to parent complaints

Wildflower Open Classroom's problem solving procedure (i.e., Concern & Conflict Resolution Process) will be outlined in the WOC Handbook provided to each family at the beginning of the school year. The Concern & Conflict Resolution Process gives concerned parents a number of options for addressing any dissatisfaction. The Process suggests taking the particular steps in a certain order, but also allows parents to go directly to the director or a mutually agreed teacher when problem solving.

In addition, comments about any concerns that parents have are actively sought during parent meetings. Classroom community support representatives discuss any matters that arise in that context and determine how to take action or, for larger issues, bring the matter to the Board of Directors. Any parent may at any time make a proposal for changes to policies that will be considered by the Board of Directors.

Finally, parents are urged to bring any concerns, including concerns about personnel and legal matters, only to the Director if there is privacy interests involved.

Parents will be given a Wildflower Open Classroom Handbook, which will be reviewed and updated annually. This handbook outlines the role of parents at Wildflower Open Classroom and encourages the families to take in the educational process as it relates to assisting the Charter School, helping their student(s) with homework, attending parent meetings, and assisting in the fundraising activities of the Charter School. Sensitive to the busy schedules of parents, staff members and the Board of Directors/ Wildflower Community Council will continually explore ways that all parents can contribute to the program.

Summary

Wildflower Open Classroom promotes a parent participation in the program. Parents are strongly encouraged to dedicate at least two hours per week per child per family of participation to benefit the Charter School. WOC has developed an on-going list of extensive participation opportunities for parents, conducts parent orientation meetings yearly and as needed, and offers extra-curricular activities for both student and parent/family participation.

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Attendance

Wildflower Open Classroom Charter School Academic Calendar for School Year 2012-2013:

See Appendix C - Number of days in the school year will be 180.

Instructional minutes for:

- K = 36,000 minutes per year.
- 1-3 = 50,400 minutes per year.
- 4-6 = 54,000 minutes per year.
- 7-8 = 54,000 minutes per year.

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II. Measurable Student Outcomes and Other Uses of Data

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. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(B).

Wildflower Open Classroom meets all statewide standards and conduct pupil assessments required pursuant to Education Code §60605 and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or pupil assessments applicable to pupils in non-charter public schools.

The WOC teaching staff has developed specific grade level benchmarks that support the Charter School's performance outcomes. These are based on the California/National Standards.

We acknowledge that exit outcomes and performance goals described below may need to be modified over time. We affirm that "benchmark" skills, specific classroom-level skills, and school-wide performance goals (including projected attendance levels, retention rate, etc.) were developed during the planning year and will be reviewed on a regular basis. School-wide curriculum materials are selected by a collaboration of the staff and may differ from the district adopted curriculum.

To stay consistent with our goal of educating the whole child, WOC strives to create the following measurable student outcomes using formative and summative assessments that are age/grade/and developmentally appropriate:

1. Students will exhibit effective communication through listening, speaking, reading and writing.
2. Students will exhibit effective communication through reading and writing.
3. Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills.
4. Students will demonstrate problem-solving skills.
5. Students will demonstrate mathematical computation.
6. Students will demonstrate their ability to define problems, hypothesize, design and carry out an investigation.
7. Students will gain cultural understanding, democratic values, and social responsibility.
8. Students will contribute solutions to community and worldwide issues.
9. Students will exhibit initiative and confidence as self-directed learners.
10. Students will gain strong presentation skills.
11. Students will participate in civic service activities.
12. Students will gain understanding of the local and global environmental issues.
13. Students will develop their artistic creativity and an appreciation and enjoyment of the performing arts.
14. Students will understand the importance of physical exercise, fitness, nutrition, health, eating habits and positive life choices for physician and mental well-being.

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15. Students will apply effective communication and problem solving skills to work collaboratively and cooperatively in group and community settings.
16. Students will have attendance rates equal to or greater than district average.
17. Before graduation, 85% of middle school students will develop and deliver a public speaking presentation.
18. Student expulsion rate will be below the average for the district.
19. 95% of Middle School Students will participate in service learning projects before graduation.
20. WOC will meet or exceed its API growth target annually.
21. WOC will meet AYP criteria annually.
22. WOC will increase the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced on the CST annually.

In addition to becoming self-motivated lifelong learners, Wildflower Open Classroom students are given the opportunity to develop the following skills:

- Problem solving
- Independent & critical thinking
- Decision making
- Use conflict resolution
- Cooperative working
- Peacemaking
- Academic responsibility
- Resourcefulness
- Moral reflection
- Environmental responsibility
- Social interaction
- Articulation
- Time management
- Life skills (see below)

In addition, we strive to instill in our students the personal qualities of

- Initiative
- Caring
- Confidence
- Teamwork
- Motivation
- Common Sense
- Effort
- Focus
- Responsibility
- Perseverance

Goals of the program are:

1. To create a child-centered, parent-supported and teacher-directed public school that emphasizes instruction that builds on students' interests in a collaborative way, where some of the learning activities are planned by children and parents under the guidance of the teacher. Additionally, parents provide enhancement activities to support a teacher-directed, child-centered curriculum.
2. To educate the whole child, addressing individual students' academic, social, emotional, creative, cognitive and physical growth and development.
3. To provide education about local and global environments and sustainability and be involved in on and off campus projects.
4. The WOC learning environment is constructed to foster students in becoming:

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- complex thinkers and problem solvers
- effective communicators
- cooperative group participants and leaders
- contributors to the community
- quality workers and producers
- self-directed learners

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III. Assessment of Measurable Pupil Outcomes

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

As part of our philosophy, we teach the “whole child,” which includes their cognitive, social, emotional, physical and creative development. Our assessments are used to measure individual student progress within those five developmental areas. Wildflower Open Classroom teaching staff and administration develop specific grade level benchmarks that support the charter’s performance outcomes. These are based on the California/National Standards. In addition to State and Federal mandated testing, we use the following to assess student progress:

Standardized Testing:

- Wildflower Open Classroom complies with current state laws regarding the administration of standardized tests (e.g., STAR) required by the California State Department of Education. The Charter School uses the results of these tests on an annual basis to aid in informing instructional practices in the context of the Charter School’s curriculum and expected student outcomes (e.g., review internally to implement strategies to address changes needed).
- Teachers review test results to identify areas of concern and work to create remedies to address those areas of concern during their annual staff development time.
- In combination with authentic assessments, narrative evaluations, and portfolios, teachers develop specific grade level benchmarks.

Wildflower Open Classroom assessments and inventories

- Language:
 - Basic Word, Reading and Spelling Inventories
 - Writing Prompt with rubrics for content and conventions
 - Reading Comprehension Assessment
 - Developmental Reading Assessment for Early Readers
- Math:
 - Basic Skills Inventory
 - Math Strand Assessments
 - Math Project
- Additional:
 - Project based assessments, using rubrics
 - Project presentations
 - Parent, teacher, student conferences
 - Teacher observations
 - Anecdotal records (complete or in-progress “commitments”)
 - Student Portfolios
 - Student self-evaluation

Wildflower Open Classroom assessments come in the form of written or oral tests/quizzes, and projects aligned to State Standards and are reflective of the work the students have learned in class. The assessments are administered regularly to chart students’ mastery of core content area knowledge and skills on a continuum.

