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ASSURANCES

As the authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for a charter for School of Arts and Global Education (“SAGE”, “Charter School”, or “School”) to be located within the boundaries of the Ventura Unified School District ("District") is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that this application does not constitute the conversion of a private school to the status of a public charter school; and further, I understand that if awarded a charter, the School:

- Will meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Section 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. The Charter School shall certify that its students have participated in the state testing programs specified in Education Code Section 60600-60652 in the same manner as other students attending public schools. [Ref. Education Code Sections 47605(c), 47612.5(a)(3)]
- Will be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act and will comply with Government Code Sections 3540-3549.3. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O)]
- Will be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- Will not charge tuition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- Will admit all students who wish to attend the School according to the following criteria and procedures and as further outlined herein:
 - a. Admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the student’s place of residence, or that of his/her guardians, within this state, except that any existing public school converting partially or entirely to a charter school shall adopt and maintain a policy giving admission preference to students who reside within the Charter School’s former attendance area.
 - b. If the number of students who wish to attend the Charter School exceeds the Charter School’s capacity, attendance, except for existing students of the Charter School, shall be determined by a public random drawing. Preferences shall be extended to students currently attending the Charter School and students who reside in the District. In the event of a drawing, the County Board shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of the Charter School and shall not take any action to impede the Charter School from expanding enrollment to meet student demand.

Date of Submission:
November 14, 2005

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- c. Other admissions preferences permitted by the Board in this petition that are consistent with law. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B)]
- Will not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, perceived sexual orientation, home language, or disability. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
 - Will adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act.
 - Will 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)]
 - Will ensure that teachers in the 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)]
 - Will ensure that no person who has been convicted of a violent or serious felony is employed in either a certificated or classified position. [Ref. California Education Code Section 44830.1, 45122.1]
 - Will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage, including but not limited to general liability insurance, worker's compensation insurance and other necessary insurance.
 - Will promptly respond to all reasonable inquiries from the County Office of Education, or the Superintendent of Public Instruction, including but not limited to inquiries regarding its financial records. [Ref. California Education Code 47604.3]
 - Will follow any and all other applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to the Charter School including but not limited to:
 - SAGE shall maintain accurate and current written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection.
 - SAGE shall on a regular basis consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School's education programs.

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- SAGE shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities.
- SAGE will comply with the Brown Act.
- SAGE will comply with Education Code Sections 51745-51749.3 in the event that the Charter School offers independent study.
- SAGE shall offer, at a minimum, the same number of instructional minutes set forth in Education Code Section 46201 for the appropriate grade levels.
- SAGE shall offer, at a minimum, the minimum number of school days provided by law.
- SAGE will commence operation by September 30 of its first year of operation.
- SAGE shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment.
- SAGE shall comply with all applicable portions of the No Child Left Behind Act.
- SAGE shall comply with the Public Records Act.
- SAGE shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Authorized Representative's Signature _____

Date: _____

I. FOUNDING GROUP

SAGE, The School of Arts and Global Education, was inspired by Open Classroom, a District **alternative/magnet program** with a successful thirty-year history in the Ventura Unified School District. Open Classroom has not been able to reach its full potential, nor has it been able to pursue its mission for innovative practices, due to the lack of control over its educational program, daily operations, and resources. In response to a need for autonomy, Open Classroom founding teachers and key parents became SAGE Founders. They began meeting with consultants in January 2004 to design the School, and are dedicated to the creation and success of SAGE.

The founders of SAGE 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 parent founders are business owners, attorneys, artists, salespeople, teachers, resource specialists, real estate agents, and accountants. The founders have hired the state's leading law firm, Spector, Middleton, Young & Minney LLP, specializing in charter schools to ensure that the Charter School's operations are legally compliant. In addition, the Director of Operations at Santa Barbara Charter School, Dave Weisman, and the Program Director at Our Community School, Chris Ferris, are providing practical management expertise. Cathi Vogel, a California public school finance consultant, with vast experience in the financial management of both school districts and charter schools, is assisting the founders with fiscal issues.

SAGE's Board of Directors will be responsible for ensuring the School's viability, focusing on financial, legal, and personnel issues. SAGE will use a combination of strategies, such as nominating committees, elections, and a screening process to recruit and select Board members, to ensure the Board remains an expert and well-balanced one. The collaborative efforts of the parents, teachers, and the administrative team to meet the needs of the children will ensure a viable, sustainable educational environment at SAGE. (Exhibit A is a listing of the main Founders and a brief description of their expertise and current and future involvement in the School.)

Founder Goals

The following SAGE K-8 school design goals are in alignment with the seven statutory purposes for charter schools:

- **Expand educational choices for parents and students within the public school system to improve student achievement**

SAGE will provide Ventura residents and neighboring communities with an innovative K-8 school that has a unique arts, environmental, and global education focus. SAGE will incorporate a student-centered curriculum that is aligned with the California State Content Standards. It will feature multi-age groupings of students for instruction, team teaching and collaboration, and experiential learning activities within a caring community

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of students, parents, and teachers intentionally created to provide optimum success. Such a school is currently unavailable in Ventura.

- **Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods**

Our purpose is to educate the whole child within a success-oriented, supportive environment, using a variety of methods. Multiple Intelligence Theory, integrated curriculum, and multi-sensory modalities will be applied to meet individual needs. Through our focus on the arts and global education, and the fostering of interpersonal skills and community involvement, students will become globally aware, competent, and caring human beings of the 21st century. The belief that the innate curiosity, joy, and enthusiasm of childhood should be deeply honored and protected will move SAGE towards innovation.

- **Improve student learning through smaller class and school size and parent participation**

SAGE's commitment to small school and class size will provide more resources for individualized teaching and active learning. Research indicates that small K-8 schools are often superior to large ones in the areas of student attitudes, social behavior, attendance, and sense of belonging, and they often result in higher standardized test scores (*New York Times*, September 12, 2004). Active parent participation is crucial to our program design and community approach. Most of our parent volunteers will work in the classroom weekly under teacher supervision, while others will assist the teachers and support the program in other capacities, enhancing the community atmosphere and providing additional resources. With the assistance from parent volunteers, SAGE will provide more hands-on curriculum, small group instruction, and personalized attention to students.

- **Create responsible citizens in our democracy**

SAGE is committed to creating students who will maintain and nurture the attributes of a democratic society and who will be intelligent, caring, strong, resilient, imaginative, and thoughtful. Our goal is to cultivate students who will live productive, socially responsible, and personally satisfying lives, while also respecting the environment and the rights of others. SAGE will help strengthen commitment to diversity, equity, and mutual respect. Citizenship in a democracy requires the skills and competencies to be well informed and compassionate--to read well, to write and speak effectively and persuasively, and to think creatively, critically, and independently.

- **Utilize comprehensive authentic assessments**

In keeping with our instructional philosophy, we will utilize performance-based assessments such as portfolio assessments, projects and presentations, narrative reports, and annual parent surveys **in addition** to state-mandated standardized testing.

- **Provide new professional opportunities and responsibilities for teachers**

SAGE teachers will have the freedom and resources to pursue innovation. Our teachers will adjust their delivery based on student needs and will integrate curriculum to address the student body as a whole. Ongoing professional development resources will be

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available to support our highly qualified teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program. Furthermore, SAGE teachers will have an active role in governance through the Teachers Council, working in partnership with parents and students.

- **Stimulate continual improvement in all public schools**

SAGE is committed to offering progressive, high quality alternatives to public school children by pursuing and developing innovative curriculum and delivery methods. In doing so, it is our hope to inspire other schools to adopt and adapt the approaches that we have shown to be successful.

II. EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND PROGRAM

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

MISSION

The School of Arts and Global Education (SAGE) envisions a supportive 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. SAGE seeks to create a student-centered learning environment that provides a standards-based curriculum 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 SAGE 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.

EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

What it Means to be an Educated Person in the 21st Century

We believe that students entering the world of the 21st century will need enhanced skills, knowledge, and attitudes to prepare them for a lifetime of learning, change, and transition. They will have a strong self-concept and see themselves as autonomous, cooperative, respectful, and productive lifetime learners. They will be self-disciplined, intuitive, and self-motivated. They will be able to work and live harmoniously with others and the environment and interact in a manner that is healthy, purposeful, and creative. Educated citizens of the 21st century understand that life is interconnected and interdependent and will see themselves as active members of a diverse global community. With the increasing availability of massive rapid data-retrieval systems, the ability to memorize information will become less important, and success in today’s world will require creativity, flexibility, resourcefulness, and a readiness to see things in new ways.

