

Riversage School Charter Petition

Submitted to Tahoe Truckee Unified School District
Term: July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2028

Certificate of Completeness

Riversage School - New Independent Charter School

Petitioner hereby submits this charter petition to the district, and deems it to be complete, containing all requirements for a new charter school petition.

Signature of Lead Petitioner:

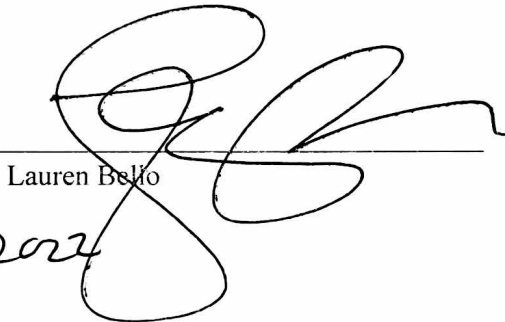

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Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Affirmations	6
Element 1: Educational Program	9
A. VISION	9
B. MISSION	9
C. DESIGN FOR DIVERSITY & SUSTAINABILITY	9
D. WHOM THE SCHOOL IS INTENDING TO EDUCATE	10
E. AN EDUCATED PERSON IN THE 21ST CENTURY	14
Partnership for 21st Century skills	15
Academic Excellence	17
Social Emotional Literacy	17
Eco-literacy	18
F. HOW LEARNING BEST OCCURS AT RIVERSAGE SCHOOL	20
History of Waldorf Education	20
Foundational Research	20
G. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGIES & APPROACHES	23
Waldorf Core Principles	23
California State Standards	25
Waldorf /Common Core Articulation	25
Collaboration with Partners	26
H. ACADEMIC PROGRAM– Curriculum & Instruction	28
Transitional Kindergarten / Kindergarten	28
A Typical Day in the Grades	29
Grades 1 to 8	30
Independent Study	34
Grades Curricular Overview	35
I. DIVERSE LEARNERS	40
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students	40
Youth in Foster System &/or Experiencing Homelessness	42
Students who are academically under performing	44
Students Who Are Academically High Achieving	46
English Learners	47
Students with Disabilities	55
Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504	61
J. LOCAL CONTROL & ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN (LCAP)	63
K. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	63

Element 2— Measurable Pupil Outcomes	65
A. MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES	65
B. CHARTER SCHOOL OUTCOMES ALIGNED TO STATE PRIORITIES	65
Element 3— Assessment Methods	75
A. ASSESSMENTS	75
B. DATA SOURCES	77
California School Dashboard	77
CAASPP Results & Curriculum Assessments	77
C. COMMUNICATING ASSESSMENT RESULTS	78
D. PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY	79
Element 4 – Governance	80
Public Operating Principles	80
Governance Structure	80
Governing Board Major Roles and Responsibilities	81
Organization Charts	82
Leadership Major Roles and Responsibilities	85
Advisory Board	88
Stakeholder Involvement	91
Element 5 – Employee Qualifications	94
Element 6 – Health and Safety Procedures	102
Element 7 – Means to Achieve Racial and Ethnic Balance as well as a Balance of Special Education Students & English Learners	106
Element 8 – Admission Requirements	110
Element 9 – Annual Financial Audits	115
Element 10 – Suspension and Expulsion Procedures	117
Element 11 – Employee Retirement Systems	133
Element 12 – Public School Attendance Alternatives	134
Element 13 – Rights of District Employees	135
Element 14 – Mandatory Dispute Resolution	136
A. Overview of Dispute Resolution Process	136
B. Disputes between Sierra Sage Board or Riversage School and its Authorizer	136
C. Disputes Arising Within Riversage School	137
Element 15 – Charter School Closure Procedures	139
A. Revocation	139
B. Amendments and Severability	139

C. Closing Procedures	139
Miscellaneous Provisions	142
A. Business and Operations Management	142
B. Inquiries and Notifications	142
C. Charter Term	142
D. Charter School Revolving Loan Fund	142
E. Food Service Program	143
F. Financial Plan	143
G. Facilities	144
H. Civil Liability Impact	145
Appendix	
A. Waldorf Frameworks Sample - 4th Grade Math	
B. Progress Report with Power Goals Sample - 4th Grade Mathematics	
C. Draft Calendar, Bell Schedule, and Instructional Minutes Calculation	
D. Articles of Incorporation and Draft Revised Bylaws	
E. List of Founders for purposes of Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B)	
F. Current Governing Board Member Biographies and Key Future Personnel Resumes / CVs	
G. Five Year Budget and Financial Projection	
H. Petition Signatures - Meaningfully Interested Students and Teachers	

Introduction

Waldorf Education in the Public Schools

In a 2015 study of a Sacramento Waldorf-methods charter, the Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education cites the transition to Common Core as a key reason to “broaden our understanding of the purpose and essential components of a well-rounded education to better prepare students to both survive within and solve the problems of our world.”¹ In the study they identify these “key ideas” from their observations of Waldorf-informed charter classrooms:

- The teacher teaches the child rather than the subject;
- Every child develops at their own pace;
- Children move through different developmental stages in which they need different learning environments to thrive;
- Children access learning through multiple learning modalities: art, music, handwork, movement, speech, reading, storytelling, hands-on experimentation, practical life skills, and connection to nature. These modalities are taught both discretely and through an interdisciplinary approach;
- Teachers monitor and respond to children’s developmental stages and optimal learning modalities by adjusting their instruction, including the needs of special education students and English Language Learners;
- Long-term relationships with teachers support students’ development.²

Riversage School will:

- Provide the Tahoe-Truckee community with a unique academic program not available at this time in Tahoe-Truckee public schools
- Enroll approximately 240 students in grades TK to 8 by year five
- Be governed by a local nonprofit board
- Provide a program that embraces Waldorf Core Principles, is fully aligned with the California Common Core State Standards, and is based upon four building blocks
 - Academic Excellence;
 - Social-Emotional Literacy;
 - Eco Literacy; and
 - Digital Literacy.

Stability & Sustainability

- Our founding families have secured property and a facility for our school. We plan to be located at 12640 Union Mills Road, Truckee CA 96161 or a similar location within the district.

¹ Friedlaender, D., Beckham, K., Zheng, X., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2015). *Growing a Waldorf-Inspired Approach in a Public School District*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education.

² IBID

- Our faculty has been identified and includes nine teachers who are already residents of the Tahoe-Truckee area.
- Our board includes expertise in fields such as the science and technology industries; business expertise in human resources and finance; extensive educational experience, particularly with Waldorf pedagogy and charter school operations and finance; entrepreneurial and strategic planning; public school facilities knowledge; and community representation as all are residents of the Tahoe-Truckee area.
- Local partners include:
 - Friends of Tahoe Truckee Waldorf
 - Vilda Nature enrichment programs
 - Gradalis Teacher Education [ACCET Accredited]
 - Bespoke + Atelier
 - Hobo Farms
 - New Moon Natural Foods
 - The Genesis Group Design-Build Contracting firm
 - Riverside Studios
 - Coalition Snow
 - Independent Technologies (IT services)

Affirmations

Riversage School (RS) will follow any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to RS, including but not limited to:

- Shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required pursuant to Education Code Section 60605 and any other statewide standards authorized in statute or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- Shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of RS for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605 (c)(6)]
- Shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(1)]
- Shall not charge tuition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(1)]
- Shall admit all students who wish to attend RS, and who submit a timely application, unless RS receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case each application will be given equal chance of admission through a public random drawing process. Except as required by Education Code Section 47605(e)(2) and described herein, admission to RS shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the student or the student's parents within the State. Preference in a public random drawing shall be provided as described in Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B). In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of RS in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(C). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(A)-(C)].
- Shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics), and shall not request a pupil's records or require a parent, guardian, or pupil to submit the pupil's records to Riversage before enrollment.. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(e)(1)]
- Shall not discourage a pupil from enrolling or seeking to enroll in Riversage for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in clause (iii) of subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2) of Education Code Section 47605(d)(4);
- Shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004.
- Shall meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to, credentials, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)]
- Shall ensure that teachers at RS hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools is 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)]

- Shall at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
- Shall, for each fiscal year, offer, at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D).
- Shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum number of school days. [Ref Title 5 California Code of Regulations §11960]
- Shall notify, within 30 days, the superintendent of the school district of any pupil who is expelled or leaves RS without graduating or completing the school year for any reason. The school district notified shall be determined by the pupil's last known address. RS shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card and health information. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(e)(3)]
- Shall review and update the school safety plans by March 1 of each school year, which shall include the safety topics listed in subparagraphs (A) to (H), inclusive, of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Education Code Section 32282 and procedures for conducting tactical responses to criminal incidents pursuant to Education Code Sections 47605, 47605.6.
- Shall maintain and regularly test onsite Automated External Defibrillators (AED pursuant to Education Code Section 35179.6).
- Shall notify students and parents or guardians of pupils on how to initiate access to available student mental health services on campus or in the community, pursuant to Education Code Section 49428.
- Shall adopt procedures for preventing acts of bullying, including cyberbullying pursuant to Education Code Sections 234.4 and 32283.5.
- Shall provide two meals free of charge (breakfast and lunch) during each school day to students requesting a meal, regardless of their free or reduced-price meal eligibility.
- Shall ensure all pupils in grades 7-8 receive comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education in accordance with Education Code Sections 51930 through 51937, including the provision for parents to opt their students out of this instruction.
- Shall adopt and implement a policy on pupil suicide prevention pertaining to grades 7 and 8 pursuant to Education Code Section 215.
- Shall include the national suicide prevention hotline number on pupil identification cards for grades 7 and 8 per Education Code Section 215.5.
- Shall inform pupils in grades 6 through 8 of human trafficking prevention resources and the methods to implement the methods identified per Education Code Section 49381.
- Shall, pursuant to Education Code Section 48985, provide notices to parents in languages other than English if 15 percent or more of the pupils enrolled in Riversage speak a single primary language other than English, as determined from the census data pursuant to Section 52164 in the preceding year, all notices, reports, statements, or records sent to the parent or guardian of any such pupil by RS shall, in addition to being written in English, will be written in the primary language, and may be responded to either in English or the primary language.
- Shall comply with all provisions under Education Code Section 47605(e)(4):

- (A) shall not discourage a pupil from enrolling or seeking to enroll in Riversage for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in clause (iii) of subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2).
- (B) shall not request a pupil's records or require a parent, guardian, or pupil to submit the pupil's records to Riversage before enrollment.
- (C) shall not encourage a pupil currently attending Riversage to disenroll from Riversage or transfer to another school for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(iii). This subparagraph shall not apply to actions taken by RS pursuant to the procedures described in Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(J)..
- (D) shall develop a notice of the requirements of this paragraph. This notice shall be posted on RS's internet website. RS shall provide a parent or guardian, or a pupil if the pupil is 18 years of age or older, a copy of this notice at all of the following times: when a parent, guardian, or pupil inquires about enrollment; before conducting an enrollment lottery; and before disenrollment of a pupil.
- (E) A person who suspects that Riversage has violated this subparagraph may file a complaint with the chartering authority.
- Shall encourage parental involvement, but shall notify parents and guardians of applicant pupils and currently enrolled pupils that parental involvement is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at RS [Ref. Education Code 47605(n)]
- RS shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection. [Ref. Education Code Section 47612.5(a)]
- RS shall on a regular basis consult with parents and teachers regarding RS's education programs. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)]
- RS shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities. [Ref. Education Code Sections 47605 and 47605.1]
- RS shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment. [Ref. Education Code Sections 47612(b), 47610]
- RS shall comply with all applicable portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
- RS shall comply with Education Code Section 47604.1 and be subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act, the Public Records Act, the Political Reform Act, and Government Code Section 1090 *et seq.*, as they may be amended from time to time.
- RS shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
- RS shall comply with Article 5.5 (sections 51745–51749.3) of Chapter 5 of Part 28 of the Education Code and implement regulations adopted thereafter for the purpose of implementing short-term independent study.