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Portfolio of student work

- Student self-evaluation and checklists
- Parent, teacher, student conferences
- e-mail journals/ logs

Written Qualitative Feedback (Primary and Intermediate)

- Teacher narratives:
 - Formative (beginning of unit/ year)
 - Summative (end of the unit/ year)
 - Developmental and academic continuum

As a small school where teachers know their students well, Wildflower Open Classroom uses regular written and oral feedback from teachers to monitor student progress. This type of feedback, which is personalized for each student, can capture aspects of learning not covered in standard assessment tools and can provide readily actionable ways to improve student performance.

WOC favors authentic assessment that is embedded in the regular curriculum which is just as valuable as traditional forms of assessment that focus on end products and quantitative scores or rankings. Most assessment consists of qualitative narratives that give the child and parent detailed feedback on his/her strengths and areas in need of improvement. These narratives, along with samples of the child's work, are organized in comprehensive, yearly portfolios. Assessments are on-going, with regular opportunities for students to receive feedback and encouragement.

Communication with parents regarding student progress is an on-going process, both formal and informal. Daily and weekly communication logs, newsletters, email and family conferences are used to accomplish communication. Formal evaluations, both narrative and progress-based are provided to families as well. This includes fall conferences, followed by a mid-year teacher evaluation, ending with a student-led meeting with families and teachers.

Assessment information is shared with parents and students at semi-annual Parent/Teacher/Kid conferences. Information about student progress is also shared in the following ways:

- Monthly parent meetings (classroom/ grade level);
- Individual conferences as requested by teachers and/or parents; and
- Parent presence in the classroom.

Students skill and mastery of both core and non-core subject areas are evaluated. Student portfolios are criterion-referenced against established standards. Students present their portfolios to their teacher and parents.

In addition to regular classroom assessments, seventh and eighth graders may be assigned to an "advisor"—an adult whose primary responsibility is to work closely with the classroom teacher in order to guide the child's overall learning plan, provide specific support for the child's graduation project, and provides feedback to the child on his/her progress in both regular classroom activities and the graduation project.

If assessments identify needs that apply to the whole classroom, the teacher addresses those needs. If assessments identify needs that apply to more than an individual classroom, the faculty as a whole is responsible for identifying and addressing those needs.

A common assessment to be administered at Wildflower Open Classroom is the California Standards Test (i.e., STAR testing) in the second to eighth grades.

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English Learners

All students at Wildflower Open Classroom are expected, to the fullest extent of their abilities, to achieve mastery of student outcomes outlined in Element 2 as well as achieve personal learning goals identified by themselves and their teachers. This applies to both the English Learner (EL) and academically struggling students.

For ELs and academically struggling students, our strategy involves four key components:

1. providing students with programs that are tailored to meet their linguistic and academic needs
2. providing students with fair assessment
3. providing students with quality instruction and adequate resources
4. involving each student's parents and communities in their education

The California English Language Development Test (CELDT) is given as an initial assessment to newly enrolled students whose primary language is not English and as an annual assessment to English learners enrolled in kindergarten through grade eight at WOC.

The CELDT has three purposes:

- To identify students who are limited English proficient
- To determine the level of English language proficiency of students who are limited English proficient
- To assess the progress of limited English proficient students in acquiring the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English

English Learners receive instruction utilizing the techniques of phonics, sheltered English, cooperative learning groups, and experiential activities. Wildflower Open Classroom serves English Learners at the school site through a sheltered English immersion program. Students are enrolled in an English-speaking classroom with a BCLAD or CLAD credentialed, highly qualified teacher. Teachers, paraeducators, parent volunteers, or other students provide primary language support. WOC, where possible, will hire personnel and recruit bilingual community support and services to meet the primary language needs of English Learners. WOC complies with all applicable federal laws in regard to services and education of EL students. The Charter School develops, implements, and maintains policies and procedures for the provision of services to English Learners in accordance with guidelines published by the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education.

Many of the innovative features of WOC curriculum and instruction provide enriched learning opportunities for EL students. Frequent social interactions in small group settings, peer collaboration and peer tutoring, oral expression during performances, reports, songs and presentations, and multi-sensory teaching methods and learning activities support English Language Development and Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English.

Beyond the classroom, we provide effective support for ELs and academically struggling students by engaging students in their communities and the world around them. In addition, by engaging their parents and families in their education, we strive to build a sense of mutuality and trust that allows WOC teachers and staff to develop an understanding of family and community practices.

Plan for Students who are Academically Low Achieving

Low achieving students are identified and continually assessed using some or all of the following:

- spelling inventories (formative, summative and cumulative)
- developmental reading assessment (formative, summative and cumulative)
- math assessments (formative, summative and cumulative)
- writing samples with grade level rubrics
- student portfolios (both skill and project based)
- teacher interviews

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If WOC believes a student needs to be retained, based on test scores, teacher observations and/or parental concerns, we will hold a Student Study Team meeting. If the team agrees that this is in the best interest of the child, then all measures will be taken to ensure that this will be a positive experience for the student. These measures include: holding a meeting with the team and the student; creating an accepting environment in the class; creating many opportunities for success for the student; and ensuring that the student receives the necessary assistance and support to ensure future promotion. Specific times will be allocated to provide the opportunity for teachers to discuss and share concerns related to student progress before students matriculate to the next grade.

Evaluation of School Performance

Wildflower Open Classroom also uses a variety of statistical data to evaluate school performance. These data include:

- Academic Performance Index (API): API scores, both relative and absolute, can provide a useful snapshot of school performance.
- Average Daily Attendance: WOC uses ADA as a general benchmark of how well the Charter School is engaging its students and community.
- Discipline Report: One indicator of the students' personal development is the overall disciplinary report which records student misbehavior from tardiness to suspension and expulsion. School-wide trends are duly noted and acted upon.

Measurement of Pupil Outcomes

Wildflower Open Classroom meets measurable school-wide performance goals which include an API score comparable to other in district schools.