Students will need a better understanding of and appreciation for global relations--other people, cultures, religions, and geographies--to bridge the cultural, linguistic, and historical divides that exist in our country and the world. Exposure to foreign languages will increase students’ sensitivity to the nuances of other worldviews. They will need to understand the economic, political, social, and cultural interrelationships that will influence and determine their future. An educated person in the 21st century will understand the role of art in society and appreciate art both by others and as a means of personal expression. A heightened awareness of the fragility of ecosystems will be

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crucial along with a strong sense of responsibility for protecting, preserving, and restoring the earth for future generations.

Our students will need sophisticated, compassionate, and resilient social and emotional skills to actively develop and participate in deep and meaningful friendships and create rich and healthy families and communities. Peaceful conflict resolution skills will be critical to their success in all aspects of their lives. They will need the ability to navigate within competitive systems as well as cooperative ones to participate effectively in professional and civic lives within a democratic society. In addition to having the skills of reading, writing, reasoning, speaking, listening, and computing, students will need to acquire the skills necessary to become collaborative workers, effective communicators, community contributors, and complex, creative, and critical thinkers.

The staff, students, and parents of SAGE will need to continue to reflect upon, act upon, and adapt to an ever-changing world. SAGE will evolve and continue to address what it means to be an educated person who is well prepared for healthy forms of self-reliance as well as interdependence.

How Learning Best Occurs

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.

Our research and experience on how learning best occurs has led SAGE to develop learning environments in which the following components are emphasized:

• Positive Interpersonal Relationships

Through daily problem-solving sessions such as “Magic Circle” and class meetings, students will develop the communication skills needed to resolve social and emotional issues as they arise. Children will be 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). SAGE students will apply the skills necessary to work collaboratively and cooperatively in group and community settings and will communicate effectively to solve interpersonal problems. They will have ongoing

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opportunities to learn to establish and maintain successful and satisfying personal relationships with other students, teachers, and adults.

- **Constructivist Learning**

The research of Jean Piaget (*The Psychology of Intelligence*, 1947; *The Construction of Reality in the Child*, 1954) found that 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 will closely facilitate this process, encouraging students to inquire and investigate, to analyze, create, develop, describe, reflect on, and finally disseminate understandings. Through these experiences, 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.

- **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. SAGE will foster 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). SAGE believes in fostering children's "intrinsic motivation" to learn. According to Alfie Kohn, intrinsic motivation is significantly related to high academic achievement (*Punished By*

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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 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).

- **Educating the Whole Child**

SAGE seeks to educate the whole child addressing the intellectual, social, emotional, creative, physical, and collaborative aspects of education. The mission statement of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) supports this goal:

Academic achievement is but one element of student learning and development and only a part of any complete system of education accountability. ASCD believes a comprehensive approach to learning recognizes that successful young people are knowledgeable, emotionally and physically healthy, motivated, civically inspired, engaged in the arts, prepared for work and economic self-sufficiency, and ready for the world beyond their own borders (*Educational Leadership*, September, 2005).

SAGE is committed to pursuing high academic achievement through the education of the whole child.

Students to be Served

SAGE will eventually serve approximately 275 Kindergarten through 8th grade students, with an anticipated enrollment of 190 in K-7 the first year. SAGE will participate in the State Class Size Reduction Program. SAGE will serve students who are interested in learning through integrated, student-centered curriculum and innovative, activity-based instruction. SAGE students will be empowered to meet California content standards and reach their innate intellectual, creative, and leadership potentials.

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SAGE will adopt a school calendar with a minimum of 180 instructional days and will meet or exceed the instructional minutes required by the State of California. (see Exhibit O) SAGE will commence operation on or before September 30 of its first year.

Where the Ventura Unified School District student population is approximately 53% Caucasian, 38% Hispanic, 4% other, 2% African American, 2% Asian, and 1% Native American, SAGE's student population will be approximately 65% Caucasian, 20% Hispanic, 7% Asian, 3% Other, 3% Native American, and 2% African American. SAGE will strive, through recruiting, to achieve a racial and ethnic balance of students that reflects the general population of the District. SAGE's outreach plan includes flyers and presentations in English and Spanish at various organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs, Headstart, Jumpstart, and various preschools and agencies. SAGE will advertise through local newspapers, radio stations, and Spanish language media in order to draw students from communities underrepresented in our student population. SAGE will schedule 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.

Targeted Student Population

SAGE will attract K-8 students and families who desire an alternative to traditional schooling for a variety of reasons. We will attract students whose families want a rich and multi-dimensional curriculum where their children will be challenged and motivated in multi-age classrooms to achieve above and beyond the confines of grade level instruction. SAGE will educate 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. SAGE will provide a rich learning environment, where multiple learning styles are embraced and love of learning is celebrated.

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

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

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SAGE plans to serve additional students through a home-based component, a flexible independent study program (See Exhibit P), an on-site before and after school program, and an on-site preschool. Enrollment at the Charter School shall not be capped but the Charter School will plan to enroll only the number of students that can be accommodated within its facility or through independent study instruction.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Curriculum Overview

The SAGE curriculum will be driven by the social studies content standards with a specific emphasis on global education and the arts. Through interactions with their own and other cultures of the past and present, students will find meaning in their world. The arts will be 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 will include self-reliance, social responsibility, artistic expression, and critical and independent thinking, balanced with an awareness of interdependence. Creativity and curiosity will be valued and encouraged, and learning will be experiential and integrated.

SAGE will integrate course work across the curriculum as a regular part of instructional planning. 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 will come to understand the relationships among disciplines and how the interconnections of all the parts create "the whole." Therefore, the K-5 curriculum at SAGE will be designed around specific themes developed by SAGE teachers, based on social studies content standards. Units of study will be interdisciplinary, incorporating reading, language arts, math, science and the arts. California frameworks and model curriculum guidelines will also inform unit and lesson design. Areas that will receive special emphasis and provide an ongoing sub-structure for SAGE curriculum are multi-cultural awareness; global and environmental studies; the fine, performing and applied arts; and interpersonal communication skills. SAGE will strive to introduce the Spanish language informally in the primary grades through songs, cultural arts, poems, stories, and games. Formal instruction will be provided in the upper grades as resources allow.

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 will 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.

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The SAGE elementary curriculum will explore 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 6-8th grade curriculum will integrate global and international studies with the California State Content standards and explore 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 SAGE Arts curriculum will be an integral part of the general education and will include frequent exposure to dance, drama, music, visual, and applied arts. SAGE will provide students with opportunities to view and experience the arts and to recognize their historical and cultural significance.

By studying the arts, students will 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 SAGE will have frequent opportunities to engage in a wide variety of fine, performing, and practical arts. Music, dance, drama, needlework, drawing, printmaking, ceramics, graphic arts, sculpture, and painting will be interwoven throughout the curriculum as artistic responses to literature, multicultural studies, and thematic instruction. Woodworking, photography, computer graphic design, and filmmaking will also provide potential curriculum projects as electives for older students.

English Language Arts Curriculum

In alignment with the California Reading/Language Arts Framework and Content Standards, SAGE will develop each student's strengths as reader, writer, researcher, listener, speaker, and collaborator. Highly motivating and engaging literature and language arts lessons will enhance learning, with reading and writing skills taught both

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through whole language and through phonemic awareness and explicit phonics instruction to create a balanced approach to literacy.

The language arts curriculum will be a strong literature-based program that includes a balance of oral and written language. Reading instruction will be meaning based and will encompass 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 will also be given ample opportunities to participate in communicative and interactive learning activities, which will enhance their language acquisition, social, interpersonal, and academic skills in a language and print rich environment.

The strengths of the SAGE language arts program will 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 will be 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 will be presented via a spiraled curriculum, offering students the opportunity to go both deep and broad over the course of their years in SAGE.

Reading Instruction

At SAGE we 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 will be 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 will 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 will be exposed to greater amounts of informational reading through nonfiction texts in content areas across the curriculum. Using the English Language Arts Content Standards as a roadmap, teachers will plan daily reading practice with a variety of instructional materials that support the SAGE interdisciplinary approach. Students will be involved in shared and guided reading, reading workshops, teacher read-alouds, partner reading, daily independent reading, reading buddies, 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.
- 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.
- 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 social studies and science topics in 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

SAGE will 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 Language Arts Content Standards as a guide, teachers will 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 will be involved in writing activities such as journals, quick-writes, guided writing, language experience, key words, pen-pals, and

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individual and class book-making. As their writing skills develop, students will have instruction and practice in all the writing genres, including descriptive, expository, narrative, and persuasive as well as poetry, journal, and letter writing. SAGE'S 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 will use the standards to plan writing projects and lessons to teach explicit skills in writing conventions and strategies. The students will demonstrate their learning in ongoing formative assessments of their daily writing and in benchmark writing assessments that will be tied to the interdisciplinary study.
- Provide multiple times each week for children to work on their writing. During each day's writing workshop, children will 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 will work on a variety of 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 will not usually write about books, but, instead, they will write their own books. At the end of a unit of study, children's writing will be "published." Publishing can be as simple as having a class 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 will usually be provided through the ten-minute-long mini-lesson, which will occur at the start of writing workshops. Teachers will be encouraged to design mini-lessons in which they demonstrate a strategy and provide children with assisted practice using that strategy.
- Assess and coach writers through individual and, sometimes, small group conferences. These conferences will generally begin with research and assessment. Teachers will move among children during the writing workshops, holding three-to five-minute-long conferences, or longer small group meetings, with them as they write and reflect on their writing. Teachers will work one-on-one with student writers on the final editing of their work. In this way, instruction on the conventions/mechanics of writing is personalized and meaningful.