Tracy Bondi
Lead Petitioner

Element 1: Educational Program

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

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

A. VISION

Riversage School provides a free, comprehensive public education to families in the Truckee-Tahoe Region, integrating academics, arts, movement, nature, and social responsibility into everyday learning. Through a culture of holistic learning, our students, teachers, faculty, and families emerge as confident, creative, strong critical thinkers and environmental stewards, empowered to act positively in their own lives and communities. Our community honors and nurtures the whole child – head, heart, and hands – by engaging the mind, enlivening the imagination, and strengthening the will.

B. MISSION

Riversage School nurtures our students’ intellectual, social, emotional, and physical capacities through an artistic, hands-on, interdisciplinary education based upon the Waldorf Core Principles; each child blossoms into an imaginative, engaged, competent, life-long learner who is empowered to create a more equitable and sustainable world.

C. DESIGN FOR DIVERSITY & SUSTAINABILITY

Diversity

We define diversity in its broadest sense, including race/ethnicity, gender, language, socioeconomic status, ability, religious beliefs, political affiliations, immigration status, and family composition. A free, public education based upon Waldorf Core Principles will increase access to a Waldorf education; our community will be enriched as we evolve into an organization that is diverse by design. In our hiring we will seek out teachers who are bilingual, especially Spanish speakers, and we will ensure we have Spanish speakers on our staff and that outreach is in English and Spanish. Students will begin Spanish classes in first grade and continue through eighth and our curriculum will be global and intercultural. Our Compassionate Campus will teach students how to respect and acknowledge the diversity of our lived experiences and value multiple versions of success.

Sustainability

Riversage School’s governing board will be the local nonprofit board Little Gems of the Sierra, which has provided the Tahoe/Truckee community with a preschool education rooted in Waldorf Core Principles since 2019. Our success is demonstrated by our full enrollment and a waitlist of over 150 students. With this charter petition, we seek to ensure our families continue to have access to a multi-faceted learning environment that embraces the individual and varied learning styles of a diverse student body. At Riversage School, students will experience learning in both traditional and innovative ways that blend content, modalities, approaches, and pedagogies.

Our governance is structured to support a vibrant and diverse community, and ensure organizational stability and longevity. Regularly scheduled long-term strategic planning and board training will ensure adherence to best practices for nonprofit public charter school boards. Board members will have expertise in education, governance, finance, non-profit leadership, and familiarity with our local community. To ensure a robust and high-functioning board and administrative team, our leadership will be trained in and practice proven leadership frameworks, including Franklin Covey’s thirteen behaviors of high trust³ and Marzano’s research on effective schools and educational leadership,⁴ in order to create an effective, equitable, and sustainable learning community.

D. WHOM THE SCHOOL IS INTENDING TO EDUCATE

Riversage School’s unique school design offers families with students attending grades TK-8 in Truckee / Tahoe and surrounding communities a quality public school choice. Our multifaceted learning environment embraces the individual and varied learning styles of all students and is tailored to meet the needs of those who learn best by doing. In our classrooms, students experience learning in both traditional and innovative ways that blend a multitude of content sources, learning modalities, instructional approaches, and pedagogies.

Riversage’s Waldorf education program is well suited for:

- Students who would find greater success in a developmentally appropriate environment that focuses on both academic and social emotional learning
- Students whose learning style may limit their ability to achieve their learning potential in a conventional classroom employing traditional methods
- Students designated as English learners, foster youth, and free and reduced price meal (“FRPM”)-eligible students who can benefit from a unique and supportive school design
- Students who are high achieving, engaged, self-directed and independent thinkers
- Students with disabilities for whom a least restrictive or modified inclusion model is deemed appropriate

³Covey, S. M. R. (2008). *The Speed of Trust*. Simon & Schuster.

⁴ Marzano, R (2003). *What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action*. ASCD

Demographics of community schools

For the 2021-22 school year enrollment in schools near our proposed location was:

Enrollment Nearby Public Schools K-8								
	Glenshire Elementary		Alder Creek Middle		Yuba River Charter		Sierra Expeditionary Learning School	
Total Enrollment	483		598		303		212	
	Ethnicities*							
	Num ber	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
African American	0	0	0	0	1	0.3%	1	0.5%
American Indian / Alaska Native	0	0	1	0.2%	1	0.3%	0	0
Asian/Pacific Islander	0	0	1	0.2%	6	1.3%	4	1.8%
Hispanic or Latino	46	9.5%	205	34.3%	25	8.3%	65	30.7%
White	406	84.1%	370	61.9%	243	80.2%	130	61.3%
2 or More Races	22	4.6%	17	2.8%	26	8.6%	9	4.2%
Not Reported/ Other	9	1.9%	4	0.7%	1	0.3%	3	1.4%
	Student Groups**							
FRLM- Eligible	53	11.0%	170	28.4%	151	49.8%	52	24.5%
English Learners	14	2.9%	64	10.7%	1	0.3%	26	12.3%
Students with Disabilities	51	10.6%	79	13.2%	23	7.6%	35	16.5%
Migrant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Homeless Youth	0	0	3	0.5%	1	0.3%	0	0
*CDE Dataquest (report accessed May 23, 2021) "2021-2021 Enrollment by ethnicity"								
**CDE Dataquest (report accessed May 23, 2022) "2021-2022 Enrollment by subgroup"								

For the 2021-22 school year enrollment in public schools in the region was:

K-12 Enrollment Regional Demographics										
Name	Total	African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Filipino	Hispanic or Latino	Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races	Not Reported
Tahoe-Truckee Unified	4,165	0.1%	0.1%	0.5%	0.1%	35.1%	0.1%	58.8%	3.8%	1.4%
El Dorado County	30,367	0.9%	0.8%	4.3%	1.4%	20.4%	0.2%	65.6%	5.4%	1.0%
Nevada County	10,745	1.1%	0.9%	0.9%	0.3%	20.8%	0.1%	63.7%	5.9%	6.2%
Placer County	74,446	2.0%	0.5%	7.2%	3.1%	22.0%	0.4%	56.2%	7.3%	1.3%

**CDE Dataquest (report accessed May 23, 2022 and Sep 3, 2022) "2021-2022 Enrollment by ethnicity"*

Student groups	El Dorado County	Nevada County	Placer County	Tahoe- Truckee Unified
English Learners	6.2%	2.2%	7.6%	14.2%
Foster Youth	0.4%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%
Homeless Youth	1.9%	1.9%	1.1%	0.3%
Migrant Education	0	0	0	0
Students with Disabilities	13.0%	12.8%	11.6%	13.1%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	29.0%	46.6%	26.2%	31.4%

** CDE Dataquest (report accessed May 23, 2022 and Sep 3, 2022) "2021-22 Enrollment by Subgroup"*

Demographics of Golden Valley Tahoe

The previous charter school on the site, which operated from 2018 to 2022, had the following demographics in 2020, its peak year of enrollment.

Golden Valley Tahoe Charter School		
	Number	%
Total Enrollment*	107	100
African American	1	0.9%
American Indian/ Alaska Native	1	0.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2	1.9%
Hispanic or Latino	13	12.1%
White	86	80.4%
Two or More Races	4	3.7%
Not Reported/ Other	0	0
FRLM-Eligible**	22	20.6%
English Learners	1	0.9%
Students with Disabilities	6	5.6%
Migrant	0	0
Homeless Youth	3	2.8%
<p><i>*CDE Dataquest (report accessed May 23, 2021) "2021-2021 Enrollment by ethnicity"</i></p> <p><i>**CDE Dataquest (report accessed May 23, 2022) "2021-2022 Enrollment by subgroup"</i></p>		

Riversage Five-Year Enrollment Roll-out Plan

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
TK	25	27	27	27	27
K	25	27	27	27	27
1	22	24	24	24	24
2	22	22	24	24	24
3	13	22	22	24	24
4	13	13	22	22	24
5	13	13	13	17	22
6	16	15	20	24	24
7	10	16	15	20	24
8	6	10	16	15	20
Total	165	189	210	229	240

Based on our experience and the experience of other charter leaders, the percentage of high needs students is likely to increase over time. Leaders of other Waldorf-informed or whole-child charter schools report that their proportion of English Learners and of students with exceptionalities increases as their schools become established in their communities. We may be serving homeless students from the outset, as Golden Valley Tahoe School’s percentage of homeless students was higher than the county’s. However, smaller enrollment numbers can skew percentages.

E. AN EDUCATED PERSON IN THE 21ST CENTURY

An educated person is one who has fully developed their personal and unique potential and has the confidence, initiative, and resourcefulness to take responsibility for their place as a citizen in the world.

The following are integral academic attributes of an educated person for the 21st century:

- Literacy and language development; the ability to clearly articulate ideas, think critically, and communicate both orally and in writing.
- An ability to think creatively and to use analysis and logic to solve problems.
- A clear understanding of mathematical concepts and how they relate to the world.
- An ability to observe, gather, organize, and analyze information.
- A significant knowledge of history, geography, language, and cultural practices, both locally and globally.
- An understanding of the major concepts underlying physical, earth, and life science, and a working knowledge of scientific inquiry and method.
- Ability to express oneself artistically.

The following are significant personal attributes of an educated person for the 21st century:

- A sense of self that provides inner strength, confidence, and fortitude.

- Perseverance and the ability to focus on the challenges of working on tasks to completion.
- Confidence, compassion, and a social conscience; a deep respect for the environment.
- Self-respect to help create and maintain healthy relationships and work cooperatively with others.
- Enthusiasm, open-minded inquiry, and curiosity; self-motivated, competent and lifelong learning capability.
- Knowledge of the political/social processes at work locally, nationally, and internationally.
- A sense of aesthetics and an appreciation for the arts and music.

Partnership for 21st Century skills

In March of 2013, the California Department of Education joined the Partnership for 21st Century State Leadership Network to help prepare students for Common Core State Standards and Career Readiness Standards.