Outcome	Ongoing Measurement	Exit Assessment
1. Students will exhibit effective communication through listening, speaking, reading and writing.	Teacher Observations Student Projects Authentic Assessments Written Qualitative Feedback	Narrative evaluation Portfolio
2. Students will exhibit effective communication through reading and writing.	Teacher Observations Student Projects Authentic Assessments Written Qualitative Feedback Standardized Testing	Narrative evaluation Portfolio Test results
3. Students will demonstrate complex thinking skills.	Teacher Designed Assessments Teacher Observations Authentic Assessments Student Projects Written Qualitative Feedback	Narrative evaluation Portfolio
4. Students will demonstrate problem-solving.	Teacher Observations Student Projects Authentic Assessments Written Qualitative Feedback Standardized Testing	Narrative evaluation Portfolio Test results
5. Students will demonstrate mathematical computation.	Teacher Observations Student Projects Authentic Assessments Standardized Testing	Narrative evaluation Portfolio Test results

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Outcome	Ongoing Measurement	Exit Assessment
6. Students will demonstrate their ability to define problems, hypothesize, design and carry out an investigation.	Teacher Designed Assessments Teacher Observations Authentic Assessments Student Projects Written Qualitative Feedback	Narrative evaluation Portfolio Test results (in class quizzes)
7. Students will gain cultural understanding, democratic values, and social responsibility.	Teacher Designed Rubric Teacher Observations Student Participation Written Qualitative Feedback	Narrative evaluation Portfolio
8. Students will contribute solutions to community and worldwide issues.	Teacher Designed Rubric Teacher Observations Student Portfolios Verbal and/or Written Qualitative Feedback	Narrative evaluation Portfolio
9. Students will exhibit initiative and confidence as self-directed learners.	Teacher Observations Student Portfolios Verbal and/or Written Qualitative Feedback	Narrative evaluation Portfolio
10. Students will gain strong presentation skills.	Teacher Designed Rubric Teacher Observations Student Projects Verbal and/or Written Qualitative Feedback Peer Feedback	Narrative evaluation Portfolio
11. Students will participate in civic service activities.	Teacher Observations Written Qualitative Feedback Student Service Project Logs	Narrative evaluation Portfolio
12. Students will gain understanding of the local and global environmental issues.	Teacher Observations Oral and Written Qualitative Feedback Teacher Designed Assessments Student Self-Evaluation	Narrative evaluation Portfolio
13. Students will develop their artistic creativity and an appreciation and enjoyment of the performing arts.	Teacher Observations Student Portfolios Written Qualitative Feedback Student Self-Evaluation	Narrative evaluation Portfolio
14. Students will understand the importance of physical exercise, fitness, nutrition, health, eating habits and positive life choices for physician and mental well being.	Teacher Observation Student Self-Evaluation	Narrative evaluation Portfolio

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Outcome	Ongoing Measurement	Exit Assessment
15. Students will apply effective communication and problem solving skills to work collaboratively and cooperatively in group and community settings.	Teacher Observation Student Self-Evaluation Peer Observation and Qualitative Feedback	Narrative evaluation Portfolio
16. Students will have attendance rates equal to or great than district average.	School Attendance Records	School and District Attendance Records
17. Before graduation, 85% of middle school students will develop and deliver a public speaking presentation.	Teacher Observation Student Portfolio	Completed Student Portfolio Teacher Rubric on oral presentation
18. Student expulsion rate will be below the average for the district.	School Records	School and District Records
19. 95% of Middle School Students will participate in service learning projects before graduation.	Teacher Observation Student Portfolio	Completed Student Portfolio Teacher Rubric
20. WOC will meet or exceed its API growth target annually.	API	
21. WOC will meet AYP criteria annually.	AYP	
22. WOC will increase the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced on the CST annually.	CST	

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IV. Legal Issues, Governance and Parental Involvement

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

The Charter School will be a directly funded independent charter school and will be operated as a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation, pursuant to California law upon approval of this charter.

The Charter School will 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 as 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.

Wildflower Open Classroom pays CUSD for actual costs of supervisory oversight up to 1% of the Charter school's revenue as defined by Education Code 47613 (f), unless the District provides a substantially rent free facility to the Charter school in which case the District shall be entitled to collect actual costs of supervisory oversight up to 3% of the Charter school's revenue as defined by Education Code 47613 (f).

Attached, as Appendix E, please find the Charter School Articles of Incorporation, Corporate Bylaws, and Conflicts Code.

Governance

The Charter School is governed by the Wildflower Open Classroom Board of Directors ("Board" or "Board of Directors") in accordance with its adopted corporate bylaws, which shall be consistent with the terms of this charter.

Wildflower Open Classroom has establish itself as a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization.

Chico Unified School District has oversight and supervisory responsibilities only as required by law, and is allowed to inspect or observe any part of Wildflower Open Classroom school at any time. WOC School Administration and Faculty perform the day-to-day work of WOC. The Board of Directors has the final responsibility and is accountable for Wildflower Open Classroom and its operations.

Wildflower Open Classroom may separately purchase financial and other administrative services from third party, outside agencies. The Board of Directors serves as the fiscal agent for Wildflower Open Classroom.

Board of Directors

A Board comprised of Directors and Officers chosen in accordance with the Wildflower Open Classroom bylaws governs the Charter School. The bylaws determine the number of Directors and Officers serving, the procedure for adding future Directors to the Board, the method of replacing Board members, and the length of their terms. All Directors exclude themselves from promoting or participating in any issue that would be an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

As the WOC bylaws state, the number of Directors serving, shall be no less than 5 and no more than 7. The bylaws also provide the procedure for adding future Directors to the Board, the method of replacing Board members, and the length of their terms.

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The WOC Election Committee shall be responsible for coordinating all school community elections. The Wildflower Community Council (WCC) Chairperson will oversee the election committee. At a minimum, the Election Committee shall include one Board member whose term is not expiring, one teacher, and one parent. For school community elected seats, each election shall: (a) be preceded by public announcements over a two to four week period prior to the election, (b) those interested shall submit a letter of interest and complete nominating documents, (c) have the nominating documents maintained in a public place for viewing by school community members, (d) include a public forum for the school community to meet candidates after the nominating period is closed and prior to the election, and (e) utilize an instant runoff voting system. Parents may then vote for their preferred candidate.

The Board of Directors is the entity which is held accountable for the operation of the Charter School. The Board of Directors shall develop written policies governing the Charter School that promote the successful and efficient functioning of the Charter School. The Board, on a continuous basis, evaluates the results achieved through its policies.

The members of the Board of Directors include individuals with expertise or related experience in one or more of the following: finance, curriculum, marketing and public relations, facilities related issues, business management, communication, and team building.

Board of Directors' function includes:

- Oversight that the Charter School's program and operation are faithful to the terms of its charter and its mission statement.
- Ensuring that the Charter School's academic program is successful.
- Ensuring that the Charter School is a viable, financially solvent organization equipped with a competent staff.
- All members participate in and direct periodic communications between the district and the Charter School administration as needed
- Maintaining a professional conduct in all Board of Director functions
- Representing Wildflower Open Classroom in a positive and professional manner
- Defining the Charter School's mission, strategy and adopting policies that further clarify and assist in maintaining the mission.
- Hiring the Charter School Administrator/ Director and evaluating performance yearly.
- Planning and budgeting to meet the Charter School's goals.
- Evaluating the Charter School's effectiveness by monitoring staff, parent and student perspectives.
- Appointing people to necessary committees; such as Budget /Finance, Facility, Conflict/Resolution.
- Developing and approving short and long term goals.
- Being responsible for approving the hiring and termination of all staff.
- Insuring that School Academic Report Card is prepared annually.
- Actively being engaged in the Charter School community and school events
- Being involved in the Charter School's growth, development and direction

The Board of Directors is responsible for all future modifications to the Charter School's Charter. Any such modifications require a majority vote of the Board. CUSD must approve all material revisions to the charter. The Board notifies CUSD in a timely manner of all Board of Director meetings and agendas.