Mathematics

SAGE students will be provided a mathematics program that will allow them to develop the necessary computation, application, and problem solving skills to be proficient in the California State Mathematics Standards, while developing a deep conceptual understanding of math principles and operations. SAGE will seek to balance skill instruction with conceptual learning and problem solving. It is our goal to help students

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develop a sense of confidence about their ability to understand and apply mathematics in their everyday lives. SAGE will incorporate 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 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 will study history and social sciences through an integrated, literature-enriched curriculum that will draw 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 will be aligned with the State framework. The teaching of history will be integrated with geography, the humanities, and other social sciences through our focus on global education. Activities and lessons will be correlated with language arts, science, and the visual and performing arts. Teachers will build upon students' curiosity about themselves and their world by presenting history as an exciting and dramatic series of events and issues. Students will engage in problem solving as they acquire, evaluate, and use information in a variety of ways. Frequent opportunities will exist for all students to share their language, cultures, customs, and heritage, thereby providing multicultural dimensions to the curriculum. The Spanish language and culture will be infused into the curriculum whenever appropriate. The teachers will provide equal access to the core curriculum for all students through a variety of appropriate instructional materials and strategies.

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Science

Students will discover and learn about the natural world by using the methods of science as extensions of their own curiosity and wonder. Students will acquire knowledge of science concepts through a balanced curriculum, which will 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 will develop the critical thinking skills of science: observing, comparing, organizing, inferring, relating, and applying. All students will have access to the science core curriculum and will be exposed to life, earth, and the physical sciences in alignment with the State Framework and the California State Science Standards.

Physical Education

SAGE students will 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 will provide necessary physical outlets and athletic expression for SAGE students. Physical fitness as a lifelong endeavor and the importance of recreational activity will be stressed through the physical education curriculum. Cooperative games, skill instruction, and sportsmanship will be emphasized in the younger grades. Older students will enjoy learning competitive and non-competitive physical activities. Health shall be taught in a holistic manner. Cooking, especially with organic fruits, and vegetables from the SAGE garden, will provide a motivating vehicle for learning about health and nutrition. Nutritional whole food snacks will be provided daily to encourage healthy eating habits. Knowledge of health, safety and life promoting choices for personal behavior will provide a foundation for positive lifelong habits.

(Exhibit C is a sample of a SAGE integrated humanities curriculum for the fifth grade.)

TEACHING METHODS

The principles, theory, and research of progressive education from the past, present, and future will underlie SAGE's innovative and evolving instructional methods. Founding theorists of the past include John Dewey, Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky. Influential theorists and researchers of the present include Howard Gardner, William Glasser, Mel Levine, and Alfie Kohn. SAGE staff will strive to remain informed about innovative progressive education practices throughout the world.

Just as SAGE students will be provided with a variety of choices regarding interest areas in the curriculum, they will also be exposed to a variety of teaching and learning methods. Hands-on, experiential learning is integral in a SAGE 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 will facilitate the "learn-by-doing" instructional focus.

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Cooperative learning groups, social interaction, multi-age grouping, and cross-age tutoring will assist students in learning from one another. SAGE acknowledges that students learn by actively constructing knowledge, weighing new information against their previous understanding, comparing and contrasting, and coming to new understandings. SAGE teachers, parents, and students will continue to engage in a dynamic cycle of reflection and action. In constructivist classrooms at SAGE, students will be 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 will be integrated into instruction in the elementary grades and MI practices will drive instruction in the 6th through 8th grades. In addition to focusing on the linguistic and logical-mathematical domains, SAGE's teaching methods will 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) will be acknowledged and valued at SAGE. Learning opportunities will be presented in a variety of ways to allow students to study in ways harmonious with their own unique minds. (Exhibit D is an example of how Multiple Intelligence theory can be applied to specific sixth grade standards.)

An inquiry-based, project approach will also be 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 will be emphasized at SAGE. Higher order thinking skills will be developed through well-designed inquiry learning activities.

MATERIALS

The Teachers Council will determine all instructional materials utilized at SAGE. In addition to standards-aligned textbooks in the content areas, SAGE will also utilize a variety of supplementary materials such as: 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 alouds, and reading workshops; multiple copies of novels, historical fiction, biographies, and non-fiction at various reading levels for teachers to offer small groups

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during Literature Circles; writing materials, such as paper of all types, book binding materials, and a laminator for writing and displaying books composed by student authors; numerous reference 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.

Technology

SAGE'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 will model effective integration of technology into instruction. SAGE 3rd through 5th grade students will learn the keyboard to enhance writing capabilities in basic word processing programs. They will do Internet research for reports and will later progress to networking and collaborating with student peers around the world on educational projects. Students will have the opportunity to become media literate by developing their own multi-media presentations.

Technology will be fully integrated and utilized in interdisciplinary projects and learning activities throughout the middle school grades. 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 will 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 will encourage students to make decisions about how to communicate their particular message and will give students with diverse learning styles multiple ways to demonstrate their learning.

Plan for Students who are Academically Low Achieving

SAGE's integrated curriculum will be 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. For those who need more individual assistance, intervention teachers will provide tutoring and small group help in basic literacy and math skills to improve achievement. Parents of at-risk or low achieving students will be 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 may include intervention programs beyond the classroom and school day. If necessary, the option of summer school and after school enrichment classes will be offered as a measure to curtail retention.

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If we believe a student needs to be retained, 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

SAGE's thematically based curriculum will provide 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 will 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 identified for Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) will benefit from multi-age groupings, will be clustered for peer support, will receive qualitatively differentiated instruction and assignments, and will be offered enhancements and extensions to the curriculum as needed. Our educational program offers many opportunities for students to take on leadership roles, to find resources in the larger community, and to explore areas of interest and make deeper connections with higher level content and concepts. Community service projects, mentorship programs with local colleges and universities, and prospective career internships will be utilized to provide expanded challenges and opportunities for GATE students.

Plan for English Learners

English learners will receive instruction utilizing the techniques of phonics, sheltered English, cooperative learning groups, and experiential activities. SAGE will serve English Language Learners (ELL) 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. SAGE, where possible, will hire personnel and recruit bilingual community support and services to meet the primary language needs of English Learners. SAGE shall comply with all applicable federal laws in regard to services and education of ELL students. The school will develop, implement, and maintain policies and procedures for the provision of services to English Language 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 SAGE curriculum and instruction will provide enriched learning opportunities for ELL students. Frequent social interactions in small

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group settings, peer collaboration and peer tutoring, oral expression during performances, reports, songs and presentations, and multi-sensory teaching methods and learning activities will support English Language Development and Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English.

PLAN FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Overview

SAGE will adhere to all laws affecting individuals with exceptional needs, including all provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act (“IDEIA”), its amendments, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”). All students will be given equal access to the school, regardless of disabilities, and the School will not discriminate against any student based on his or her disabilities. The School shall not require the modification of an IEP or 504 plan as a condition of acceptance at the SAGE.

SAGE recognizes the importance of providing education opportunities to all students regardless of physical challenges or special needs. To that end, SAGE pledges to work in cooperation with the Ventura County Office of Education to ensure that the students enrolled are served in accordance with applicable federal and state law.

IDEIA

The School intends to function as a local educational agency for purposes of providing special education instruction and related services under the IDEIA pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(a). Upon approval of the Charter, the School intends to apply for membership with a Special Education Local Plan Area (“SELPA”). The School anticipates SELPA approval in time to start the 2006-2007 school year. However, in the case that SELPA membership is delayed, until such time as the School is accepted as an LEA member of a SELPA, the School shall operate, by default, as a public school of the County for purposes of special education instruction and related services. However, it is the understanding of the Petitioners that special education services are not available through the County Office of Education. Accordingly, if the School operates transitionally as a school of the County, the Petitioners understand that the School will be required to provide any and all necessary special education instruction and related services required by each student’s individualized education program (“IEP”) and in accordance with the IDEIA with the amount of funds allocated under the SELPA allocation plan to the County Office. Special education instruction and related services shall be provided internally by appropriately credentialed staff and/or through a contract with Total Education Solutions (“TES”) or another special education service provider.