The Partnership for 21st Century Framework was developed to help practitioners integrate skills into the teaching of core academic subjects. This Framework proposes the skills, knowledge, and expertise students must master to succeed in work and life, including the following essential skills:

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Critical Thinking
- Creativity

The P21 Framework identifies key subjects and themes that are essential to student success in the 21st Century.⁵

According to the framework, the teaching of key subjects, such as English language arts, world languages, mathematics, economics, science, geography, history, government, and civics, must be suffused with interdisciplinary themes:

- Global Awareness
- Financial, Economic, Business, and Entrepreneurial Literacy
- Civic Literacy
- Health Literacy
- Environmental Literacy

Riversage School's school design and instructional program nurtures intellectual, social and emotional, and physical capacities through an artistic, hands-on, interdisciplinary approach to core academic subjects. The Waldorf educational approach develops graduates who are adept at reading the world around them. An international survey of graduates of Waldorf Education found that the former students credited their Waldorf education with influencing or strongly influencing the graduates in the following areas⁶:

⁵ P21 Framework (2019) Accessed May 20, 2022
https://static.battelleforkids.org/documents/p21/P21_Framework_Brief.pdf

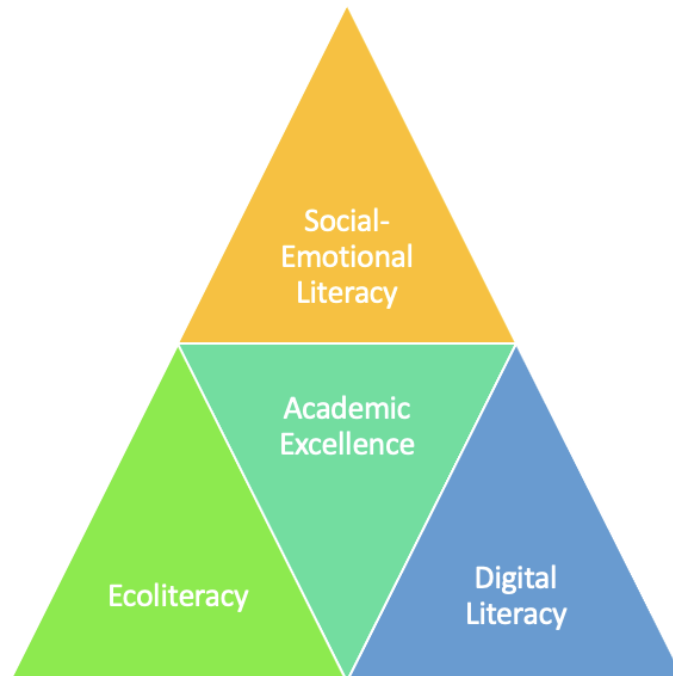
⁶ Mitchell, D & Gerwin, D. *Research Survey of Waldorf Graduates, Phase 2* (Research Institute for Waldorf Education, 2007) Retrieved from

- Multiple intelligences and cross-disciplinary learners
- Global consciousness and sustainability
- Basis for moral navigation
- Creative problem solving
- High levels of social/emotional intelligence
- Environmental stewardship

The Waldorf Educational approach is rooted in the Ancient Greek notion that education in the Liberal Arts supports a holistic development of being human. Although it may seem counterintuitive that a notion over 2,500 years old is relevant to 21st Century preparedness, the rapid change our students face in today's world necessitates that they are taught how to learn and how to retain their humanity.

While Riversage School adheres to some age-old ideas about learning, we also take an approach of openness to innovation and modernization of specific curricular areas. To address the current cultural times, Riversage School has identified four building blocks, which will ensure our program prepares students for an unknown future. The rigorous and engaging academics of Waldorf Education will be supported by explicit attention to:

- Social-Emotional Literacy– Compassionate Campus
- Ecoliteracy– Environmental Education Initiative & Outdoor Education
- Digital Literacy–Cyber Civics



https://www.waldorflibrary.org/books/3/view_bl/52/ebooks/178/research-survey-of-waldorf-graduates-phase-2-ebook

Academic Excellence

Academic Excellence is the ability to think critically, transfer knowledge, and undertake original thinking with creativity and imagination. Riversage School's arts integrated, interdisciplinary, and developmentally differentiated "Main/Expeditionary Blocks" present core subjects in 3 to 4 week units. These units engage students in thematic deep dives into content. The content of instruction is guided by the Waldorf framework document (See sample in Appendix A). These are cross-correlated to the California Common Core State Standards (CA CCSS). The science eco-literacy curriculum is cross-correlated to NGSS. History-Social Sciences standards are integrated in a transdisciplinary approach into English Language Arts and Math expeditionary lessons in each grade. History-Social Sciences standards are also taught in Cyber Civics.

Social Emotional Literacy

Emotional literacy is one's ability to "read," recognize, and respond appropriately to emotions and feelings in oneself and in others. Social literacy is learning how to build and maintain respectful relationships. The foundation of social emotional wellbeing is the ability to develop self-reflection and effective problem solving skills. This serves as the foundation for respect for oneself and differing lifestyles, views and beliefs of others. We strive to be a caring community where social and academic learning are fully integrated throughout the school day, and where students are nurtured to be strong, ethical, critical thinkers.

Riversage School will implement the Compassionate Campus program, which uses student-to-student interactions with coaching from teachers in real-life situations to hone students' empathy skills over the course of each school year. This program was awarded a Townsend Press Prize and a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Prize in the Ashoka Changemakers Activating Empathy competition.

Compassionate Campus includes Restorative Practices - a continuum of holistic, proactive approaches to school culture. Restorative Practices are built on the understanding that children develop prosocial skills best in the presence of firm, clear boundaries and expectations, and persistent, motivational support from authoritative, fair, relationally connected adults.⁷ Furthermore, "the fundamental premise of Restorative Practices is that people are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes when those in authority do things WITH them, rather than TO them or FOR them."⁸

Waldorf teacher education ensures teachers have a clear understanding of child development and of the social-emotional work that is typically associated with different stages of child development. Social-emotional skills are taught explicitly, and practiced during classroom activities and challenges. Areas for individual growth are addressed both directly and indirectly through theater, story-telling, debate, and other approaches.

⁷ Thorsborne, M., & Blood, P. (2013). *Implementing restorative practice in schools: A practical guide to transforming school communities*. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

⁸ International Institute for Restorative Practices. (2017). Retrieved from <http://www.iirp.edu/>

Eco-literacy

Environmental literacy is a crucial outcome of K-12 education for California’s students. According to California’s Blueprint for Environmental Literacy “an environmentally literate person has the capacity to act individually and with others to support ecologically sound, economically prosperous, and equitable communities for present and future generations. Through lived experiences and education programs that include classroom-based lessons, experiential education, and outdoor learning, students will become environmentally literate, developing the knowledge, skills, and understanding of environmental principles to analyze environmental issues and make informed decisions.”⁹ As educators, we are responsible for making sure all students understand the Environmental Principles and Concepts as outlined in the Science, History-Social Studies, and Health Frameworks, and as codified in CA Education Code as a result of SB720 (2018). We also are responsible for ensuring that students have regular and rich interactions with and in nature in order to foster their appreciation for the natural world and how they are situated within it.



Experts at Stanford University systematically searched the academic literature and analyzed 119 peer-reviewed studies published over a 20-year period that measured the impacts of environmental education for K-12 students. The studies reviewed demonstrate that environmental education leads to a number of positive impacts, from improving academic performance, to enhancing critical thinking skills, to developing personal growth and life-building skills including confidence, autonomy, and leadership. In addition, a number of the studies showed that environmental education also increased civic engagement and positive environmental behaviors.¹⁰

⁹ <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/sc/documents/envronliteracyblueprint.pdf> . Page 11

¹⁰ Ardoin, N, et. al. “Environmental education and K-12 student outcomes: A review and analysis of research” (Sep 29, 2017) *The Journal of Environmental Education* <https://doi.org/10.1080/00958964.2017.1366155>

As Riversage School students move through our Ecoliteracy program, they will develop the ability to perceive social needs and global concerns. They will learn how to contribute to the well-being of the communities in which they are a member (including their home, school, neighborhood, country, and the greater world). Through increasing awareness and sensitivity toward social, cultural, and environmental concerns, students will apply leadership and problem solving skills to make a measurable difference in their community and society. By accessing resources in the community, Riversage School will provide students with developmentally appropriate opportunities for civic engagement and leadership; building their understanding of the myriad ways they can contribute to society. When students identify and research community problems, share and implement solutions and measure their impact, they are both practicing academic skills and concepts and realizing the value of learning; learning is relevant and empowering. Riversage School students will collaborate with teachers, parents, and the larger community to apply their knowledge and leadership skills in a real-world context.

Digital Literacy

Digital literacy is a key part of preparing students for an uncertain and rapidly changing world. The American Library Association’s digital-literacy task force offers this definition: “Digital literacy is the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills.”¹¹

In grades TK-4, families are encouraged to limit students’ access to screens. Both the World Health Organization (WHO) and American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) have advised eliminating or limiting screen time for younger children. There are reasons for concern over the large amounts of time tweens and teens spend on computers, gaming devices and smartphones. Correlational studies have shown that 8- to 11-year-olds who exceed screen time recommendations scored lower on cognitive assessments. A combination of screen time and too little sleep has also been associated with heightened impulsivity in the same age group. A systematic review of the research on teens’ screen time, published by University College London psychologist Neza Stiglic, PhD, and Russell Viner, PhD, a professor of adolescent health, found firm associations between screen time and obesity and screen time and depressive symptoms.¹² Riversage School will encourage families to minimize students’ time on screens until the upper grades and then carefully curate screen-based activities and facilitate time spent away from screens. Riversage School will provide workshops for parents exploring the impact of digital technology on children and providing strategies for supporting and protecting children in age-appropriate use of technology.

Riversage School intentionally develops students’ capacity to use, respect and understand technology, starting with older forms of technology, like pencils and paintbrushes, and gradually increasing the complexity until digital technologies are introduced. In the second semester of grade 5, Riversage School students begin Cyber Civics, which teaches students how to protect themselves from online harms and how to navigate the risks of social media. The Cyber Civics program includes at-home activities for families, engaging the entire school community in creating a campus supportive of positive digital skills and norms. The lessons are aligned to both Common Core ELA Standards, ISTE Technology Standards for Students, and CASEL Core SEL Competencies.

¹¹ American Library Association. Accessed June 9, 2022 <https://alair.ala.org/handle/11213/16260>

¹² Pappas, S, (April 1, 2020) *American Psychological Association*
<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2020/04/cover-kids-screens>

F. HOW LEARNING BEST OCCURS AT RIVERSAGE SCHOOL

Riversage School’s design is guided by the core principles of public Waldorf education and grounded in research that informs our educational program and classroom methodologies. By taking the foundational elements of this research, adapting it to meet our students’ needs, and framing it within Waldorf core principles, we are able to ensure that each of our students grows and develops. As a deeply reflective teaching community, we will use our direct experience to consider research and locally apply it to our context, thereby resulting in greater successes to our educational program and instructional approach.