All meetings are conducted in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act (Chapter 9, commencing with Section 54950, of Division 2 of Title 5 of the California Government Code). Wildflower Open Classroom also complies with the Public Records Act and its Conflict of Interest Code.

The Board of Directors evaluates all Wildflower Open Classroom programs annually. Evaluations determine the effectiveness of the programs and provide direction for improvements.

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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.

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 the Charter School 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 Board of Directors shall participate regularly in training regarding issues such as the Brown Act, fund raising strategies, board dynamics, Open Classroom pedagogy, school finance, and conflicts of interest rules.

School Administration

The administration of the Charter School includes the following roles:

- Director
- Office staff

The Director shall report directly to the Board of Directors. Some of the Director's duties are:

- Establish procedures to carry out the policies adopted by the Board of Directors.
- Propose to the board policies for discussion and possible adoption by the Board of Directors.
- Compile a hiring committee and oversee the hiring of all faculty and support employees subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.
- Supervise and evaluate annually all employees of the Charter School; included in evaluation would be employee's value to WOC.
- Be the direct liaison between Wildflower Open Classroom and CUSD, and between WOC and the community.
- Assist and coordinate with faculty ongoing student assessment and evaluation tools.
- Annually prepare and submit a budget to the Board of Directors.
- Maintain appropriate fiscal and program records necessary for annual audits.

Faculty

The classroom teachers, who constitute the faculty, provide the day-to-day teaching of the children and, as a group are the primary resources of WOC. The entire faculty, including specialty teachers and classified paraprofessionals shall report to the Charter School Director.

Some of the duties of the Faculty are:

- The Faculty, working with the Director, are responsible for the curriculum; its development and implementation
- The Faculty, working with the Director, assists and coordinates ongoing student assessment and evaluation tools.
- The Faculty works with parents in the creation and development of special activities of the Charter School.

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Parents

Parents at Wildflower Open Classroom play a significant role in governing the Charter School. Some of the ways that parents may participate in the governance of the Charter School include:

- Voting for the Board of Directors
- Membership on the Board of Directors
- Membership in the Wildflower Community Council
- Participation in Town Hall meetings
- Participation in conflict resolution processes

Participation in Wildflower Open Classroom Committees:

Parents with a particular interest in becoming involved in WOC's curriculum and instructional program are invited to participate in several WCC committees.

Parents are also invited and encouraged to attend Wildflower Open Classroom Board of Directors meetings, where policies, procedures, curriculum and instruction is regularly discussed.

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V. Employee Qualifications

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

Qualifications for Prospective Employees

Wildflower Open Classroom Charter School has recruited and hired professional, effective, and qualified personnel to serve in administrative, instructional, instructional support, and non-instructional support capacities. Employees meet specific qualifications for employment as outlined in their job descriptions. These documents shall be maintained on file at Wildflower Open Classroom and shall be subject to inspection by the District. All requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law are met, including but not limited to credentials, as necessary.

In addition to the requirements listed above, successful applicants must possess the following qualities:

- Leadership and management abilities
- A commitment to students and to learning
- A strong knowledge of their subject matter
- The ability to be reflective in their practice
- The ability and desire to collaborate with staff, parents, and community partners, and students as a part of a team
- Flexibility and resourcefulness
- A strong commitment to the Wildflower Open Classroom program and its philosophy, as outlined in section I
- A willingness and ability to collaborate and integrate across disciplines
- Ongoing engagement in professional growth and development
- A willingness to participate in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities such as serving as an advisor to a student club, traveling with students to student leadership organization conferences, etc
- The ability to creatively and effectively facilitate student learning

All applicants are paper-screened, pass a criminal background check in accordance with the Charter Schools Act, and then are interviewed by a committee that is comprised of a cross-section of stakeholders (which includes teachers, students, and parents) as well as the Director. The candidates also need to demonstrate a lesson as a part of the interview process.

All staff maintains a current Live Scan through the Department of Justice prior to and during the entire period of employment at Wildflower Open Classroom. Any staff supervising children on- or off-campus also maintains current Child First Aid/CPR certification and TB testing. All staff at Wildflower Open Classroom agrees to adhere to maintaining a drug, alcohol, and smoke- free work place.

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Key Positions and Additional Qualifications

Instructor Qualifications

Teachers

Wildflower Open Classroom School shall adhere to CA Education Code Section 47605(l), and the applicable provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act in the hiring of all Faculty for the Charter School. Teachers for all classes must hold appropriate California teaching certificates (valid authorization from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (“CCTC”) to serve as a California Credentialed teacher), permits, or other documents equivalent to that which district teachers are required to hold pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(l). All teachers must be highly qualified and demonstrate core academic subject matter competence.

Wildflower Open Classroom has a hiring process that ensures all teachers are properly credentialed with emphasis placed on teachers being NCLB “highly qualified” and CLAD certified Wildflower Open Classroom focuses on competency within the standards for the teaching profession as well as assurance for implementation of the Wildflower Open Classroom Teaching practices.

Wildflower Open Classroom provides ongoing training to its teachers to ensure full understanding and compliance of NCLB regulations and timetables as well as developments in the Wildflower Open Classroom philosophy as it applies to pedagogy. Because we strive to ensure Wildflower Open Classroom draws a diverse student body, including English learners, teachers will have English learner authorization as defined in Assembly Bill (AB) 1871 (Ch. 660, Stats. 2008) as required. For an elementary school, this entails a combination of Commission-approved California Teacher of English Learner (CTEL) program coursework with passing scores on the CTEL examination subtest(s).

Wildflower Open Classroom School may also employ non-certificated instructional staff in any case where a prospective staff member has an appropriate mix of subject matter expertise, professional experience, and the demonstrated capacity to work successfully in an instructional capacity in non-core, non-college preparatory courses and activities. All staff must be highly qualified.

Teaching Aides

In order to maintain quality in the classroom and ensure that each student is striving and maintaining his or her goals Wildflower Open Classroom plans to hire teaching aides as needed to assist classroom instructors. The Teaching Aides will be held to similar high qualifications as all staff, and will be required to meet these minimum qualifications:

- Candidate must hold a high school diploma;
- Candidate will have any additional qualifications that meet the requirement of relevant federal and state regulations associated with funding received by the Charter School.