As Education Code Section 51745(c) states that no individual with exceptional needs may participate in independent study unless his or her individualized education program specifically provides for that participation, all students entering the nonclassroom-based program with a current IEP shall be given a 30 day interim placement until an evaluation can be done and an IEP team meeting held to consider whether or not independent study is an appropriate placement. Further, those students identified as individuals with

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exceptional needs during their enrollment will be evaluated as to whether or not independent study is an appropriate placement as part of the IEP team meeting discussing the development of an IEP.

We would anticipate that a special education agreement would be developed between the County and the Charter School which clearly requires the Charter School to assume full programmatic and fiscal responsibility for IDEIA compliance.

The School is in the process of contacting SELPAs with Ventura County to obtain information on how to submit an application for membership in the SELPA.

The Charter School pledges full compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (“IDEIA”).

Section 504/ADA

The School shall be solely responsible for its compliance with Section 504 and the ADA. All facilities of the School shall be accessible for all students with disabilities in accordance with the ADA.

Further, the School shall adopt and implement a policy, which outlines the requirements for identifying and serving students with a 504 accommodation plan. The School recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program of the Charter School. Any student, who has an objectively identified disability, which substantially limits a major life activity such as learning, is eligible for accommodation by the School and shall be accommodated.

III. MEASURABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES AND OTHER USES OF DATA

Governing Law: The extent to which all students enrolled in the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school's educational program. [Ref. California Education Code 47605 (b)(5)(B)]

SAGE will seek to align curriculum, instruction, and evaluation with the California Content Standards in order to ensure success in meeting student outcomes. The standards will serve as a guide in developing school goals and in making decisions regarding expenditures of resources, allotment of budget, staff development, program priorities, and policy decisions.

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

- Students will develop their abilities as readers, writers, researchers, listeners, speakers and collaborators;
- Students will develop their math computation, application and problem-solving skills;
- Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of history and the social sciences through global and environmental studies that promote cultural understanding, democratic values, and social responsibility;
- Students will acquire knowledge of science concepts through exploration, experimentation, application, and utilization of the scientific method;
- Students will develop an understanding of the importance of physical exercise and fitness, nutrition and healthy eating habits, and positive life choices for physical and mental well being;
- Students will apply the skills necessary to work collaboratively and cooperatively in group and community settings and will communicate effectively to solve interpersonal problems.
- Students will develop their artistic creativity and aesthetic appreciation for the fine, performing, and applied arts.

Academic Performance Index and State Standardized Testing

SAGE will comply with administering all California mandated standardized assessments. While aggregate scores generated by these tests may be unreliable due to small sample size and the limitations of standardized testing, SAGE will use these measures, as well as other formative and summative assessments, to identify student strengths and challenges, to determine progress toward educational goals, and to evaluate the effectiveness of our educational program and teaching practices. The Director of Education will be responsible for scheduling the tests and reporting test results as required in the Education Code and will also forward results to the SAGE Board of Directors for analysis and review. SAGE staff will work with parents to ensure that all parents understand the importance of their child participating in state tests. The School will strive to meet or

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exceed targets for the State’s Academic Performance Index and for federal NCLB Adequate Yearly Progress.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

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

Assessment of Learning Outcomes in SAGE Charter School

Learning Objectives	Formative Assessment Measures/Benchmarks	Annual Progress Indicators
<p>Students will develop their abilities as readers, writers, researchers, listeners, speakers, and collaborators.</p>	<p>Informal Reading Inventories (IRIs) given at the beginning, middle, and end of the academic year.</p> <p>Writing samples collected at the beginning, middle, and end of the academic year (or appropriate equivalent as identified in IEP) scored using four-point rubric.</p> <p>Teacher-designed rubrics, assessments, and checklists.</p> <p>Portfolios</p> <p>Teacher observations</p>	<p>Current state-mandated accountability measures (i.e., STAR).</p> <p>California English Language Development Test (CELDT) and California Alternative Performance Assessment (CAPA) as needed.</p> <p>State writing tests.</p> <p>SAGE Narrative Report Card, which will document achievement of specific grade-level standards.</p>
<p>Students will develop their math computation, application, and problem-solving skills.</p>	<p>Standards-based content and skill assessment instruments given at the beginning, middle, and end of the academic year.</p>	<p>Current state-mandated accountability measures (i.e., STAR).</p> <p>SAGE Narrative Report Card, which will document achievement of specific grade-level standards.</p>
<p>Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of history and the social sciences through global and environmental studies that promote cultural understanding, democratic values, and social</p>	<p>Research reports, group and individual projects, presentations, and exhibitions scored by teacher and student created rubrics.</p>	<p>Applicable state tests.</p> <p>SAGE Narrative Report Card, which will document achievement of specific grade-level standards.</p>

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responsibility.		
Students will acquire knowledge of science concepts through exploration, experimentation, application, and utilization of the scientific method.	Assessments provided in standards-based, School-adopted science curriculum given after each unit of study. Teacher observations.	Applicable state-mandated tests. SAGE Narrative Report Card, which will document achievement of specific grade-level standards.
Students will develop an understanding of the importance of physical exercise and fitness, nutrition and healthy eating habits, and positive life choices for physical and mental well being.	Teacher observations of student participation and performance in P.E. activities and healthy nutrition and life choices. Teacher-selected checklists and student self-evaluations.	State-mandated physical performance tests. SAGE Narrative Report Card, which will document achievement of specific grade-level standards.
Students will apply the skills necessary to work collaboratively and cooperatively in group and community settings and will communicate effectively to solve interpersonal problems.	Teacher observations and checklists of social/emotional and interpersonal skills. Various emotional development, conflict resolution and social skills continuums, rating scales and sociometric measures, such as American Guidance Service, 1990; Elias & Tobias, 1996; Johnson & Johnson, 1996; Saarni, 1999.	SAGE Narrative Report Card, which will document growth and development over time.
Students will develop their artistic creativity and aesthetic appreciation for the fine, performing, and applied arts.	Portfolios, presentations, and performances evaluated by teacher-selected checklists and rubrics.	SAGE Narrative Report Card, which will document achievement of specific grade-level expectations.

California-aligned “Standards Master” assessments developed by Renaissance Learning Company (or a comparable system) will be used to measure student growth towards mastery of state standards in mathematics, language arts, and reading.

Non-Standardized Assessments

In alignment with our vision and our teaching methods, SAGE will use a variety of assessment tools for relevant, ongoing, and authentic evaluation. We will assess complex thinking and problem solving skills using performance-oriented assessments. We will also engage students in self-assessment, empowering them to evaluate their own learning,

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set appropriate goals, and make informed decisions regarding their education. Teacher observations, checklists and anecdotal records will provide a powerful and ongoing tool for measuring student development and progress. The following assessments will also be used to guide our curriculum and delivery methods in meeting students' learning objectives.

- **Portfolio Assessment**

Student portfolios will be an integral component of assessment. Portfolios will include work samples that document student growth in all content areas. They will be maintained annually and reviewed by students and parents during conferences or as necessary. The Teachers Council will use portfolio work for "Student Study Teams" (SST), where teachers come together to gain insight on students' strengths and challenges with the objective of developing individualized plans to assist students in reaching their maximum potential.

- **Formative Assessments**

Students will be assessed throughout the year in core academic content areas to measure progress. Reading, spelling, and math inventories, sight word, phonics and phonemic assessments, diagnostic measurements, writing samples, and other teacher-selected, age-appropriate tools will be used, and records will be kept documenting student achievement.

- **Narrative Reports**

Two narrative reports per year will be available to parents and those who will have future educational contact with SAGE students. Narratives will describe students' abilities in each content area, learning styles exhibited, and educational strengths and challenges, along with information on grade level expectations. Narratives will also comment on the students' social and emotional growth and development and their participation and achievement in the arts. Students will have sequential reports that trace educational and developmental milestones, allowing parents to assess the types of educational services that best suit their child.

Teachers will use data from portfolios, formative and summative assessments, and narrative reports to design future curriculum, gather new or additional instructional resources, and create new assessments to measure continued progress.

USE AND REPORTING OF DATA

One of SAGE's primary purposes for assessment is to provide meaningful and reliable data to teachers, students, and families. SAGE will strive to involve parents/guardians in the assessment process, as they are often the best arbiters of their children's educational progress. By the time students complete their studies at SAGE, parents will have an educational history of their child which will provide them with the following information: learning styles, ideal working environments, strengths and challenges, and the student's social and emotional development, as well as the student's progress toward meeting grade-level standards. The following is the School's plan for collecting, analyzing, and

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reporting data on student achievement to school staff, parents, and guardians and the plan for utilizing the data continuously to monitor and improve the charter school's educational program.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents will meet with their child's teacher twice a year to formally identify educational goals and factors that may impact his/her learning. Informal meetings will be held when necessary. As students get older, conferences will emphasize planning for their future education and the preparation necessary for their next educational setting.