History of Waldorf Education

Waldorf education is the fastest growing independent and public school movement in the world. Currently there are over 70 Public Waldorf Schools in the United States with 23 located in the state of California.

The modern philosophy behind “Waldorf” education is based on an innovative school started in Stuttgart, Germany in 1919 by the Austrian philosopher, scientist, and thinker Rudolf Steiner. In responding to a request to start a school during the cultural upheaval in Germany following World War I, Steiner outlined a model for education that has since inspired many schools called “Waldorf” after the first Steiner school. At its very inception, the first Waldorf school embraced a sense of equity and social responsibility: educating boys and girls together, being open to all children, stretching across a wide range of grades, and involving teachers in school governance. Underlying all instruction is a three-fold model of human development, which acknowledges how children develop in three key capacities– 1) to “will”, meaning to move and to do, 2) to feel, and 3) to think. Riversage School’s approach to education practice is built on this rich Waldorf philosophy and commitment to education for social renewal.

While many Waldorf schools are independent schools and people may perceive them as places chosen by mostly middle- and upper-middle-class families, Waldorf education has its roots as a vehicle to educate children from low-income environments.¹³ Over the past 20 years, the number of public schools using Waldorf Core Principles has risen quickly, from a dozen in 2000 to 45 in 2010, with another 30 expected to open this year, according to the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, a non-profit membership group for public Waldorf schools. Many are charter schools.

Foundational Research

Small Learning Communities

Riversage School believes that small learning communities promote more personal and supportive relationships between and among students, teachers, parents, and their communities. The benefits of small schools, which are well documented in research, include: improved student attitudes towards school; lower incidences of negative social behavior such as truancy, classroom disruption, vandalism, aggressive behavior, etc.; higher levels of extracurricular participation in a greater variety of activities; higher attendance rates, especially for students of color and low SES students; improved retention rates;

¹³ Oberman, I (Mar 1997) “The Mystery of Waldorf” *ERIC* <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED409988.pdf>

improved students' self concepts and sense of belonging; and favorable interpersonal relationships among students.¹⁴

Looping

Vygotsky, Piaget, and Bruner all emphasize cognitive development as being intimately linked to the brain's construction of knowledge within a social context.^{15 16 17} Their research has been instrumental in providing a foundation for looping practices that support educational environments where a single group of students stays with a teacher for two (or more) years or grade levels. The students and the teacher remain together as the class is promoted.

When students and teachers stay together for multiple years—a strategy some call looping—they do not have to spend time re-establishing relationships and developing norms and routines, and they can devote much more time to the business of learning. Teachers can come to know their students and families well, and can organize their teaching to take advantage of student strengths and experiences and to address student needs.¹⁸ Additionally, multi-year relationships between teacher and student create a familiarity with the social-emotional health of a student and provides for deeper understanding of the whole child to guide instructional decisions. Riversage School's looping classroom environments are a critical component to the success of our school design. It is a key to the success of our School-Family Partnership as it encourages and develops a stronger sense of community and family among parents, students, and teachers.¹⁹

Our process for looping is detailed in our looping policy. Typically there are two loops— from first to fifth and from sixth to eighth. If a teacher petitions to continue with a class beyond this, then school leadership considers the social-emotional implications, academic preparedness and teacher capacity before they are permitted to continue.

Social-emotional development

Social emotional development provides the platform for learning and development of self-reflection and effective problem solving.^{20 21 22} It describes the ability to motivate ourselves toward a positive goal, to

¹⁴ Cotton, Kathleen. (May 1996) "Review of Research on Class and School Size." Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

¹⁵ Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

¹⁶ Piaget, J. (1952). *The Origins of Intelligence in Children*. New York, NY: International University Press.

¹⁷ Bruner, J. S. (1973). *Beyond the Information Given: Studies in the Psychology of Knowing*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company.

¹⁸ Darling-Hammond, L. (2002). *Redesigning high schools: What matters and what works*. Palo Alto, CA: School Redesign Network at Stanford University.

¹⁹ McClellan, "Looping Through the Years: Teachers and Students Progressing Together" 1995. Retrieved on 5/20/2022 from

<http://web.archive.org/web/20010708041327/http://ericps.ed.uiuc.edu/eece/pubs/mag/magfal95.html>.

²⁰ Cohen, J. (2001). *Caring Classrooms/Intelligent Schools: The Social Emotional Education of Young Children*. New York: Teachers College press.

²¹ Gardner, H. (1998). *Building on children's strengths: The experience of project spectrum*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

²² Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. New York, NY: Bantam Books.

understand and manage our own emotions and impulses, to handle the emotions of others, and to build positive relationships. These skills enhance the problem solving and decision-making abilities of students, improve their relationship satisfaction, and maximize their potential in school. Ultimately, it creates a fundamental shift in the structure of the school toward collaboration, inclusion, and humanism.

Arts Integration

At Riversage School, students explore various art, craft, and technological genres that are integrated within the core curriculum to enhance their curricular understanding, increase their appreciation for human ingenuity, and develop their own fine motor skills. For example, while studying early humans and ancient civilizations, students might make fire by hand, make pigment and paint cave paintings, make cordage from yucca fibers, make papyrus, or learn to weave. Eric Jensen states, “The industrial arts provide precisely the circumstances that can enrich the brain. They include exposure to challenging, meaningful, complex, and novel circumstances with feedback built in over time. A project in which the student builds a cabinet, a theater set, or an instrument is good for long term brain development, as well as self confidence. The skilled use of the hands and body require countless decisions in the spatial and kinesthetic world. These decisions build the same kinds of connections in the brain that we know enrich neural structures. The projects must be challenging, be novel, take some time, be meaningful, and have feedback built in.” Sample projects in Handwork include woodworking, creating medieval illuminated letters, papermaking, weaving, perspective drawing, sewing, knitting, quilting, and graphic design.²³

Arts integration and Universal Design for Learning are natural partners. The arts offer teachers multiple means for providing information to a wide range of learners, multiple means for all students to make sense of and express their understandings, and multiple means for engaging all students in participatory, collaborative, authentic, and energizing learning experiences.^{24 25} A 2017 review of the research by the American Institutes for Research considered findings from 44 studies of arts-integration programs that met the stringent criteria the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) uses to determine whether an intervention is "evidence-based. These studies provide evidence that practicing arts integration in a school positively affects students' outcomes in several academic areas, in addition to improving attendance, behavior, and social skills.²⁶

Riversage School maintains that learning best occurs when teaching methods and curriculum include:

- An instructional model that recognizes the individual child's stages of development and supports the unfolding of the cognitive, physical, emotional, and social aspects of a child
- An integrated academic curriculum that is developed in a stimulating environment that meets the needs of the 21st century California student, while incorporating Common Core State Standards.
- An instructional approach that is relevant, engaging, interactive, creative, and that incorporates the fine and practical arts

²³ Jensen, Eric. (2003) *Arts with the Brain in Mind*. ASCD, Virginia.

²⁴ Hall, T, et. al. (2012) *Universal Design for Learning in the Classroom: Practical Applications*. Guilford Press

²⁵ Kennedy Center

<https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/articles-and-how-tos/articles/collections/arts-integration-resources/arts-integration-and-universal-design-for-learning/>

²⁶ Ludwig, M., et. al. (2017) “Review of Evidence: Arts Integration Research Through the Lens of the Every Student Succeeds Act”

- Common Core State Standards based summative assessments in grades 3 - 8.
- On-going formative assessments in grades 1 - 8 that inform instruction.
- A prevailing school attitude that encourages and supports cooperation over competition.
- An equal emphasis on process and outcome.
- A knowledge that technological literacy occurs in a specific and gradual timeframe, beginning with analog tools, emphasizing student mastery and understanding of each tool, and employing digital tools as powerful learning tools during middle school, encouraging a strong sense of ethics as students become proficient in computer technology and web based research.
- An instructional model that is universally accessible and effective in delivering differentiated instruction to a broad range of student abilities and learning modalities, and is particularly adept at addressing students with special needs in the least restrictive environment.

Riversage School maintains that learning best occurs when the supporting organization includes:

- A staff that is sensitive to each child's unique intelligence and gifts, so they can support and foster attitudes and habits that promote responsibility and confidence.
- Parental commitment, support, and involvement in the child's education and the school.
- A school faculty that is equipped to uphold the philosophy and learning goals of Riversage School through weekly staff meetings, ongoing professional development, regular observation and feedback, and opportunities to collaborate with peers and work with mentors.
- A faculty and administration that is held accountable to upholding the philosophy and learning goals of Riversage School through clearly articulated roles and responsibilities, feedback from multiple stakeholders, transparent systems for evaluative feedback, and annual evaluations by supervisors.
- Limited exposure to the dimming effects of electronic media, i.e., television, computers, and video games, with the aspiration that these will be replaced by creative play, recreational reading, social interests, and physical activity.
- An informed and mission-unified Governing Board

G. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGIES & APPROACHES

Riversage School adheres to the Waldorf Core Principles, as outlined by the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education.

Waldorf Core Principles²⁷

Image of the Human Being

Public Waldorf education is founded on a coherent image of the developing human being. Each human being is a unique individual who brings specific gifts, creative potential, and intentions to this life. Public Waldorf education addresses multiple aspects of the developing child including the physical, emotional,

²⁷ Alliance for Public Waldorf Education. Accessed May 24, 2022. <https://www.publicwaldorf.org/core-principles>

intellectual, social, cultural, moral, and spiritual. Through this, each child is helped to integrate into a maturing whole, able to determine a unique path through life. Rudolf Steiner’s educational insights are seen as a primary, but not exclusive, source of guidance for an understanding of the image of the human being.

Child Development

An understanding of child development guides all aspects of the educational program, to the greatest extent possible within established legal mandates. Human development proceeds in approximate seven-year phases. Each phase has characteristic physical, emotional, and cognitive dimensions and a primary learning orientation. The Public Waldorf educational program, including the curriculum, teaching methodologies, and assessment methods, work with this understanding of human development to address the needs of the individual and the class in order to support comprehensive learning and healthy, balanced development. Our developmental perspective informs how state and federal mandates, including curriculum sequence, standardized testing, and college and career readiness, are met.

Social Change Through Education

Public Waldorf education exists to serve both the individual and society. Public Waldorf education seeks to offer the most supportive conditions possible for the development of each student’s unique capacities and for engendering the following qualities to work towards positive social change:

- A harmonious relationship between thinking, feeling, and willing;
- Self-awareness and social competence;
- Developmentally appropriate, academically informed, independent thinking;
- The initiative and confidence necessary to transform intentions into realities; and
- An interest in the world, with active respect and a feeling of responsibility for oneself, one’s community, and the environment.
- The ability therefore to participate meaningfully in society.

Human Relationships

Public Waldorf Schools foster a culture of healthy relationships. Enduring relationships— and the time needed to develop them— are central to Public Waldorf education. The teacher works with each student and class as a whole to support relationship-based learning. Healthy working relationships with parents, colleagues, and all stakeholders are essential to the well being of the student, class, and school community. Everyone benefits from a community life that includes festivals, events, adult education, study, and volunteer activities. Public Waldorf education encourages collaboration in schools, within the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, among all schools working out of a developmental approach, and in conjunction with the broader field of education.