Specialty Teachers

The special format of Wildflower Open Classroom, with multi-age classrooms, allows for the flexibility of the inclusion of non-core, non-college preparatory special programs as approved by the Board of Directors. These additional programs can be for enrichment, improvement, or other pedagogical reasons. Teaching of these additional programs are undertaken by ‘Specialty Teachers’ on an as-needed basis. Specialty Teachers are required to maintain a current Live Scan through the Department of Justice prior to and during the entire period of employment at Wildflower Open Classroom, current Child First Aid/CPR certification and TB testing. The non-core, non-college preparatory teaching positions may be filled by non-certified teachers as allowed by law. Qualifications are necessarily broad, however, the following minimum qualifications hold for Specialty Teacher positions:

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- The candidate shall hold a minimum Bachelors degree from an accredited institution and prior teaching experience of elementary-aged children.
- The candidate should also have Wildflower Open Classroom training in his/her subject area.
- The candidate also shall also be highly qualified under the No Child Left Behind Act.

For Visual and Performing Arts, the candidate should possess an established history of excellence in both the mediums and in teaching.

Better than average recommendations from student teaching supervisors or other professionals who have observed the personal characteristics, scholastic attainment, and classroom performance of the teacher.

Director Qualifications

The Director's qualifications will include the following knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Comprehensive educational vision that is consistent with the Wildflower Open Classroom's mission and educational program
- Understanding of the "Open Classroom" philosophy and pedagogical approach
- Passion for educating K-8 students
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Ability to work effectively and build consensus with students, teachers, parents, community members, and Board of Directors
- Knowledge of school management and teacher evaluation
- Strong, demonstrable leadership skills in educational and administrative areas
- Knowledge of curriculum development and program design

The Administrator's qualifications will include the following education and experience:

- Bachelor's Degree or equivalent education and/or experience
- Experience in program or school administration preferred
- Experience in serving similar student populations preferred.

The Director candidate must possess a minimum of a Bachelors of Arts or Science degree from an accredited institution, and demonstrate an understanding of both the Open Classroom Philosophy and the California Educational Code. It is the role of the Board of Directors to design and implement a fair, equitable, and non-discriminatory evaluation process. Preference will be given to candidates with prior Open Classroom administration training and prior administrative experience. While it is not necessary to be credentialed as per California Education Code, candidates with administrative credentials will be given preference over other comparably qualified applicants. Bilingual (English/Spanish) is preferred but not required.

Office Manager

This position manages the operation of the Charter School's school central office. The position serves as secretary to the Director and other assigned administrators, supervises clerical staff and provides various support services for students, parents, staff, and the public. The office manager promotes positive public relations for the charter school. Candidate must have good secretarial and communication skills, and an understanding of general bookkeeping principles both attendance and financial. Bilingual (English/Spanish) and experience as an office manager is preferred but not required.

Yard Duty Staff

This position works under the supervision of the Director and Teachers. The position serves as a safety person on the campus when students are not in class. This position is required to have a background in working with children and preference will be given to candidates with training in conflict management. Finger printing and background check will be required.

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Other Staff

Other Wildflower Open Classroom staff shall have appropriate qualifications based upon the nature of the job they are performing at the Charter School. These qualifications shall be established by the Charter School prior to recruitment.

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VI. Health and Safety Procedures

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

In order to provide safety for all students and staff, WOC has adopted and implemented health and safety procedures and risk management policies in consultation with its insurance carriers and risk management experts. As such policies are subject to regular updating and amending based on many factors, including, but not limited to, judicial rulings, changes to the Education Code or other laws, and requirements of our insurance carrier, these policies may often be updated.

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

Procedures for Background Checks

Employees and contractors of WOC are required to submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Sections 44237 and 45125.1. New employees must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice and receive a clear criminal record summary. Prior to commencing employment, WOC Director monitors compliance with this policy. The Board of Directors Chair will monitor the fingerprinting and background clearance of the Director. Volunteers (including mentors) who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of an employee will be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of an employee.

Role of Staff as Mandated Child Abuse Reporters

All employees are mandated child abuse reporters and follow all applicable reporting laws.

TB Testing

WOC follows the requirement of Education Code Section 49406 in requiring tuberculosis testing of all employees.

Immunizations

WOC adheres to all laws related to legally required immunizations for entering students pursuant to Health and Safety Code Sections 120325-120375, and Title 17, California Code of Regulations Sections 6000-6075. All rising 7th grade students must be immunized with a pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine booster.

CPR/First Aid Training

All employees are CPR/First Aid trained before the end of their first year of employment.

Medication in School

WOC adheres to Education Code Section 49423 regarding administration of medication in school.

Vision/Hearing/Scoliosis

WOC adheres to Education Code Section 49450, et seq., as applicable to the grade levels served by the Charter School.

Oral Health Examinations

WOC requires its students to comply with all oral health examinations pursuant to Education Code Section 49452.8.

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Emergency Preparedness

WOC adheres to an Emergency Preparedness Plan drafted specifically to the needs of the school site in conjunction with law enforcement and the Fire Marshall. This plan includes, but not be limited to the following responses: fire, flood, earthquake, terrorist threats, and hostage situations. If assuming a facility that was previously used as a public school site, any existing emergency preparedness plan for the school site is used as a starting basis for updating the handbook for WOC. If the Charter School is not situated on a public school site, it will develop its own Emergency Preparedness Plan specific to the site.

Blood Borne Pathogens

WOC meets state and federal standards for dealing with blood borne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the work place. WOC has established a infectious control plan designed to protect employees and students from possible infection due to contact with blood borne viruses, including human immunodeficiency virus (“HIV”) and hepatitis B virus (“HBV”). This plan includes the annual training of staff. Whenever exposed to blood or other bodily fluids through injury or accident, staff and students will follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.

Diabetes

WOC provides an information sheet regarding type 2 diabetes to the parent or guardian of any incoming 7th grade students, should WOC offer instruction to 7th grade students, pursuant to Education Code Section 49452.7. The information sheet shall include, but shall not be limited to, all of the following:

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

Drug Free/Alcohol Free/Smoke Free Environment

WOC maintains a drug, alcohol and tobacco free workplace.

Integrated Complaint and Investigation Procedure

WOC utilizes a uniform complaint procedure to centralize all complaints and concerns coming into the Charter School. Under the direction of the Board, the Director is responsible for investigation, remediation, and follow-up on matters submitted through this procedure.

Comprehensive Sexual Harassment Policies and Procedures

WOC is committed to providing a school that is free from sexual harassment, as well as any harassment based upon such factors as race, religion, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability. WOC has policies and procedures in place to prevent and immediately remediate any concerns about sexual discrimination or harassment at WOC (including employee to employee, employee to student, student to employee, and student to student misconduct). Misconduct of this nature is very serious and is addressed in accordance with WOC’s sexual harassment policy.

School Facility Safety

WOC complies with all applicable federal environmental laws. WOC complies with Education Code Section 47610 by either utilizing facilities that are compliant with the Field Act or facilities that are compliant with the State Building Code. WOC agrees to test, or if in a district owned or leased facility, to verify, that sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms are tested annually at its facilities to ensure that they are maintained in an operable condition at all times. WOC conducts fire drills regularly. As is current practice with all schools, if WOC’s students are at some future point housed at facilities belonging to the CUSD, WOC will operate under the provisions of the School Safety Plan of the facility where it is housed. If WOC is not operating under the School Safety Plan of the facility where it is housed,

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it will implement its own school safety and disaster preparedness plan that will be based on the provisions of Education Code Section 32286(a).