Annual Parent Survey

At the end of each year, SAGE will send families a survey to evaluate their children's educational experiences. The survey will ask parents to evaluate student readiness for future education, whether the school accomplished its mission, and their overall satisfaction with SAGE. The results of this survey will be tabulated and reported to the charter authorizer and/or Ventura County Office of Education as a part of the SAGE School Annual Report Card. Results will also serve as a guide for the Teachers Council to use in their process of continual educational improvement.

SAGE School Annual Report Card

SAGE will compile and provide its charter authorizer and/or Ventura County Office of Education an annual performance report. The report will include:

- An overview of the School's mission, profile, and learning climate;
- Summary data showing attendance, class size, and student achievement in California's mandatory standardized testing;
- An analysis of whether the School is meeting its Academic Performance Index (API) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals;
- A summary of major decisions and policies established by the SAGE Board during the year;
- Annual parent survey results;
- Data regarding SAGE staff and their qualifications;
- A copy of the school's health and safety policies and/or a summary of any major changes to those policies;
- An overview of SAGE's admissions practices and student demographics.

SAGE and its charter authorizer and/or Ventura County Office of Education will jointly develop a site visitation process and protocol to enable the grantor to gather information needed to confirm the school's performance and compliance with the terms of this charter.

IV. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

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

SAGE will operate as a duly constituted California nonprofit public benefit corporation, and will be governed in accordance with applicable California Corporations Code Sections and its adopted bylaws, as subsequently amended from time to time, which shall be consistent with the terms of this charter. While SAGE intends to collaborate with the Ventura County Office of Education, it shall operate as a separate legal entity, independent of the Ventura County Office of Education. As provided for in the California Corporations Code, SAGE will be governed by its Board of Directors, whose members have a legal fiduciary responsibility for the well-being of the School.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(c), the charter authorizer and/or the Ventura County Office of Education in performing its oversight of SAGE as required by Education Code Section 47604.32, shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of SAGE or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the charter school or its employees, representatives, board members, officers, or agents.

Bylaws of the Board of Directors have been adopted and are attached to this petition for the Ventura County Office of Education's reference.

Non-Profit Board Of Directors

SAGE will be governed by a minimum of seven and a maximum of nine members as specified in the bylaws (Exhibit E). Future Board members shall be selected in accordance with the corporate bylaws. (The names of the current Board members are included in Exhibit F.)

The SAGE Board of Directors will meet monthly to ensure the School's viability and academic success by focusing on financial, legal, and personnel issues. The SAGE Board will oversee the implementation of the Charter and approve necessary revisions to its bylaws, policies, and procedures. The SAGE Board's major roles and responsibilities will include establishing and approving all major educational and operational policies, approving all major contracts, approving the school's annual budget, overseeing the School's fiscal affairs, and selecting and evaluating the administrative staff. Specific duties may include but are not limited to the following:

- Hire and evaluate the Director of Education and Director of Operations of the School.
- Approve the hiring and dismissal of all employees of the Charter School after considering recommendations by the Director of Education and/or the Director of Operations of the School.

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- Approve and monitor the implementation of general policies of the School. These will include effective human resource policies for career growth and compensation of the staff.
- Develop and monitor an operational business plan that focuses on student achievement and artistic development.
- Approve and monitor the School's annual budget and fiscal and performance audits.
- Act as fiscal agent. This includes the receipt of funds for the operation of the School in accordance with charter school laws and the receipt of grants and donations consistent with the mission of the School.
- Contract an external auditor to produce an annual financial audit according to generally accepted accounting practices.
- Establish operational steering committees of parents, educators, and art professionals.
- Regularly monitor progress of both student and staff performance.
- Involve parents and the community in the support of School programs.
- Execute all other responsibilities provided for in the applicable law.
- Develop, review, or revise the School's accountability and mission.
- Develop the school calendar and schedule of Board meetings.
- Develop Board policies and procedures.
- Review and approve requests for out of state or overnight field trips.
- Participate in the dispute resolution and complaint procedures when necessary.
- Approve charter amendments.
- Appoint an administrative panel to act as a hearing body and take action on recommended student expulsions.
- Create external or sub-committees as needed, including but not limited to, compensation committee and an audit committee.

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The Board may initiate and carry on any program or activity or may otherwise act in any manner which is not in conflict with or inconsistent with or preempted by any law and which is not in conflict with the purposes for which SAGE has been established.

All meetings of the Board of the Charter School shall be held in accordance with the Brown Act.

A Board member shall not vote or participate in a discussion relating to a matter in which he/she has a personal financial interest. The Board shall adopt policies and procedures regarding self-dealing and conflicts of interest.

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 School any of those duties. 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 or its exercise and the beginning and ending dates of the delegation; and require an affirmative vote of a majority of Board members.

Administrative Team (SAGE Leadership)

SAGE's administrative team will be comprised of the Director of Education and the Director of Operations. One or both of these positions may include teaching and/or classroom responsibilities in addition to administrative duties.

Director of Education

The Director of Education will oversee the educational program and staff for grades K-8. S/he will support teacher development, coordinate student services, write and revise curriculum with SAGE teachers, facilitate teacher evaluations and peer reviews, and supervise student assessments, and monitor student achievement. The Director of Education reports to the SAGE Board of Directors and meets the minimum employment requirements as outlined in the Human Resource section. His/her responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, the following duties:

- Provide assistance and coordination in the development of curriculum;
- Oversee parent/student/teacher relations;
- Attend IEP meetings when necessary;
- Supervise student disciplinary matters;
- Coordinate the administration of Standardized Testing;
- Plan and coordinate student orientation;
- Supervise and evaluate all certificated employees of the School;
- Facilitate educational events and activities;
- Make recommendations to SAGE Board regarding school calendar and schedule;
- Establish and administer enrollment procedures.

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Director of Operations

The Director of Operations has the responsibility for all operational functions of the school. S/he reports directly to the SAGE Board of Directors regarding all committees and the charter school community at large. S/he ensures that financial functions are carried out within the guidelines established by the SAGE Board of Directors.

His/her responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, the following duties:

- Correlate the Charter School goals with a strategic fiscal plan; create budget calendar and guidelines; review and revise budget assumptions; review and discuss multi-year financial projections with all stakeholders
 - Work with accounting services provider to develop and administer the budget in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and school goals;
- Supervise and evaluate all classified employees of the School;
- Communicate with the School's legal counsel;
 - Stay informed on current school laws and regulations;
 - Approve all purchase orders, pay warrants, and requisitions;
 - Supervise grant writing process;
 - Attend meetings with the Chief Financial of the Charter Authorizer and/or Ventura County Office of Education on fiscal oversight issues as necessary;
 - Complete all necessary financial reports as required for proper ADA reporting;
 - Present a quarterly financial report to the Board;
 - Monitor site safety;
 - Develop the School annual performance audit;
 - Present fiscal audit to the Board of the Charter School and after, review by the Charter School Board, present audit to the County Board of Education and the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and the California Department of Education.

Depending on the area of expertise required, one or both of the Directors will be responsible for the following duties:

- Attend the charter authorizer and/or Ventura County Office of Education's administrative meetings as necessary;
- Develop SAGE Board meeting agendas in conjunction with the Board secretary in compliance with the Brown Act;
- Propose policies and make recommendations for adoption by the Board;
- Handle crime reports, child protective services referrals, CBEDS, SARB, CCR and other legal matters;
- Monitor Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) reporting and compliance;
- Participate in complaint and dispute resolution procedures;
- Attend SAGE Board meetings;
- Maintain communication between the charter authorizer Ventura County Office of Education/ County Board of Education and the SAGE Board of Directors.
- Ensure that all legal qualification requirements are met by all school personnel.

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Office Manager

Under supervision of the Director of Operations, the Office Manager performs general office clerical duties:

- Screens and directs phone calls, mail, and visitors, and takes messages;
- Assists students and parents with classroom information;
- Assists faculty by providing student information; manages CUM files;
- Conducts word processing of instructional materials, correspondence, flyers, memos, and reports;
- Prepares basic purchasing orders under direct supervision of Director of Operations;
- Monitors office equipment and supplies;
- Maintains records and office literature;
- Performs other duties as assigned.

In addition, the Office Manager is the designated person for administering and tracking student medications in compliance with physician's written orders and parental authorization. Office Manager will also supervise and or coordinate activities of parent volunteers who will assist in office administration duties.

The above duties may be delegated or contracted as approved by the SAGE Board to a business administrator of the School or other employee, or to a third party provider.

Teachers Council

The Teachers Council will be comprised of all full-time teachers and the Director of Education. SAGE will empower its teachers and trust their professional expertise to have authority over the creation and administration of the SAGE educational program.