Access and Diversity

Public Waldorf Schools work to increase diversity and access to all sectors of society. Public Waldorf schools respond to unique demands and cultures in a wide range of locations in order to provide maximum access to a diverse range of students. Schools work towards ensuring that students do not experience discrimination in admission, retention, or participation. Public Waldorf schools and teachers

have the responsibility to creatively address the developmental needs of the students with the most inclusive possible approaches for all learners. The Public Waldorf program and curriculum is developed by the school to reflect its student population.

Collaborative Leadership

School leadership is conducted through shared responsibilities within established legal structures. Faculty, staff, administration and boards of a Public Waldorf school collaborate to guide and lead the school with input from stakeholder groups. To the greatest extent possible, decisions related to the educational program are the responsibility of those faculty and staff with knowledge and experience of Rudolf Steiner’s educational insights. Governance and internal administration are implemented in a manner that cultivates active collaboration, supportive relationships, effective leadership, consequential action, and accountability. A Public Waldorf school is committed to studying and deepening its understanding of best practices of governance appropriate to its stage of organizational development.

Schools as Learning Communities

Public Waldorf schools cultivate a love of lifelong learning and self-knowledge. Public Waldorf education emphasizes continuous engagement in learning and self-reflective practices that support ongoing improvement. At the individual and classroom level, teachers reflect regularly on their observations of the students and of the educational process. Essential aspects of school-wide work and professional development include self-reflection, peer review, faculty and individual study, artistic activity, and research. Rudolf Steiner is a primary, but not exclusive, source of guidance for developing an active inner, meditative life and an understanding of the dynamics within society. Public Waldorf schools encourage all community members to engage in active and ongoing ways to enhance their capacities as human beings through self reflection and conscious social engagement.

California State Standards

The instructional program is guided by and follows the following State Board of Education approved standards (collectively, the California State Standards):

- 2013 California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts/Literacy
- 2013 California Common Core State Standards for Mathematics
- 2013 Next Generation Science Standards for California Public Schools
- 2016 History-Social Science Framework Content Standards for California Public Schools
- 2012 California English Language Development Standards
- 2009 Physical Education Framework for California Public Schools

Waldorf /Common Core Articulation

Riversage School employs the “Gradalis Curriculum Frameworks.” This is a thorough guide for teachers at each grade level to implement Waldorf teaching methodologies when addressing core subjects. This document includes a cross-correlation matrix at each grade level to the CCSS. It is composed of four volumes– two for literacy, two for math, and one appendix that contains power goals for each grade. The latter is used in reporting systems at Riversage School (See Appendix B for sample).

Other key methodologies/aspects of program

■ Main/Expeditionary Blocks

The teacher plans nine thematic units, also called “Main/Expeditionary Blocks,” for the school year. These lessons feature a transdisciplinary approach to learning. Starting in first grade and continuing through eighth grade, students write and illustrate a text book for each of their grade-level’s expeditionary blocks. The formulation of such a text extends the learning experience from interdisciplinary to transdisciplinary– “Transdisciplinary teaching moves beyond just teaching *across* disciplines using common themes, topics, or issues that thread through different courses. Transdisciplinarity requires collaboration *between* disciplines to create a cohesive curriculum in which students collaborate to solve multifaceted problems. Transdisciplinarity requires innovation, cooperation, and intentionality.”²⁸ Transdisciplinary learning includes, for example, the independently arrived at sense for the ethics in a scientific point of view or a historical account of a social movement.

■ Single Subjects

Waldorf Education fosters the notion of global citizenship by exploring the contributions of many cultures in the realms of folk traditions, language, food, handcrafts, cultural celebrations and more. The single subjects seek to integrate and augment topics being explored either as a yearly emphasis or within the nine Expeditionary Blocks. They are as follows:

- ❖ A Foreign language - Riversage School offers Spanish
- ❖ Cooking Class
- ❖ Gardening Class
- ❖ Music
- ❖ Handwork Class - both fabric arts and woodworking
- ❖ Movement and games of many countries

■ Sixth, Seventh & Eighth grade electives, such as robotics, leadership skills, videography

Collaboration with Partners

*Regardless of family income or background, students whose parents are involved in their schooling are more likely to have higher grades and test scores, attend school regularly, have better social skills, show improved behavior and adapt well to school.*²⁹

²⁸ Amanda Smothers, “Transdisciplinary and Interdisciplinary Approaches,” Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (Northern Illinois University Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, May 26, 2022), <https://citl.news.niu.edu/2020/11/17/transdisciplinary-interdisciplinary/>.

²⁹ Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. L. (2002). A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement. Austin, TX: National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools.

While the Waldorf core principles and Riversage School's four building blocks create the foundation for educating the whole child, it is the school-family partnership that creates a true community of learners supporting our goals in students becoming self-motivated, competent, lifelong learners. Parental involvement at Riversage School is critical to the success of students, as well as to the success of the school as a whole. Parents bring a substantial body of experience, knowledge, skills and talents that enrich the school and the learning experience of each child.

Riversage School believes all students should have access to high quality public school options and that it is our shared responsibility to support the education of all learners in our community. It is understood that the level to which any one parent or family can be involved at Riversage School will vary greatly from person to person and family to family. Therefore, Riversage School ensures it notifies parents that parental involvement is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment in, Riversage School. Parents are notified of this in the Parent Student Handbook, Volunteer Policy, and through our enrollment process.

Parents are encouraged to participate at the level that they are able to be involved. Parents are given the following suggestions as they consider their involvement in their child's education and the overall success of the school:

- Participate in their child's learning by attending parent/teacher meetings to set learning goals, review the child's academic performance, and foster achievement of those goals
- Build relationships with children's teachers and keep in touch with them often, including attending classroom celebrations
- Ensure students arrive to school on time daily and stay in contact with the school and teacher at all times
- Create a home-school connection by providing time, space, and environment to support learning outside of the classroom walls. Ask your child about school on a daily basis
- Establish high yet reasonable expectations for your child's achievement
- Attend and support class performances, fairs, family workshops and class meetings
- Volunteer in a classroom, on a committee, or serve in a leadership capacity with the Governing Board, Family Association, or the Friends of Tahoe Truckee Waldorf
- Promptly read and respond to school communication
- Understand the distinctive characteristics of Riversage School's vision, mission and unique school design
- Read and understand all of Riversage School's policies and procedures, many of which are included in the Student and Parent Handbook

Riversage School perceives partners to include not only our family community, but outside partners, including our authorizer, professional colleagues, and the outside professional worlds to which they belong. Our staff collaborates regularly and is expected to be responsible and responsive members of those partnerships.

H. ACADEMIC PROGRAM– Curriculum & Instruction

Transitional Kindergarten / Kindergarten

The kindergarten classroom is founded on the principle that the young child learns best in an environment where the work performed is worthy of imitation, yet opportunities for imaginative play are frequent. Children's physical, emotional, and intellectual abilities are allowed to unfold in a nurturing environment, thus developing a solid foundation of skills needed for the academic challenges of the upcoming grades. With reverence for the magic of childhood, the teacher draws the Kindergarten student into activities that foster creativity and cultivate the imagination. The classroom environment is rich with sensory experiences of texture, warmth, and the fragrances of cooking and baking. Children participate in an active rhythm of vigorous playtime and quiet, artistic circle time. Free play is necessary in forming the basis for later academic success, as is supported by early childhood research by such prominent educational researchers as David Elkind, Howard Gardner, and Jane Healy.

The Kindergarten program, founded in pediatric neurological research, supports the connections between brain function and physical activity. Our kindergarten provides students with a wide range of activities that challenge their body's ability to sense movement, action and location– gardening, running, skipping, swinging, climbing, jumping, dancing, and cooking. The development of the young child's physical body, including fine and gross motor skills, is emphasized, enhancing opportunities for intellectual growth. Challenges offer children a chance to develop their awakening capacities to think clearly, to feel fully, and to act freely.

Our kindergarten curriculum is developmental; that is, we meet the children "where they are," while simultaneously laying the foundation for academic success in later grades. It is designed to enhance not only physical development, but also the young child's self-regulation, language development, and sensory integration. In addition, the activities of the kindergarten are structured to strengthen the child's imagination, creativity, social skills, and sense of self-confidence. Teachers involve the student in maintaining the orderliness and organization of materials, preparing the foundation for orderly thinking. Our successful model, involving a teacher assistant, benefits Riversage School kindergarteners with a low maximum adult to student ratio of 1:12 (all TK mandates will be met, so if the pupil-teacher mandate lowers to 1:10, our class size will not exceed 1:10 in TK classes or TK/K combo classes), while providing the combined expertise of a state-credentialed teacher and a Waldorf Kindergarten Specialist for all kindergarten classes.

We assess student progress in core subject areas using the California Common Core State Standards, and progress is shared with parents on CCSS correlated progress reports.

Literacy begins in kindergarten with a rich oral language base. The teachers use storytelling, including classic and modern fairy tales from various cultures, to develop the students' attention span, concentration, vocabulary, speaking, and listening comprehension skills and to lay down the basis for reading comprehension. Through drama, rhythmic poetry, nursery rhymes, and songs, the teachers further immerse the children in vivid and imaginative oral speech and literature. The teachers use puppetry,

engaging the children in acting out stories rich in vocabulary and imagination, and lead singing games to teach comprehension strategies such as story sequence and character development.

Kindergarten introduces the fundamental concepts of mathematics through creative play and daily practical activities. Mathematics begins in the kindergarten with sorting, one-on-one correspondence, counting from 1 to 30, patterning, and identifying shapes through daily practical activities such as setting the table, students learn to pattern, as well as to identify, sort, and classify objects by attribute. The approach, through imitation and creative play, uses raw materials such as logs, nature blocks and driftwood of different shapes and sizes, seashells, stones, pinecones, etc. By the end of kindergarten, students understand small numbers, quantities, and simple shapes in their everyday environment. They count, compare, describe, sort objects, and develop a sense of properties and patterns. They explore economics through imaginative play that involves sorting and trading objects of different sizes and properties.

The science curriculum gives the children a multiplicity of experiences with the natural world. In the physical sciences, students' creative play involves them deeply in exploring basic physics principles, such as mass, density, gravity, balance, and the creation of pulleys and levers. Students experience the properties of heat and cold through cooking, as well as observing seasonal changes. Life science and earth science start with students observing common objects using their five senses. Students learn to communicate observations orally and through drawings. Nature tables, as well as frequent nature walks, provide an awareness of the seasons and a connection to the natural environment. The students experience the cycle of growth through gardening, from seed to harvest to transformation through cooking.

Other activities involve students directly in the transformation of colors and natural materials into useful and beautiful creations. These activities include combining colors in watercolor painting, carding and felting raw wool, and making dolls from garden grasses. Finger-knitting develops fine-motor skills and nurtures children's ability to focus and concentrate, while fostering hand eye coordination. Students' development of fine-motor skills and focus is essential for learning to read and write, as well as for doing mathematics and other academic work.