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VII. Means to Achieve Racial and Ethnic Balance of the 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).

As a Kindergarten through 8th grade school, Wildflower Open Classroom serves students who are interested in learning through integrated, student-centered curriculum and innovative, activity-based instruction. WOC students are empowered to meet California content standards and reach their innate intellectual, creative, and leadership potentials.

WOC has adopted a school calendar with a minimum of 180 instructional days and will meet or exceed the instructional minutes required by the State of California. WOC will commence operation on or before September 30th of each year. WOC strives, through recruiting, to achieve a racial and ethnic balance of students that reflects the general population of the District.

WOC's outreach plan includes flyers and presentations in English and Spanish at various local organizations, preschools and agencies. WOC advertises through local newspapers, radio stations, and Spanish language media in order to draw students from communities underrepresented in our student population. WOC schedules dates, times, and locations of open houses, informational meetings, and other activities in a manner which assures, to the extent possible, that all interested families are able to attend.

WOC also includes the following elements and strategies in the outreach efforts:

- Wildflower Open Classroom works to prepare, translate and distribute fliers to places where children and their parents gather, including libraries, recreation centers, pre-schools (including Head Start), local businesses and multi-cultural centers.
- The distribution of promotional and informational materials to a broad variety of community groups and agencies that serve the various cultural, ethnic, and interest groups represented in the District.
- Ongoing interaction and relationship building with key organizations within ethnic and cultural groups for collaborative development of outreach strategies (e.g., Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Chico Hmong Advisory Council, Boys & Girls Club, Head Start, WIC, etc.).
- The development of promotional and information material that appeals to all of the various racial and ethnic groups represented in the District.
- The appropriate development of promotional and informational materials in languages other than English to appeal to limited English proficient populations.
- Wildflower Open Classroom has yearly events to target different populations with interpreters if needed.
- An enrollment process that is scheduled and adopted to include a timeline that allows for a broad-based recruiting and application process.

An open enrollment policy seeks to maintain a diversified balance among students of Wildflower Open Classroom. Any child residing within the Chico Unified School District, regardless of actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics, is equally welcome and eligible to apply for enrollment.

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VIII. Admissions Requirements

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

Wildflower Open Classroom actively recruits a diverse student population who understands and values the Charter School's mission and is committed to the Charter School's instructional and operational philosophy, as stated in Section VII above.

Admission is requested by completing and submitting an application form. The Charter School will admit all students who wish to attend WOC. If the number of students who wish to attend the Charter School exceeds WOC's capacity, attendance, except for existing pupils of the Charter School, will be determined by a public random drawing ("lottery"). A prospective applicant's parent is asked to attend a tour of Wildflower Open Classroom (if a parent cannot attend a regularly-scheduled tour, alternative arrangements will be made).

Students are placed on a waiting list based upon the order in which their name is drawn from the lottery. If a lottery is required it will be conducted after the open enrollment period.

Wildflower Open Classroom is non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. Wildflower Open Classroom does not charge tuition, and does not discriminate on the basis of any characteristic described in Education Code Section 220. The Charter School 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.

Prior to the lottery process, priority enrollment is as follows:

Kindergarten

- Siblings of existing students
- Children of teachers or founders (total not to exceed 10% of school enrollment)
- Kindergarten siblings of newly enrolled students
- CUSD Residents

1st through 8th Grade

Students from previous grades are promoted and capacity is established through enrollment and re-enrollment forms. This will determine if there are any spaces available. If capacity is exceeded by demand, the following enrollment priorities will be utilized in a lottery. If capacity is not exceeded, all students will be admitted.

- Siblings of existing students
- Children of Wildflower Open Classroom teachers and founders (total not to exceed 10% of school enrollment)
- Siblings of newly-enrolled students
- Students on the waiting list
- CUSD Residents

Wildflower Open Classroom serves kindergarten through eighth grade students. Multi-age grade configuration is determined by available facilities and enrollment. Parents who intend to re-enroll their children must notify Wildflower Open Classroom office by March of the current school year.

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IX. Annual Audit and Fiscal Issues

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).

Oversight Accountability

CUSD shall provide the necessary supervisory oversight duties as specified by the law and the WOC charter. These tasks shall be performed only for the actual costs of the function not to exceed one percent of the Charter School's revenues provided pursuant to the terms of the Charter Schools Act. The supervisory oversight services to be provided by CUSD shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The initial review, negotiations, hearing and approval of this charter contract.
- Good faith efforts to work with Wildflower Open Classroom to develop and negotiate, on an annual basis, a detailed Memorandum of understanding which outlines the respective responsibilities and relationships of CUSD and Wildflower Open Classroom.
- Good faith efforts to develop any needed additional agreements to clarify or implement this charter.
- Regular review, analysis and dialogue regarding the annual performance report of Wildflower Open Classroom.
- Monitoring of compliance with the terms of this charter and related agreements, including annual site visit.
- Good faith efforts to implement the dispute resolution and related processes described in Element 14 of this charter.
- Appointment of District contact person for charter school issues.
- Timely and good faith review of requests to renew or amend this charter as permitted under law.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(c), an authority that grants a charter to a charter school to be operated by, or as, a nonprofit public benefit corporation is not 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, including, but not limited to, those required by Section 47604.32 and subdivision (m) of Section 47605.

Financial Recordkeeping & Reporting

WOC and its Board of Directors maintain financial records of all revenues and expenditures in accordance with California School Accounting Manual (CSAM) guidelines and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Each year on or before June 30th the WOC Board of Directors will submit to CUSD an annual budget for the coming fiscal year. Additional financial reporting to CUSD will be made as defined in the MOU between WOC and CUSD. Each year on or before September 15th WOC will approve an annual statement of all receipts and expenditures for the preceding year as required by Education Code Section 42100 (b) and shall file the statement with CUSD.

Financial Audit

An annual independent financial audit of the books and records of the Charter School will be conducted as required by Education Code Sections 47605(b)(5)(I) and 47605(m). The books and records of the Charter School will be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and 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.

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

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 of each year. The Director, along with the audit committee, will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Charter School Board of Directors with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Board will submit a report to the District describing how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved to the satisfaction of the District along with an anticipated timeline for the same. 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.

Programmatic Audit

Wildflower Open Classroom compiles and provides to CUSD and WOC school community (Staff, Teachers and Parents) an annual School Accountability Report Card after data is compiled.