Responsibilities will include but not be limited to:

- Direct classes and daily classroom operations;
- Supervise all paid staff and volunteers working with children;
- Generate and implement policies and decisions regarding curriculum design and educational methodology;
- Select resources and materials;
- Recommend expenditures that support the instructional program;
- Collaboratively create school calendar of events and activities;
- Select, design, and implement on-going assessments and student evaluations;
- Participate on Staff Selection committee as needed.

Parent Teacher Council

Parent participation will be vital to the effectiveness of the SAGE mission and the community atmosphere of the School. Parental commitment to volunteer at school will be expected. As noted above, parents compose a majority of the voting members of the Board of Directors. In addition, SAGE will adopt a policy outlining the options available

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with respect to parent participation and will develop an ongoing list of extensive participation opportunities. This policy will be clearly stated in a contract to be signed by all parents/guardians of prospective students prior to admission.

To serve the needs of SAGE students and their families, and to ensure parental involvement and input, SAGE will develop a Parent/Teacher Council (PTC). It will be made up of parents/guardians of our students and attended by a SAGE teacher representative. Meetings shall be held throughout the year, allowing parents to be informed about and to participate in the operations, educational decisions, and community accountability of SAGE Charter. The SAGE Parent/Teacher Council will facilitate communication among parents, teachers, and the Board as well as promote cultural and social activities within the school community. Responsibilities of the PTC will include but not be limited to:

- Serve as a forum for the discussion of matters of interest and concern to the parents of the School;
- Act as a communication channel between the parents and other individuals and groups, both within and outside the school community;
- Coordinate and sponsor committees, clubs, and other activities that enhance the intrinsic value of the School and contribute to the fulfillment of its mission. By their nature, these committees will work with various bodies within the School, providing support activities as appropriate;
- Coordinate PTC fundraising activities and, in collaboration with the Director of Operations, oversee the allocation and disbursement of funds raised by the PTC;
- Report, as needed, to the Board of Directors at the monthly Board meetings;
- Participate on Staff Selection committee, as needed.

Conflict of Interest Code

The School shall adopt and shall abide by a Conflict of Interest Code (Exhibit G).

Brown Act

The School shall comply with the Brown Act (*California Government Code Section 54950 et seq.*).

V. HUMAN RESOURCES

QUALIFICATIONS OF SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

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

All individuals to be employed by SAGE must possess the characteristics, knowledge, and qualifications identified in posted job descriptions.

Director of Education

Candidates for this position will possess:

- Valid California Teaching Credential and a minimum of five years teaching experience. Preference will be given to candidates with an Administrative credential;
- Master's Degree or higher;
- Background, knowledge, experience, and/or expertise in progressive/constructivist education methodologies such as Open Education;
- Knowledge of curriculum development;
- Collaborative leadership skills.

The Director of Operations

Candidates for this position will possess:

- A Bachelor's Degree and a minimum of three years of administrative or management experience. Preference will be given to candidates with experience working for educational or human service agencies;
- Collaborative group process skills;
- Demonstration of leadership skills;
- Preference will be given to candidates with experience in school finance, budget, and/or business operations.

To ensure that the school employs highly qualified instructional, administrative, and support staff, SAGE will select its own teachers and staff via the Staff Selection committee. This committee will be comprised of teachers and parent representatives and will make recommendations to the Board as outlined under the Governance Structure. All teachers will possess the subject matter competence required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act. The Selection procedure shall not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, or sexual orientation.

SAGE shall comply with Education Code Section 47605(l), which states in pertinent part:

Teachers in charter schools shall be required to hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. These documents shall be maintained on file at the charter school and shall be subject to periodic inspection by the chartering authority. It is the intent of the Legislature that

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charter schools be given flexibility with regard to non-core, non-college preparatory courses.

Teachers (Certificated Personnel)

Candidates interested in SAGE must possess the following:

- Bachelor's Degree
- A valid California teaching credential
- CLAD or BCLAD certification

In addition, teachers who desire a position with SAGE must:

- Have background, knowledge, experience, and/or expertise in progressive/constructivist education methodologies such as Open Education;
- Be willing to work collaboratively with parents in classroom and community; open to the concept of community as classroom;
- Show enthusiasm for collaboration with other teachers at classroom and school levels;
- Be willing to participate in professional development opportunities, and to engage in continuous reflection on the goals and methods of education;
- Be willing to work beyond the parameters of a regular school day to assure the success of the program;
- Be skilled at using project-based, structured cooperative learning strategies; integrated thematic units; multicultural education; conflict resolution; and an affective teaching approach;
- Be knowledgeable about educational psychology, particularly constructivist learning strategies and the work of Dewey, Piaget, Glasser, and Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory.

Part-time, temporary, or short-term personnel may be employed directly by SAGE. The Board, based on the recommendations of the Staff Selection Committee and the needs to be filled, will determine the qualifications and educational experience for these persons.

SAGE may have non-credentialed teachers and staff to the extent permitted by state and federal law. Educators in non-core classes, defined as those who are providing specialized learning opportunities, such as physical education, fine, performing, and applied arts, and foreign language, will hold either a teaching credential or have subject matter expertise and meet minimum qualifications contained in job descriptions and position announcements. Their role is to directly provide and/or provide for the means and the atmosphere that enable students to learn. Their relationship to one another is non-hierarchical in the sense that every staff person (with learners) shares in the responsibility for the educational process. The governing procedure is flexible, maximizing opportunities for consensus decision-making, and assuring that those most responsible for specific aspects have the authority and resources needed.

Substitutes

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SAGE will use qualified substitutes from the Charter School pool of credentialed teachers for teaching substitutes and qualified classified substitutes as substitutes to fill classified employee positions.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

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

In order to secure and hold specialized and experienced staff committed to innovation, SAGE recognizes the importance of an attractive compensation package, which includes salaries and health benefits. SAGE anticipates having Certificated and Classified salary schedules that are commensurate with that of the District in which the Charter school resides.

Teachers at SAGE will be covered by the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS). Administrative and support staff will be covered by Social Security.

SAGE will make all employer contributions required by STRS, and social security, as applicable to the position. SAGE will also make the employer contributions required for Workers' Compensation Insurance, Unemployment Insurance, and any other applicable payroll benefits.

EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATION

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

SAGE shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the School for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act.

RIGHTS OF SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

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

If and when specified by the collective bargaining agreement, any current school district employee who resigns their position with the district to become an employee of the School and is reemployed by the district within 39 months shall be restored disregarding the break in service, as per California Education Code 44931, listed below:

California Education Code 44931. Whenever any certificated employee of any school district who, at the time of his or her resignation, was classified as permanent, is reemployed within 39 months after his or her last day of paid service, the governing board of the district shall, disregarding the break in service, classify him or her as, and restore to him or her all of the rights, benefits and burdens of, a permanent employee, except as otherwise provided in this code. However, time spent in active military service, as defined in Section 44800, subsequent to the last day of paid service shall not count as part of the aforesaid 39-month period.

Petitioners understand the collective bargaining provisions currently in place and are not requesting that any school district negotiate for any changes to this language. However, petitioners are not waiving any legal rights that employees may possess under state law or the language of collective bargaining agreements between a school district and its bargaining units to the extent such agreements cover leaves of absence or return rights of employees.

Employees of the County Office of Education or any other entity who leave the employment of the County (or other entity) to work at the Charter School will not have any automatic rights to reemployment unless granted by their former employer, or as otherwise noted above under State law.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

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

Procedures For Background Checks

The Charter School will comply with the provisions of Education Code Section 44237 and 45125.1 regarding the fingerprinting and background clearance of employees, contractors, and volunteers prior to employment and/or any more than limited contact with pupils of the Charter School. The Executive Director/Principal of the School shall monitor compliance with this policy and report to the Board of Directors on a quarterly basis.

Role Of Staff As Mandated Child Abuse Reporters

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

TB Testing

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The Charter School will follow the requirement of Education Code Section 49406 in requiring tuberculosis testing of all employees prior to commencing employment. Employees will select the site for the TB testing and be responsible for the cost of such testing.

Fingerprinting

Fingerprint clearance for new employees will be acquired through submitting the employee's fingerprints to the California Department of Justice. New employees will be required to assume the cost of all fees related to the fingerprinting process.

SAGE will direct employees to a site where "Live Scan" will be utilized. This computerized fingerprinting system enables employers to receive reports from the Department of Justice in approximately 72 hours. Employees will not begin work at SAGE until the fingerprint clearance is received from the Department of Justice.

Immunizations

The Charter School will adhere to all law related to legally required immunizations for entering students pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 120325-120375, and Title 17, California Code of Regulations Section 6000-6075.

Medication in School

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

Vision/Hearing/Scoliosis

The Charter School shall adhere to Education Code Section 49450, et seq., as applicable to the grade levels served by the School.