Problem-solving skills have their foundation in creative play that transforms the environment in inventive ways. Creative play provides students with opportunities to imagine, plan, and carry out increasingly complex activities. During creative play, teachers guide students' growing capacities for creative problem solving and social interaction. Early childhood research shows that free play is serious work for young children, forming the basis for developing analytical critical thinking and high-level problem solving skills.

A Typical Day in the Grades

Monday through Thursday, Riversage School students begin their day with an expeditionary lesson. Teachers start the block with a set of opening activities, designed to wake up students' minds and bodies, reinforce their sense of community and activate their prior knowledge. Typical openers could include a mental math challenge where students practice the math skill they learned the previous week. Students might be climbing on and off of their chairs as they respond to the differentiated math problems or

moving to different coordinates along X and Y-axes drawn on the floor. As part of the opener, students might sing a song, recite a verse, or play their recorder, all of which is connected to the content they are learning. Singing, reciting and playing music together engages them and deepens students' connections to the expedition, thereby reinforcing community. Once they have completed their opening activities, students then launch into the expeditionary lesson, which is part of a weeks-long thematic unit focusing on one of their core content areas: math, science, English, or history/social science.

During the expeditionary lesson, students might be observing scientific phenomena and recording their observations. They might be working in their expeditionary lesson books, mini-textbooks they create for each expeditionary block. They might be listening to a story the teacher has especially created to both teach the key concepts of the block and meet the needs and interests of this particular group of students.

After the two-hour expeditionary block, the teacher transitions the students into a 15-minute nutrition lesson, followed by a 15-minute recess to play outside. Following recess is a 90 minute period of Math or English language arts. After the second block, students have 30 minutes for lunch and recess.

Reducing waste and providing appealing, healthy foods are key considerations in our school meals program. During lunch, student "trash bouncers" help to ensure that compostables, recyclables, and landfill waste are placed in the appropriate containers. Students who bring meals use reusable cloth bags or baskets. Every student brings a reusable water bottle and cloth napkins are used in place of disposable napkins. Students are not allowed to bring sugary treats to school. All students have the opportunity to participate in the school's meal program, which is part of the federal and state nutrition program. After the meal, students are dismissed outdoors for a recess for the remainder of the lunch period.

After recess, students go to single subject classes. There they study Spanish, Arts, Practical Arts, Music, Gardening, and Physical Education. They take six single subject classes each year and each class meets twice a week. Single subject classes provide students with additional entry points into core subjects and multi-modal challenges.

Grades 1 to 8

Monday through Thursday the school day for grades one through eight begins with an Expeditionary Lesson. Taught in two-hour instructional blocks, expeditionary lessons integrate California Common Core State Standards into thematic units that engage students by integrating a variety of learning approaches to encourage student learning through multiple modalities (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) and multiple intelligences. Each core subject, defined as mathematics, English/language arts, science, and history/social studies/geography, is taught in a unit or block, generally lasting three to four weeks, thus immersing the student in a particular subject. Depth of understanding is emphasized, as students approach and experience core content through myriad ways— movement, song, story-telling, observation, experimentation, oral presentations, writing, reading, recitation, drama, painting, and drawing. Our students enjoy the complete integration of the visual arts into their expeditionary lessons and core subject areas. Painting, drawing and modeling, whether illustrating a myth or reinforcing a scientific principle, allows students to link deeper meaning to lesson content, builds focus and encourages creativity. This transdisciplinary style, combined with the unit or block approach, is central to Riversage School's teaching approach as it promotes and develops active listening, imagination, curiosity, exploration,

memory, and vocabulary. The objective is not just to appeal to students' preferred learning modalities, but to develop all students in all modalities.

Following the morning expeditionary lesson block is a 15-minute human development block. During this block, the credentialed teacher leads the class in reflective journaling, data-gathering and analysis with a nutrition and health focus. This period can provide additional instruction and practice in CCSS ELA, ELD, math, and science standards, as well as instruction in California Health Education Framework. After morning recess, students attend a 90 minute block in core subjects followed by lunch/recess.

The afternoons are for "single subjects"-- specialized classes taught in 45 minute periods that develop the whole child. An interdisciplinary approach connects expeditionary and core subject lessons to the single subjects and the single subject classes ensure that our curriculum is fresh, engaging, and meaningful. Creativity and imagination are continually sparked in each classroom and within each student. In first grade, students begin lessons with their subject teachers who will accompany them through the grades.

Single subject classes include:

Spanish: (Grades 1 through 8. Twice weekly) Learning a foreign language broadens students' perspectives and deepens their understanding of other cultures. But learning foreign languages also offers several cognitive benefits, including improving overall memory, multi-tasking, communication skill and problem solving by learning to recognize and negotiate meaning more adroitly.

Gardening: (Grades 1-3. Twice weekly) Gardening provided students with learning opportunities, lasting skills, and positive, memorable experiences. Gardening can help foster healthy lifestyles and encourage healthy eating through introducing students to more nutritious food. In grade 1 & 2, students tend the gardens and learn about nutrition. Gardening teaches students where food comes from and demonstrates that humans are situated inside the ecosystem. Children not only learn about how food grows, but what it takes for food to grow. As children get older, Riversage School' gardening education aims to empower them with awareness of environmental issues, problem solving methods, and advocacy skills to promote solutions among their peers and within their community. Students are taught to identify problems, investigate, build and evaluate models, and present information to their classmates and the larger community.

Music: (Grades 1-8. Twice weekly) Music plays a role at every grade level. Rhythms and transitions throughout the course of the day are established with music for the younger students, and there are singing, poetry, rhyming and rhythm-building exercises. We also appreciate cultures around the world through the singing of songs. Early grades have singing or chorus single subject classes. Third graders learn to play the ukulele, and in fourth grade violin is introduced.

Art: (Grades 1-8. Twice weekly) In single subject classes students move through an art sequence that includes geometric, expeditionary and painting. Subject matter for drawings and painting can be related to content from core content taught in the morning or can deepen students' understanding of core content, such as drawing a flower during a botany unit or painting a ship from a particular point in history.

Drawing and painting can also utilize the techniques or technology of a particular culture or time period. Students might make pigments similar to those used by hunters and gatherers.

Practical Arts - Handwork/Woodwork (Grades 1-8. Twice weekly) Students explore various practical arts and technologies to enhance their core curricular understanding, increase their appreciation for human ingenuity, and develop their own fine motor skills. Handwork in the early grades and woodworking in the upper grades reinforce core content, as students may use techniques that illustrate a science concept or create products that reflect the people they are studying. Eric Jensen states, “The industrial arts provide precisely the circumstances that can enrich the brain. They include exposure to challenging, meaningful, complex, and novel circumstances with feedback built in over time. A project in which the student builds a cabinet, a theater set, or an instrument is good for long-term brain development, as well as self-confidence. The skilled use of the hands and body require countless decisions in the spatial and kinesthetic world. These decisions build the same kinds of connections in the brain that we know enrich neural structures. The projects must be challenging, be novel, take some time, be meaningful, and have feedback built in.”³⁰

Movement and Games (Grades 1-8. Twice weekly). Riversage School movement and games courses emphasize the principles of movement, rhythm, self-responsibility, group dynamics, and general wellness. The course addresses the California Physical Education standards and integrates themes from the core subjects to deepen student understanding and demonstrate the interconnectedness of the disciplines. For example, in 6th grade, students might study the Olympics of Ancient Greece and prepare to be Pentathletes – practicing running, jumping, throwing javelin, and wrestling – in preparation for an Olympic Festival.

Eco-Literacy Fridays

Fridays are dedicated to the Riversage School Eco-literacy program, which immerses students in the natural world through a curriculum that integrates the NGSS, California Common Core Standards, and the California Education and the Environment Initiative’s Environmental Principles and Concepts. Eco-literacy weaves the principles of outdoor education and team building into the Waldorf grades curriculum. The program’s TK-8 scope and sequence is designed to meet the student developmentally, beginning with foundational positive experiences of the outdoors that build strength, confidence, body control and curiosity.

Credentialed teachers, who are trained in outdoor education and well-versed in the Waldorf approach to child development, will lead the instruction. The curriculum is designed to fully integrate with classroom learning, removing the compartmentalization of both science and the natural world.

The overarching objectives of the Eco-Literacy Program are:

1. Children will have consistently positive experiences in nature that nurture exploration, discovery, wonder, and curiosity
2. Children will develop a first-hand, personal relationship with the natural world with observation of phenomena as the center of the learning process.

³⁰ Jensen, Eric. *Arts with the Brain in Mind*. ASCD, Virginia. 2003.

3. Through curated adventures, students will experience the three dimensions of the Next Generation Science Standards (Cross Cutting Concepts, Science and Engineering Practices and the Disciplinary Core Ideas).
4. The integration of outdoor education principles (e.g., team building and practical wilderness skills) will develop empathy, communication and strengthen the child's understanding of themselves both socially-emotionally and physically.
5. In grades 6-8 students will be equipped to turn their connection to nature into action through participation in local campaigns, non profit work, and self-driven field projects.
6. The Eco-Literacy curriculum will integrate with classroom learning through parallel integration of the arts, math and cultural studies, nature studies, and movement, removing the compartmentalization of both science and the natural world.

Objectives 1-3 will create and strengthen a cognitive structure of knowledge, experience, discovery and curiosity that will scaffold students' assimilation of the more complex science concepts introduced beginning in grade four. Objectives 1-4 will create and strengthen the students' affective and physical connection to their classmates and to the natural world, creating true environmental stewards and deepening their ability to ignite change in the future.

During their experience of nature, students will learn fundamental principles of life, including:

- Everything runs on energy
- There is no waste in nature
- Biodiversity is good
- Everything is connected³¹

As children grow, the intrinsic understanding of these concepts, and their related standards, progresses from curiosity towards exploration, from implicit knowledge to explicit science-based explanations and finally to extended investigations. The program's focus is on a two year cycle, alternating between water-centered ecosystems (e.g., streams, lakes etc.) and earth-centered ecosystems (e.g., forests, deserts, etc.).

Because learning in Eco-literacy is rooted in the natural world, units are designed to be taught in fall, winter and spring. For example, a three-week unit on the life cycle of plants is implemented across the seasons, with a week of study in the fall, winter and spring. In the lower grades the emphasis is on a dynamic experience of nature. Grade two students might each be assigned a plant to observe. In the fall, students' initial observations of their plant would include drawing the plant and describing it in their journal. In the winter, the unit on life cycles re-emerges and students return to their plant to observe it covered in snow and in the spring they observe the same plant again. Each time they capture their observations in their journals, an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of standard English conventions, word relationships and nuances in word meanings. Eco-literacy activities also reinforce concepts from the students' main/expeditionary lesson block. For example, second graders might be

³¹Catalina Environmental Leadership Program. <https://catalinaislandcamps.com/programs/school-program-celp/> Accessed July 15, 2021

reading Aesop’s fable, “The Olive Tree and the Fig Tree,” where an olive tree mocks a fig tree for losing its leaves in the fall, a phenomenon students can see during their plant observations. Journaling about their plant provides an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of standard English conventions, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings, and to deepen their capacity to observe.