This report includes the following data:

- Demographic data
- School safety and climate for learning information
- Academic data
- School completion rates
- Class sizes
- Teacher and staff information
- Curriculum and instruction descriptions
- Fiscal and expenditure data
- Review of average daily attendance

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X. Pupil Suspension and Expulsions

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

Suspension/ Expulsion Procedures

This Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policy has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well being of all students at WOC. In creating this policy, Wildflower Open Classroom has reviewed Education Code Section 48900 *et seq.* which describes the non-charter schools' list of offenses and procedures to establish its list of offenses and procedures for suspensions and expulsions. The language that follows closely mirrors the language of Education Code Section 48900 *et seq.* Wildflower Open Classroom is committed to annual review of policies and procedures surrounding suspensions and expulsions and, as necessary, modification of the lists of offenses for which students are subject to suspension or expulsion.

When the policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. This policy shall serve as WOC's policy and procedures for student suspension and expulsion, and it may be amended from time to time without the need to amend the charter so long as the amendments comport with legal requirements.

WOC staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. This Policy and its Procedures will clearly describe discipline expectations, and it will be printed and distributed as part of the Student Handbook which is sent to each student at the beginning of the school year. WOC administration shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures. The notice shall state that this Policy and Procedure is available on request at the Director's office.

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

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

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

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

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A. Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students:

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

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

B. Enumerated Offences:

1. Discretionary Suspension Offenses. Students may be suspended for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

- a) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
- b) Willfully used force of violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
- c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
- d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
- e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
- f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
- g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
- h) Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a pupil.
- i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 11014.5.
- k) Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
- l) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.

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- m) Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- n) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code Sections 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code Section 243.4.
- o) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
- p) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- q) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
- r) Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property. For purposes of this section, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family's safety, or for the protection of school property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.
- s) Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- t) Caused, attempted to cause, threaten to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- u) Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- v) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act (defined as the transmission of a communication, including, but not

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limited to, a message, text, sound, or image, or a post on a social network Internet Web site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager) directed specifically toward a pupil or school personnel. "Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including acts one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- i. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
 - ii. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
 - iii. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
 - iv. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.
- w) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (1).
- x) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any knife unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Executive Director or designee's concurrence.

2. Non- Discretionary Suspension Offenses: Students must be suspended and recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

- a) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Executive Director or designee's concurrence.

3. Discretionary Expellable Offenses: Students may be expelled for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

- a) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
- b) Willfully used force of violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
- c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.

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- d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
- e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
- f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
- g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
- h) Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a pupil.
- i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 11014.5.
- k) Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
- l) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- m) Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- n) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code Sections 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code Section 243.4.
- o) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
- p) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- q) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
- r) Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property. For purposes of this section, "terroristic threat" shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000),

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

- s) Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- t) Caused, attempted to cause, threaten to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- u) Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- v) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act (defined as the transmission of a communication, including, but not limited to, a message, text, sound, or image, or a post on a social network Internet Web site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager) directed specifically toward a pupil or school personnel. "Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including acts one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
 - 1. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
 - 2. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
 - 3. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
 - 4. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.
- w) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim

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suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (1).

- x) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any knife unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Executive Director or designee's concurrence.

4. Non -Discretionary Expellable Offenses: Students must be expelled for any of the following acts when it is determined pursuant to the procedures below that the pupil:

- a) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Executive Director or designee's concurrence.

If it is determined by the Board of Directors that a student has brought a fire arm or destructive device, as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, on to campus or to have possessed a firearm or dangerous device on campus, the student shall be expelled for one year, pursuant to the Federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994.

The term "firearm" means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm.

The term "destructive device" means (A) any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, including but not limited to: (i) bomb, (ii) grenade, (iii) rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, (iv) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, (v) mine, or (vi) device similar to any of the devices described in the preceding clauses.

C. Suspension Procedure

Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

1. Conference

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

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

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

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

2. Notice to Parents/Guardians

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

3. Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Placement/Expulsion

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

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

D. Authority to Expel

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

E. Expulsion Procedures

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

In the event an Administrative Panel hears the case, it will make a recommendation to the WOC Board of Directors for a final decision whether to expel. The hearing shall be held in closed session (complying with all pupil confidentiality rules under FERPA) unless the pupil makes a written request for a public hearing three (3) days prior to the hearing.

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

1. The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
2. A statement of specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
3. A copy of WOC's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
4. Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the school to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;
5. The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;
6. The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
7. The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
8. The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

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

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

1. The complaining witness in any sexual assault or battery case must be provided with a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of his/her right to (a) receive five days notice of his/her scheduled testimony, (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons of his/her choosing present in the hearing at the time he/she testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, and (c) elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.
2. WOC must also provide the victim a room separate from the hearing room for the complaining witness' use prior to and during breaks in testimony.
3. At the discretion of the person or panel conducting the expulsion hearing, the complaining witness shall be allowed periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which he or she may leave the hearing room.
4. The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.
5. The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also limit time for taking the testimony of the complaining witness to the hours he/she is normally in school, if there is no good cause to take the testimony during other hours.

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6. Prior to a complaining witness testifying, the support persons must be admonished that the hearing is confidential. Nothing in the law precludes the person presiding over the hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The person conducting the hearing may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany him or her to the witness stand.
7. If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, WOC must present evidence that the witness' presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to WOC. The person presiding over the hearing shall permit the witness to stay unless it is established that there is a substantial risk that the testimony of the complaining witness would be influenced by the support person, in which case the presiding official shall admonish the support person or persons not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way. Nothing shall preclude the presiding officer from exercising his or her discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom he or she believes is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.
8. The testimony of the support person shall be presented before the testimony of the complaining witness and the complaining witness shall be excluded from the courtroom during that testimony.
9. Especially for charges involving sexual assault or battery, if the hearing is to be conducted in the public at the request of the pupil being expelled, the complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a closed session when testifying at a public meeting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are not alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing by means of closed-circuit television.
10. Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness' prior sexual conduct is presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the person conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstances can be made, the witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.

G. Record of Hearing

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

H. Presentation of Evidence

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

Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay. Sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the WOC Board of Directors, Panel or designee

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determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

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

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

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

I. Written Notice to Expel

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

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

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

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

J. Disciplinary Records

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

K. No Right to Appeal

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

L. Expelled Pupils/Alternative Education

Pupils who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within the County or their school district of residence. The Charter School shall work cooperatively with parents/guardians as requested by parents/guardians or by the school district of residence to assist with locating alternative placements during expulsion.

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M. Rehabilitation Plans

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

N. Readmission

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

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

i. Notification of District

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

ii. Services During Suspension

Students suspended for more than ten (10) school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP/504 Plan; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment or functional analysis, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

iii. Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination

Within ten (10) school days of a recommendation for expulsion or any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, WOC, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP/504 Plan, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine:

- a) If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
- b) If the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP/504 Plan.

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If WOC, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team determine that either of the above is applicable for the child, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

If WOC, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP/504 Team shall:

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

If WOC, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team determine that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability and that the conduct in question was not a result of the failure to implement the IEP/504 Plan, then WOC may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to students without disabilities.

iv. Due Process Appeals

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or WOC believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, may request an expedited administrative hearing through the Special Education Unit of the Office of Administrative Hearings or by utilizing the dispute provisions of the 504 Policy and Procedures.