Emergency Preparedness

The Charter School shall adhere to an Emergency Preparedness Handbook drafted specifically to the needs of the school site. This handbook shall include but not be limited to the following responses: fire, flood, earthquake, terrorist threats, and hostage situations.

Bloodborne Pathogens

The Charter School shall meet state and federal standards for dealing with bloodborne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the workplace. The Board shall establish a written "Exposure Control Plan" designed to protect employees from possible infection due to contact with bloodborne viruses, including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and hepatitis B virus (HBV). Whenever exposed to blood or other body fluids through injury or accident, students, and staff should follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.

Drug Free/Smoke Free Environment

The School shall maintain a drug and alcohol and smoke free environment.

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Integrated Complaint and Investigation Procedure:

The Charter School will develop a comprehensive complaint and investigation procedure to centralize all complaints and concerns coming into the Charter School. Under the direction of the Charter School Board, the directors shall be responsible for investigation, remediation, and follow-up on matters submitted to the Charter School through this procedure.

Comprehensive Sexual Harassment Policies and Procedures

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

Procedures

The Charter School shall adopt procedures to implement the policy statements listed above and submit at least 60 days prior to operation.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

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

Actions That Could Lead to Revocation: Charter School Due Process

In the event that the Ventura County Board of Education determines that the School has engaged in an act that could lead to revocation of the charter, the Ventura County Board of Education or designee and the Charter School shall have a face to face meeting within 10 days of the Board and/or designee's determination that a violation has occurred. Present in the face-to-face meeting shall be at least the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools or designee and the School's Directors. If after such meeting, the Ventura County Board of Education determines that a violation has occurred which requires a cure, the Ventura County Board of Education or designee may send a formal written notification to the School outlining the alleged violation and demanding the violation be cured. The School shall have a reasonable amount of time after the date such formal written notice was sent to cure the violation. If the violation cannot be cured within the time period specified by the Ventura County Board of Education, the parties may agree to another predetermined time to commence to cure and diligently prosecute the cure to completion.

Disputes Between the School and the Charter-Granting Agency

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In the event that the school or granting agency has disputes regarding the terms of this charter or any other issue regarding the Charter School and grantor's relationship, both parties agree to follow the process outlined below.

In the event of a dispute between the Charter School and the grantor, SAGE and Ventura County Board of Education representatives agree to first frame the issue in written format and refer the issue to the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools and SAGE Directors in the "dispute statement." The dispute statement shall set forth the essential facts and provisions of charter or governing law. Each party shall have five days from receipt of the dispute statement to respond. In the event that the Ventura County Board of Education or designee believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter, this shall be specifically noted in the written dispute statement.

SAGE's Directors and Ventura County Superintendent of Schools or designee shall informally meet and confer within ten days of receipt of the dispute statement to attempt to resolve the dispute. If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, within twenty-one (21) days of receipt of the dispute statement the superintendent or designee and Directors shall identify two members of each governing board to participate in a joint meeting to attempt to resolve the dispute. If this does not resolve the dispute, the superintendent or designee and Directors shall identify a neutral, third party mediator to facilitate resolution of the dispute. The mediation shall be held within two months of the joint meeting. The Superintendent of Schools or designee and SAGE Directors and mediator shall develop the format of the mediation session jointly. All timelines under this section may be extended by written mutual agreement of the Parties. If the dispute is not resolved in mediation, both Parties shall have any applicable right of recourse specified in law.

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

Student Admission Policies and Procedures

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

SAGE will actively recruit a diverse student population from the community and surrounding areas who understand and value the School's mission and who are committed to the School's instructional and operational philosophy. Before students are admitted, their parent(s) will be required to attend an orientation meeting to ensure their understanding of and commitment to the School's vision and policies. All families seeking admission will receive extensive information about the SAGE philosophy and educational program, including the suggested parent volunteer commitment, through the following 3-step process: an orientation meeting, a tour of SAGE classrooms, and a full morning visitation for the child and parent in an appropriate SAGE classroom. No student will be denied admission, disenrolled, or otherwise harmed due to their parent/guardian's failure to volunteer. If the family chooses to enroll, a school enrollment form and an Application for Admission will be submitted.

If the number of pupils who wish to attend the Charter School exceeds SAGE's capacity, attendance (except for existing students) shall be determined by a public random drawing during the first week of March. Preferences will be extended (in the following order) to siblings of present students, children of SAGE employees, students who applied but were not admitted in the prior year, and students residing in the Ventura Unified School District. For SAGE's first year of operations, preference will also be extended to Open Classroom students. Parents will be notified of admission in early May. The parents whose children are selected by lottery to attend SAGE will be asked to review and sign the parent/student responsibility contract. This contract may contain suggested volunteer hours, but will not require them. The School shall develop and adopt a comprehensive enrollment policy.

At the conclusion of the lottery, all students who were not granted admission due to capacity shall be given the option to put their name on a wait list, in the order in which their names were drawn, for future openings.

Non-Discrimination

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

SAGE will abide by all applicable state and federal laws regarding admissions and enrollment procedures. SAGE will consider pupils for admission without regard to

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ethnicity, race, national origin, fluency in English, or parent income/educational level. SAGE will strive, through recruiting, to achieve a racial and ethnic balance of students that reflects the general population of the District. SAGE will rigorously recruit students in impacted areas and provide assistance to families in completing and returning registration applications.

SAGE's Outreach Plan shall employ established marketing principles to inform local communities of the unique benefits of the school. This will be accomplished through multiple venues to inform and motivate families to enroll. Once the charter petition is approved, and a school site is established, vigorous outreach plans include: bilingual print materials, mailings to prospective families, advertising in media outlets, internet marketing, public forums, and grass roots efforts. See the section on "students to be served" in this petition for additional details.

The Outreach Plan shall schedule dates, times, and locations of open houses, informational meetings, and other activities in a manner which insures, to the extent possible, that all interested students are able to attend. The Outreach Plan shall be updated each year and shall be considered a provision of this charter such that a material failure of SAGE to comply with the Outreach Plan may subject the School to a notice to cure and potential revocation under Education Code Section 47607(c).

SAGE, in its annual report, shall include student enrollment indicating the racial and ethnic mix of students and the percentage of students from the District and steps taken to ensure a racial and ethnic balance as described herein. The annual report shall disaggregate racial and ethnic class, free and reduced lunch participation percentage, English Learners, and shall include the percentage versus total of those who applied and those who were admitted.

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)

Attendance at SAGE Charter School is entirely voluntary on the part of the students who enroll. District of residence public schools continue to be an option for all students who choose not to attend the SAGE.

Suspension/Expulsion Procedures

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

SAGE's Suspension and Expulsion Policy will focus on developing alternative strategies for addressing student behavior in an effort to prevent the need for suspensions and expulsions, while ensuring the safety of all students, staff, and families at SAGE.

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Students who enroll in SAGE will be given a handbook with all pertinent information, including the Suspension/Expulsion Policy. Expectations for students regarding attendance, mutual respect, work habits, safety, violence, and substance abuse will be clearly described. Each student and his or her parent or guardian will be required to verify that they have reviewed and understood the policies prior to enrollment. Any student who engages in repeated violations of the School's behavioral expectations may be required to attend a meeting with the Teachers Council, the Director of Education, the classroom teacher, and the student's parent or guardian. The group will discuss strategies that have been tried and collaboratively create a specific written agreement, outlining expectations for future student conduct. A support plan to assist the student, timelines, and consequences for failure to meet the expectations will also be provided.

SAGE's Director of Education may, pursuant to the School's adopted policies, discipline and ultimately suspend or recommend for expulsion students who fail to comply with the terms of a remediation agreement. Students who present an immediate threat to health and safety may also be immediately suspended, and later expelled by the School's Governing Board upon recommendation of the Director of Education. The Director of Operations may assume this role in the absence of the Director of Education.

The School's policies will provide all students with an opportunity for due process and will be developed to conform to applicable federal law regarding students with exceptional needs. The School will include suspension and expulsion data in its annual performance report (See Exhibit H for a copy of SAGE's Suspension/Expulsion Policy).

VII. FINANCIAL PLANNING, REPORTING, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

BUDGETS

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.

[Ref. Education Code Section 47605(g)]

Exhibit I includes the following documents:

- A projected 5-year budget including startup costs and a 3% reserve for economic uncertainties.
- Cash Flows and financial projections for the first three years of operation

These documents are based upon the best data available to the petitioners at this time and have been prepared with the assistance of consultants with expertise in public school finance. Any classified positions not specified in the budget (for example, custodian, groundskeepers), will be filled by parent volunteers.

FINANCIAL REPORTING

All governmental funds of the Charter will be reported using the modified accrual accounting method, measuring cash and all other financial assets that can be readily converted to cash. All reporting will conform to the requirements of GASB 34 and all other pertinent governmental accounting and auditing standards.