In grade 5, observation of the life cycle of plants recurs, but is now a more explicit scientific exploration. Grade 5 includes a main/expeditionary botany unit; when a fifth grader observes a plant, they can use scientific vocabulary and they are better equipped to understand the form and function of the organism. Once again they observe the plant in the fall, winter and spring, but now students are learning science models, laws, mechanisms, and theories in their main/expeditionary lessons and they can use that learning to explain the natural phenomena they observe.

Eco Literacy Thematic Breakdown

Grade One	Wonder Students’ experiences create a foundational appreciation for the beauty, abundance and possibility of nature
Grade Two	Biodiversity Students learn to perceive and appreciate the diversity of earth
Grade Three	Harmony How do we live in harmony with the Earth?
Grade Four	Integration Everything on Earth is connected, part of a shared system and every action or event has an impact.
Grade Five	Change The power to affect change, see change, feel change and to be changed
Grade Six	Influence The study of interconnection and the path of influence through the natural world
Grade Seven	Sustainability Using harmony, biodiversity, interconnection, change, and influence to create sustainability
Grade Eight	The Net The connection with the natural world as a person, community, and society and what is my role.

Independent Study

Riversage School plans to offer Independent Study for students and has an Independent Study policy in place that is compliant with AB181 and other Education Code pertaining to Independent Study. This program will remain less than 20% of Riversage ADA.

Grades Curricular Overview

First Grade:

Math – Qualities of numbers up to 100; introduction to the four operations of arithmetic- addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division; counting, Roman numerals.

English Language Arts – Formal introduction to letters, writing and reading through story, images and phonics; fairy tales from around the world; poetry recitation, speech, spelling, simple sentences.

History and Social Studies– Multicultural stories, myths and legends.

Science – Nature stories, nature walks, observations, gardening, seasonal changes.

Music – Singing, pentatonic flute (develops finger coordination, concentration, and breath control.)

Art – Form drawing, painting (emphasizing an experience of working with color rather than creating formed pictures), beeswax modeling; crayon illustrations.

Performing Arts – Class play that originates from the curriculum.

Cultural Studies and Spanish– Spanish is taught through plays, songs, rhythms, and games - students study reading, writing and speaking Spanish. We also place emphasis on cultural understanding and celebrations.

Handwork – Knitting (promotes eye-hand coordination, fine motor skills, visual tracking skills, and sequencing.)

Games/Movement/Health– Gross motor movement such as skipping, hopping, galloping, starting and stopping are practiced; and matching these movements to pace and rhythm.

Second Grade

Math – Continue with four operations of arithmetic; story problems; counting by 2, 3, 5, and 10; beginning multiplication tables; graphs and tables; place value to 1,000; mental math, regrouping, estimation.

English Language Arts– Elements of grammar (adjectives); spelling, reading (using context, word recognition, reading out loud); animal fables and legends from around the world; writing teacher generated paragraphs and writing student generated paragraphs.

History & Social Studies – Multicultural stories, myths and legends focused on heroes/heroines.

Science – Garden and nature studies; observation and inquiry.

Environmental Stewardship – Stories with themes of transformation teach the concept of evolution in an imaginative way laying a metaphorical foundation for the forces of nature that will be studied scientifically later. Stories of heroic individuals, such as the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Henry David Thoreau, or Jane Goodall teach students about their unique place in the ecosystem and their personal ability to affect change.

Music – Singing up to an octave; pentatonic flute, singing in rounds by end of year.

Art – Continue form drawing; painting (complementary colors); beeswax modeling.

Performing Arts – Class play that originates from the curriculum.

Cultural Studies and Spanish – Spanish continues. (Songs, plays, poetry, stories counting, games, and simple conversations.)

Handwork– Knitting patterns of knit and purl (pattern recognition and perpetuation, concentration, fine motor skill development) resulting in specific projects such as rabbits, balls and hats.

Games/Movement/Health – Gross motor movement such as skipping, hopping, galloping, jumping and sliding; and matching these movements to pace and rhythm; chasing, dodging, jumping rope, and striking a ball.

Third Grade

Math – Higher multiplication tables through 12; weight; measure; length; volume; money; time; place value to 10,000; estimation, long division.

English Language Arts– Elements of grammar (nouns, verbs, adjectives); beginning cursive; punctuation; compositions; spelling; recitation; reading for different purposes; creation myths from around the world.

History & Social Studies – Study of practical life (farming, house building, clothing, and cooking).

Science– Environmental Studies; farming/gardening (each third grade creates, plants, tends and harvests an organic garden); ecosystems.

Environmental Stewardship– Creation myths from different cultures about the origins of the earth and human beings prime the minds of the children to think of the whole world as a single holistic environment. Gardening and farming curriculum reinforces lessons about nature and the seasons

Music– Singing in rounds and parts; recorder; beginning to read music.

Art– Continue form drawing; painting; beeswax modeling.

Performing Arts– Class play that originates from the curriculum.

Cultural Studies and Spanish – Spanish continued. (Songs, plays, conversations).

Handwork– Crocheting (pattern and placement recognition, finger dexterity).

Games/Movement/Health– Continuity and change in movement. Order and sequence of movement through a variety of gross motor control skills such as dance, running, dribbling a ball, skipping, jumping to match rhythm, speed and motion.

Fourth Grade

Math– Higher multiplication tables, four digit multiplication, long division, fractions, factoring, four processes with fractions, prime numbers, mental math, measurement, conversion, freehand drawing and identification of lines and angles, classification of shapes by properties of their lines and angles.

English Language Arts– Elements of grammar; continuing cursive; punctuation; book reports and creative writing; Norse mythology; speech/presentations; play reading; fluency with class readers; spelling, using a dictionary.

History & Social Studies– California and local history.

Geography– California; local geography and map making.

Science – Zoology; habitats; the web of life/food chain.

Environmental Stewardship– Students learn and describe the many unique aspects of their local environment with a special focus on human interaction with the animal kingdom.

Music– Singing, recorder, violin/cello (budget allowing), continuing to read music.

Art– Modeling; form drawing; representational painting.

Performing Arts– Class play that originates from the curriculum.

Cultural Studies and Spanish – Spanish immersion continues with writing, reading, and poetry.

Handwork – Cross-stitch, Embroidery, simple sewing.

Woodwork– Improve visual motor skills and two hands coordination by making projects such as eggs, hedgehogs, and stepping stools. Will also learn the general ability to follow directions and work safety.

Games/Movement/Health– Manipulating objects in and through space. Throw, kick, catch, strike, dribble, pass, transfer weight from feet to hands, jump and land for height and distance, practice balance with various objects. Development of endurance and cardiovascular capacity.

Fifth Grade

Math– Decimals; fractions; metric system.

English Language Arts– Elements of grammar, continuing cursive, punctuation, compositions, Greek myths, report writing, recitation.

History & Social Studies– Ancient civilizations (India, China, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia, Greece).

Geography– American geography as related to states study, vegetation, agriculture, culture and economics, mapping.

Science– Botany, plant reproductive systems, continuation of garden and nature studies, lab work, fieldwork.

Environmental Stewardship– American regional and physical geography related to vegetation, animals and agriculture are studied to develop a greater consciousness of the interrelatedness of life and environment – particularly through the study of botany and zoology.

Music– Singing, recorder, violin/cello (budget allowing), reading music.

Art – Calligraphy, painting, clay modeling, woodworking.

Performing Arts – Class play that originates from the curriculum.

Cultural Studies and Spanish – Spanish immersion continues; verb tenses, simple reading and conversation.

Handwork – Knitting in the round; making socks, mittens or hats.

Woodwork – Learn sequencing in a project; refine/improve existing skills by making toolbox and a 2D animal.

Games/Movement/Health– Manipulating objects with accuracy and speed. Usage of fundamental strategies, practice and conditioning. Balancing food intake with activity. Responsible personal behavior, distinguishing between unsafe/safe and following/ignoring rules. Olympic sports—running, jumping, discus, javelin, wrestling— culminating in an inter-school Pentathlon; preparation and practice for Fitness Test.

Sixth Grade

Math– Ratios, percent, proportions, geometric drawing with instruments, business math, algebra, graphing (bar, circle, line), mean, median, and mode; geometric formulas with plane and solid shapes, positive and negative numbers.

English Language Arts – Biographies; oral reports; business letters; spelling; essay writing; elements of grammar continued.

History & Social Studies – Roman and medieval history.

Geography– European geography.

Science – Mineralogy; physics (acoustics, electricity, magnetism, optics and heat); beginning astronomy; continuation of garden and nature studies.

Environmental Stewardship – Global geography provides studies in different peoples and cultures in reference to their natural environments. Continued gardening, recycling and composting.

Music – Folk songs; wind instruments; percussion/strings/chorus/dance electives.

Art – Examples include veil painting; clay modeling; woodworking, charcoal.

Performing Arts – Class play that originates from the curriculum.

Cultural Studies and Spanish – Spanish continues with speaking, reading and writing; cultural understanding is also emphasized

Handwork– Embroidery; hand-sewing stuffed animals.

Woodwork – Promoting creativity and ability to self-correct work by making serving spoons, forks/sporks and/or eating spoons.

Games/Movement/Health – Working cooperatively to achieve a common goal. Throwing, dribbling, dance; identify the five components of fitness, participation in vigorous activity for 20 minutes. Knowing warm-up and cool-down activities and how to measure heart rate. Being able to offer rule changes that improve a game. Team cooperation and effective practice. Team sports; keeping score; learning to outwit an opponent with activities like jousting, tug of war and “steeple chase”/obstacle course in preparation for an inter-school Medieval Games event.

Technology – Cyber Civics.

Seventh Grade

Math– Algebra/equations; geometry; Pythagorean theorem; area/perimeter/volume; exponents, linear graphing.

English Language Arts– Creative writing; grammar; spelling and punctuation; classical literature; lyric poetry; play writing; letter writing, essay writing, Shakespeare

History & Social Studies– The Renaissance; Age of Exploration; beginnings of modern science.

Geography– Africa, Central and South America.

Science – Physics; light/optics; acoustics; mechanics; human physiology and sexuality; astronomy continued; inorganic chemistry; nutrition.

Environmental Stewardship– Focus is on food choices and nutrition by investigating the effects of food production, diet, and nutrition on human health and the environment. Continuing with organic gardening, composting and recycling.

Music– Singing, duets, recorder, percussion/strings/chorus/dance electives.

Art – Perspective drawing, spatial solids, Chiaroscuro technique, veil painting.

Performing Arts – Class play originates from the curriculum.

Cultural Studies and Spanish – Spanish continues with speaking, reading, and writing; there is also an emphasis on cultural understanding and celebrations.

Handwork – Hand and machine-sewing from a pattern to create personal clothing.