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

v. Special Circumstances

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

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

- a) Carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 USC 930, to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;

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

vi. Interim Alternative Educational Setting

The student's interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the student's IEP/504 Team.

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

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

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

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

If WOC knew or should have known the student had a disability under any of the three (3) circumstances described above, the student may assert any of the protections available to IDEIA-eligible children with disabilities, including the right to stay-put.

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

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

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XI. Retirement System

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).

Wildflower Open Classroom has the responsibility to provide retirement benefits to its employees. Wildflower Open Classroom participates in the federal social security system and WOC employees may have access to other school-sponsored retirement plans according to policies developed by the Wildflower Open Classroom Board of Directors

The Director is responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements for coverage have been made.

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XII. Public School Attendance Alternatives

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

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

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XIII. Employee Return Rights

Governing Law: A description of the rights of any employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school. 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 the Charter School will have no automatic rights of return to the District after employment by the Charter School unless specifically granted by the District through a leave of absence or other agreement. Charter School 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 Charter 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 the Charter School will be considered the exclusive employees of the Charter School 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 provides no rights of employment at any other entity, including any rights in the case of closure of the Charter School.

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XIV. Dispute Resolution Procedures

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

In the event of a dispute between Wildflower Open Classroom and CUSD regarding the terms of this charter, both parties agree to follow the process outlined below. Disputes will be placed in a written format and referred to the Superintendent of CUSD and the Director of Wildflower Open Classroom. In the event that CUSD believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter, this shall be specifically noted in the written statement. The Director and Superintendent shall meet and attempt to resolve the issue. If this meeting fails to settle the dispute the Superintendent and Director shall meet jointly to identify a neutral, third party mediator. The format of this meeting will be developed by both the Superintendent and the Director; the findings will be non-binding. The cost of the mediator shall be split evenly by CUSD and Wildflower Open Classroom. If mediation does not resolve the dispute either party may pursue any other remedy available under the law. All procedures in this section may be revised upon mutual written agreement of the District and the Charter School.

Dispute resolution procedures shall not be construed in any manner so as to impair the CUSD's ability to pursue the revocation process set forth in Education Code 47607.

Wildflower Open Classroom Board of Directors has adopted policies and processes for airing and resolving internal and external disputes. Parents, board members, volunteers, and staff are provided with a copy of the Concern and Conflict Resolution Process policy and agree to work within this framework.

Timelines

- The meeting to attempt resolution shall occur within 5 days of the written dispute statement.
- Second meeting involving Board members within 15 days of the written dispute statement.
- Mediation to occur within 60 days of the written dispute statement.
- All timelines and procedures in this section may be revised upon mutual written agreement of the District and the Charter School.

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XV. Exclusive Employer

Governing Law: A declaration whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for 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)(5)(O).

Wildflower Open Classroom 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"). WOC shall comply with the EERA.

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XVI. School Closure

Governing Law: A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the 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)(P).

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

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

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

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

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

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

As soon as reasonably practical, the Charter School will prepare final financial records. The Charter School will also have an independent audit completed within six months after closure. The Charter School will pay for the final audit. The audit will be prepared by a qualified Certified Public Accountant selected by the Charter School and will be provided to the District promptly upon its completion. The final audit will include an accounting of all financial assets, including cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value, an accounting of the liabilities, including accounts payable and any reduction in apportionments as a result of audit findings or other investigations, loans, and unpaid staff compensation, and an assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to the Charter School.

The Charter School will complete and file any annual reports required pursuant to Education Code section 47604.33. On closure of the Charter School, all assets of the Charter School, including but not limited to all leaseholds, personal property, intellectual property and all ADA apportionments and other revenues generated by students attending the Charter School, remain the sole property of the Charter

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School and shall be distributed in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation upon the dissolution of the non-profit public benefit corporation. Any assets acquired from the District or District property will be promptly returned upon Charter School closure to the District. The distribution shall include return of any grant funds and restricted categorical funds to their source in accordance with the terms of the grant or state and federal law, as appropriate, which may include submission of final expenditure reports for entitlement grants and the filing of any required Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as well as the return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any conditions established when the donation of such materials or property was accepted.

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

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

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

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XVII. Miscellaneous Provisions

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 first three years of operation." Education Code Section 47605(g).

Attached, as Appendix F:

- A budget including cash-flow
- Budget assumptions
- Financial projections for the first three years of operation

These documents are based upon the best data available to the Petitioners at this time.

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. For a charter school in its first year of operation, financial statements submitted with the charter petition pursuant to Education Code 47605(g) will satisfy this requirement.
2. By December 15, an interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through October 31. Additionally, on December 15, a copy of the Charter School's annual, independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year shall be delivered to the District, State Controller, State Department of Education and County Superintendent of Schools.
3. By March 15, a second interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through January 31.
4. By September 15, a final 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 will 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. Prior to opening, the Charter School will 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).

It is anticipated that the Charter School will provide or procure most of its own administrative services including, but not limited to, financial management, personnel, and instructional program development either through its own staff or through an appropriately qualified third-party contractor.

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Facilities

WOC is located at 2414 Cohasset Road, Ste. 3 Chico, CA 95926. The site features: five classrooms, office space, outdoor playground area and outdoor field, garden space and eating area.

Wildflower Open Classroom may request a facility from the District under Proposition 39. The petitioners may be requesting a facility within the District boundaries in Chico. If the District is not able to accommodate the WOC's facility needs then a non-district owned facility will be found and leased by WOC Board of Directors.

WOC maintains safety and disaster plans appropriate to the school site prior to start of the school year. These shall include, without limitation, plans for seismic, safety, natural disaster and other emergencies that may occur at the school site. WOC facilities will meet any applicable federal, state and local building and safety codes and requirements prior to the school opening, including without limitation zoning, handicapped accessibility, and fire safety requirements.

Severance

The terms of this charter contract are severable. If 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 CUSD and Wildflower Open Classroom's Board of Directors. CUSD and Wildflower Open Classroom agree to meet and discuss and resolve any issues or differences relating to invalidated provisions in a timely and good faith fashion.

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XVIII. District Impact

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

Wildflower Open Classroom shall be operated by a California non-profit public benefit corporation. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 23701d.

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 is not liable for the debts or obligations of the charter school or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors or omissions by WOC, if the authority has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law. WOC works diligently to assist the District in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including monthly meetings, reporting, or other District requested protocol to ensure the District shall not be liable for the operation of the Charter School.

Further, WOC and the District entered into a memorandum of understanding which shall provide for indemnification of the District by WOC. Insurance amounts have been determined by recommendation of the insurance company for schools of similar size, location, and type of program. The District is named an additional insured on the general liability insurance of Wildflower Open Classroom.

The corporate bylaws of WOC provides for indemnification of the Charter School's Board of Directors, officers, agents, and employees, and WOC has purchased general liability insurance, Directors and Officers insurance, and fidelity bonding to secure against financial risks.

The WOC Board of Directors and the Director institute appropriate risk management practices in accordance with the health and safety policies and practices provided herein.