SAGE will provide financial reports, in the manner prescribed by California's Standardized Account Code Structure (SACS), for the required September 15 report to the Ventura County Office of Education and for the First and Second Interim Reports, Adopted Budgets, and Unaudited Actuals as required by the Education Code.

The Charter will also provide an annual audit, including financial schedules in the aforementioned formats to the Ventura County Office of Education, the County Board of Education, the Controller, and the California Department of Education.

Annually, no later than December 15th, the Charter School shall supply the Ventura County Office of Education with an annual statement of assets and liabilities. It is expected that this information will be included in the annual independent fiscal audit. However, in the event that it is not contained in the audit or the audit is not completed by this date, the Charter School shall submit a separate document to the Ventura County Office of Education containing this information.

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The Charter School shall provide reports to the Ventura County Office of Education as follows in accordance with Education Code Section 47604.33, and may provide additional fiscal reports as requested by the Ventura County Office of Education:

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 Ventura County Office of Education, 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 Ventura County Office of Education shall include an annual statement of all the Charter School's receipts and expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.

INSURANCE

SAGE shall acquire and finance general liability, workers compensation, and other necessary insurance. The charter authorizer and/or Ventura County Board of Education shall be named as an additional insured on all SAGE policies. The amount shall be set forth in a separate memorandum of understanding between the Ventura County Office of Education and SAGE.

Prior to opening, SAGE shall provide evidence of the above insurance coverage to the charter authorizer and/or Ventura County Office of Education.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

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

The petitioners anticipate that the Charter School will provide or procure its own administrative services, including financial management, accounting, personnel transactions, payroll, benefits, and instructional program development.

SAGE will establish a budget development and monitoring procedure. Budget development will be one of the Director of Education's major responsibilities. The monitoring procedure will be a routine and regular process of comparing actual revenues

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and expenditures with the budget plan on a report presented at the monthly board meeting.

Timeline

Upon approval of the charter, if not completed during the charter approval process, the Charter School shall begin MOU negotiations with the charter authorizer and/or Ventura County Office of Education over contracted services, if any. Should services be unavailable, or by July 1, 2006, if no MOU has been executed between the Parties, the Charter School shall obtain its own administrative services either in house or through a third party contractor.

FACILITIES

Governing Law: The facilities to be utilized by the school. The description of facilities to be used by the charter school shall specify where the school intends to locate. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605.6(b)(5)(D)]

SAGE will be requesting a facility from the District under Proposition 39. The attached facility plan describes the area where the school intends to locate and the nature of the facilities that are needed (Exhibit J).

SAGE will develop and submit safety and disaster plans appropriate to the school site prior to the opening of school. These shall include, without limitation, plans for seismic, safety, natural disaster and other emergencies that may occur at the school site. Since these plans are necessarily site specific and the District has yet to respond to the Proposition 39 request from the petitioners, it is unclear what facilities will be occupied by the petitioners. As such, it is not possible to draft safety and disaster plans as part of the charter petition.

SAGE 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.

It is the intent of petitioners to operate within Field Act compliant buildings if the District provides facilities under Proposition 39. If the District denies the Charter School's facilities request or does not accommodate all of the Charter School's students for any reason, the Charter School reserves the right to comply with Build Code requirements rather than Field Act standards as permitted by law.

The petitioners have submitted a request for facilities under Proposition 39, and the petitioners anticipate the maintenance of the facilities will be done in accordance with the Proposition 39 implementing regulations that were adopted by the State Board of Education. The petitioners are prepared to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding with the District to clarify any ambiguities in the responsibility of each of the parties relating to facilities maintenance.

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TRANSPORTATION

The Charter School shall not provide daily transportation to and from School.

AUDITS

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

SAGE will facilitate an annual independent audit of the School's financial affairs. The Board will select and oversee an auditor with education audit experience.

The auditor will examine SAGE's financial statements, attendance, and enrollment accounting practices and will review the school's internal controls. The audit will be conducted in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applicable to SAGE. It is anticipated that the annual audit will be completed four months after the close of the fiscal year, and that a copy of the auditor's findings will be forwarded to the Ventura County Board of Education, the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller and to the CDE by December 15th each year. The Charter School Board's Audit Committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report them to the Charter School Board with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Charter School Board will submit a report to the Ventura County Board of Education and the County Superintendent of Schools describing how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved to the satisfaction of the Ventura County Board of Education. Any disputes regarding the resolution of audit exceptions and deficiencies will be referred to the dispute resolution process contained in this Charter.

CLOSURE PROTOCOL

Governing Law:

“A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for maintenance and transfer of pupil records.”

[Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(p)]

The following procedures shall apply in the event SAGE closes. The following procedures apply regardless of the reason for closure.

Closure of the School will be documented by official action of the Board. The action will identify the reason for closure.

The Board will promptly notify the Ventura County Board of Education and the Ventura County Office of Education of the closure and of the effective date of the closure.

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

As applicable, SAGE will provide parents, students, and the charter authorizer and/or Ventura County Office of Education 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"). SAGE will ask the Ventura County Office of Education to store the records of the charter school but will offer to transfer student records to the district of residence of each student with a copy to the family.

As soon as reasonably practical, but no later than 60 days after closure, SAGE will prepare final financial records. SAGE will also have an independent audit completed as soon as reasonably practical, generally no more than six months after closure. SAGE will pay for the final audit. The audit will be prepared by a qualified Certified Public Accountant selected by SAGE and will be provided to the Ventura County Board of Education and Ventura County Superintendent of Schools promptly upon its completion. In the case that SAGE either does not pay for or have an independent audit completed within one month of the applicable timelines, the Ventura County Board of Education or designee may, at its option, pay for an audit to be completed and subtract such payment from any funds due to the Charter School.

Upon closure of SAGE, all assets of the school derived from state revenues, including but not limited to all leaseholds, personal property, intellectual property, and all ADA apportionments and other revenues generated by students attending SAGE, shall be returned to the State of California upon the dissolution of the nonprofit public benefit corporation in accordance with the nonprofit's Articles of Incorporation. Upon closure of SAGE, all assets of the school derived from fundraising may either be donated to the State of California or distributed to another governmental entity engaged in public education. On closure, SAGE shall remain solely responsible for all liabilities arising from the operation of the School. SAGE will file a final tax return before dissolution of the nonprofit corporation.

Since SAGE is organized as a nonprofit public benefit corporation, the Board will follow the procedures set forth in the California Corporations Code for the dissolution of a nonprofit public benefit corporation, which may include bankruptcy, and file all necessary documents with the appropriate state and federal agencies.

VIII. IMPACT ON THE CHARTER AUTHORIZER

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

POTENTIAL CIVIL LIABILITY EFFECTS

Intent

This statement is intended to fulfill the terms of Education Code Section 47605(g) and provide information regarding the proposed operation of SAGE and its potential effects upon the Ventura County Board/ Office of Education.

Civil Liability

SAGE will be operated as a California non-profit public benefit corporation. The corporation is organized and will operate exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 23701(d). In accordance with the Charter Schools Act, California Education Code Section 47600, et seq., one of the objectives of the corporation is to provide public education for residents of the State of California.

Pursuant to Education Code 47604(c), any entity that grants a charter to a charter school operated by or as a non-profit benefit corporation shall not be liable for the debts or obligations of the charter school or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the charter school if the authority has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law. SAGE will work to assist the Ventura County Board/Office of Education/Superintendent of Schools in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including monthly meetings, reporting, or other requested protocol to ensure the Ventura County Board/Office of Education/Superintendent of Schools will not be liable for the operation of SAGE.

SAGE and the Ventura County Board of Education/Office of Education will enter into a memorandum of understanding, (MOU) which will provide for reciprocal indemnification.

The corporate bylaws of SAGE will provide for indemnification of the School's Board of Directors, officers, agents, and employees, and SAGE will purchase general liability insurance, Director's and Officer's insurance, and fidelity bonding to secure against financial risks. Insurance amounts will be determined by recommendation of the insurance company for schools of similar size, location, and type of program. The Ventura County Office of Education will be named an additional insured on SAGE's general liability insurance.

The Board of Directors will institute appropriate risk management practices, including employee screening, the establishment of codes of conduct for students, staff, and participating families, and procedures governing financial transactions and dispute resolution.

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Conclusion:

By approving this charter, the Ventura County Office of Education will be fulfilling the intent of the Charter Schools Act to increase learning opportunities for all pupils; create new professional opportunities for teachers; and provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in education and following the directive of law to encourage the creation of Charter Schools. To this end, SAGE pledges to work cooperatively with the Ventura County Board/Office of Education to answer any concerns over this document and to present the Ventura County Board/ Office of Education with the strongest possible proposal for approval of the charter. The term of the charter shall be for five (5) years. Renewal of the charter shall be governed by the standards and criteria in Education Code Section 47605.