Woodwork – Encourage diligent work and self-motivation; acknowledge the beauty of their work by making a bowl, handheld mirror and/or box.

Games/Movement/Health– Meeting challenges and making decisions. Perform a variety of dances. Offer basic offensive / defensive strategies. Participation in vigorous activity for 20 minutes. Know warm-up and cool-down activities and how to measure heart rate. Offering rule changes to improve a game. Team cooperation. Track & Field events (running, sprinting, long jump); push-ups; team sports.

Technology – Cyber Civics.

Eighth Grade

Math– Algebra; quadratic equations; solid geometry.

English Language Arts– Epic poetry; non-fiction; business and practical writing; writing process; 8th grade report.

History & Social Studies– Study of Revolutions (French, Russian, Industrial and American); American history; Current events.

Geography – World geography.

Science – Physics; organic chemistry; anatomy- skeletal system; meteorology.

Environmental Stewardship– Students explore the sources, production, uses, and environmental effects of energy in the study of the historical birth of the industrial age and the economic globalization in contemporary times. Field trips and field study are a large part of the learning. Continue with organic gardening, composting and recycling.

Music– Singing; recorder; percussion/chorus/strings/dance electives.

Art – Black & white drawing; clay modeling; veil painting.

Performing Arts– Class play that originates from the curriculum.

Cultural Studies and Spanish– Reading, writing and speaking in Spanish. We also place emphasis on cultural understanding and celebrations.

Handwork– Machine sewing.

Woodwork– Improve team cooperation and time management; enjoy work by making a 3-legged stool and a group project of their choice.

Games/Movement/Health– Working as a team to solve problems. Perform a variety of dances. Offer basic offensive/defensive strategies. Participation in vigorous activity for 20 minutes. Know warm-up and cool-down activities and how to measure heart rate. Offering rule changes to improve a game. Team cooperation. Team sports and fitness.

Technology– Cyber Civics, 8th grade project research and presentation

I. DIVERSE LEARNERS

Riversage School’s school design attracts diverse learners. Families whose students may not be thriving in a traditional district setting often seek out Waldorf education for their children. Our experience aligns with what is reported by other public Waldorf and alternative schools: the percentage of high needs students is likely to increase over time. Effectively meeting the needs of diverse learners is at the heart of the Waldorf Core Principles. At Riversage School, we will establish inclusive learning environments for all students. Some of the essential elements to our educational program which increase student engagement and ensure learning is accessible to all students include:

- Small class sizes allow for teachers to build relationships and identify students’ individual social emotional and learning needs
- Social emotional curriculum fosters a safe and positive learning environment, which enhances students' ability to be successful in school
- Looping classrooms develop a strong and positive teacher-student relationship, which has a profound effect on student engagement
- Flexible and personalized classroom environments allow for individual student choice and flexibility
- Developmentally appropriate curriculum
- Rigorous curriculum and high expectations provide for purposeful, relevant, and engaging teaching practices for students to be successful
- School family partnership supports communication between home and school building close and mutually respectful relationships

These essential elements lay the foundation for students to be self-directed and engaged in their learning, and also foster a sense of community. While Riversage School believes these foundational practices support all learners, we equally recognize the necessity to identify additional needs, challenges and supports of our various student groups.

Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students

Research indicates children from low socioeconomic status (“SES”) households and communities develop academic skills more slowly compared to children from higher SES households (Morgan, Farkas,

Hillemeier, & Maczuga, 2009). Economic circumstances also place higher stress levels on students, which can negatively impact their learning. To enable socioeconomically disadvantaged students to achieve state and charter school academic standards, Riversage School acknowledges the value in understanding the challenges and supports necessary for students' socioemotional and academic success. While we recognize the impact of economic circumstances on students, research also indicates the school environment has more impact on a student's potential for academic success than their socioeconomic status.³²

Riversage School recognizes that there is ample research on the challenges faced by socioeconomically disadvantaged students. However, it is not the failure of the students; rather it is the failure of the schools. We believe our school design is especially well suited to meet the needs of our socioeconomically disadvantaged student population. Additionally, creating Individualized Learning Plans for students within the first six weeks of school allows for the early identification of students who might need additional resources or supports, including referrals to our intervention programs or to our Student Success Team. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students are identified through their participation in the National Student Lunch Program, or via Direct Certification from the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS).

To support the emotional needs of at-risk students, Riversage School provides social-skills instruction, schedules regular parent conferences, recommends individual and group counseling services, and, if needed, makes referrals to outside therapy services. Parents also have access to resources through parent education workshops that are held at least once each month. We often collaborate with community partners to focus on the challenges families are facing every day, such as navigating social media, health education and the importance of rhythm and routine.

A family's involvement at school supports the achievement of at-risk students. However, parents of low socioeconomic status students are often "underrepresented among the ranks of parents involved with the schools."³³ To increase parental involvement, Riversage School surveys the needs of our parents to ensure that programming is flexible and meets parents' work schedules and child-care needs. Research indicates that the parents of disadvantaged children can and do "...make a positive contribution to their children's achievement in school if they receive adequate training and encouragement in the types of parent involvement that can make a difference. Even more significant, the research dispels a popular myth by revealing, as noted above, that parents can make a difference regardless of their own levels of education. Indeed, disadvantaged children have the most to gain from parent involvement programs."³⁴

The research reveals that the most successful parent participation efforts are those that "...offer parents a variety of roles in the context of a well organized and long-lasting program. Parents will need to be able to choose from a range of activities which accommodate different schedules, preferences, and

³² Jensen, E. (2013). *Engaging students with poverty in mind: Practical strategies for raising achievement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

³³ Cotton, Kathleen and Wikelund, Karen Reed. Parent Involvement in Education. Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. School Improvement Research Series Close Up #6 from <http://www.nwrel.org/archive/sirs/3/cu6.html>

³⁴ Ibid

capabilities.”³⁵ The research indicates that it is most effective to provide orientation and training for parents, but “...that intensive, long-lasting training is neither necessary nor feasible.”³⁶

Riversage School school/family partnership features the following elements:

- Professional development for the teachers underscoring the importance of family involvement and the many means of communication possible at Riversage School.
- Parent orientation program on the first day of school for all parents and additional orientation for incoming TK/K parents.
- Informing parents of state testing program and interpretation of scores.
- Allowing parents to observe the school’s programs and visit classrooms.
- Bi-weekly newsletter, informing parents of school events, due dates, and parent education opportunities
- Class meetings with students’ teachers that provide parents with a description and explanation of the instructional program, forms of academic assessment, and levels of progress students are expected to meet.
- Soliciting feedback and suggestions from parents at parent meetings on decisions relating to the education of their children
- Looping, where teachers stay with students for multiple years, providing more time to build relationships
- A small learning community that is accessible to families
- Parent-teacher conferences two (and, if necessary, three) times a year
- Repeated invitations for a wide range of volunteer activities—including gardening, making props/sets for school plays, helping in classrooms, assisting in handwork class, chaperoning field trips, and helping with fundraisers and fairs.
- Invitations to attend fairs, play performances, festivals, student presentations and parent education events.
- Participation in parent council
- Summer Bridge program for new families

Youth in Foster System &/or Experiencing Homelessness

Riversage School recognizes foster and homeless youth face significant barriers to achieving academic success due to their family circumstances, disruption to their educational program, and their emotional, social, and other health needs. Adjusting to new school cultures, environments, and curricula impose further challenges and increase the risk of academic failure. Frequent out of home placements can lead to school transfers because children can be required to change schools when they change addresses. Research shows that the result of frequent school transfers and disruptions in the learning process can take a toll on a student's learning development. School transfers can create gaps in the learning cycle. They force children to adjust to new classroom settings, teachers, and classmates, and cause children to lose social networks, peer groups, and relationships with adults. These changes can exacerbate the emotional instability and unrest caused by home transfers. Furthermore, children who experience changes in school

³⁵ Ibid

³⁶ Ibid

placement are also likely to find it difficult to form relationships with school staff who could support their academic success.

Homeless students can lack transportation, school supplies, clothing, etc. Homeless students are twice as likely to repeat a grade or be expelled or suspended.³⁷ Less than one out of four homeless students graduate from high school.³⁸

In order to help facilitate the enrollment, placement, and transfer of foster/homeless youth to Riversage School, the Governing Board designates the School Principal as Riversage School's liaison for foster youth and for students who are homeless. The role of the liaison is to facilitate the appropriate placement and enrollment for foster and homeless youth, and ensure they are provided with the appropriate resources and support.

Riversage School utilizes the guidance of local, state, and federal best practices and policies to provide homeless students with the necessary access and support to access educational opportunities. In general the overall education and wellbeing of homeless students is significantly lower than that of their non-homeless peers. According to the National Center on Family Homelessness, students are more likely to be underperforming academically, in need of mental health services, and often have developmental delays as a result of their homelessness. Other challenges homeless students encounter is they transfer schools more often, are more likely to miss school, have lower standardized test scores, and are more likely to leave school than their peers. Most homeless youth have difficulty staying at the same school for an entire school year, which can increase stress and anxiety. The absence of a stable living arrangement has a devastating impact on the educational outcomes for homeless youth. Another significant barrier is the lack of necessary documents to homeless youth receiving education. For many students who are homeless, not having the proper school records often leads to incorrect classroom placement. Medical records, immunization records, previous school transcripts, proof of residency, and for unaccompanied youth, parental permission slips, are some of the "paper" barriers to students being placed efficiently and appropriately in school settings. The stigmas about homelessness combined with lack of support from the school district can often prevent homeless students from receiving the best education possible. Riversage School staff will be trained to understand the challenges homeless youth face and the rights they have to access public education.

In order to ensure the needs of homeless students are met at Riversage School, the Homeless Student Liaison will gather and maintain listings of appropriate resources for students and their families and will ensure they are informed of the educational rights and responsibilities of the school. Furthermore, the Liaison will identify and provide school employees with information and best practices for meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of homeless students.

Riversage School will partner with our authorizer and Child Welfare Services to support the education of students receiving child welfare services. With the expertise of these partners, Riversage School believes it can reduce instability for foster/homeless youth, which is a critical component of a successful

³⁷ "America's Youngest Outcasts", www.homelesschildrenamerica.org; 2009

³⁸ The National Center on Family Homelessness, *The Cost of Homelessness*, 2012.

educational experience, and that we can ensure homeless/foster students access any and all resources available to support them.

Students who are academically under performing

Riversage School utilizes a systematic approach to closing the achievement gap by allocating multiple resources to academically low-achieving students. Students performing below grade level are identified as such, based on the results of several assessments and evaluations including CAASPP statewide assessment results, progress monitoring and diagnostic assessments, authentic assessments, and student work samples. Each fall, teachers administer assessments and screenings in the areas of reading, writing, and math which provide a meaningful snapshot of a student's performance and skill level. Teachers identify students who are struggling to stay at grade level throughout the year via the University of Oregon's easyCBM progress monitoring assessments in Mathematics and reading and teacher-designed curricular assessments, and monitoring of Individualized Learning Plan goals.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

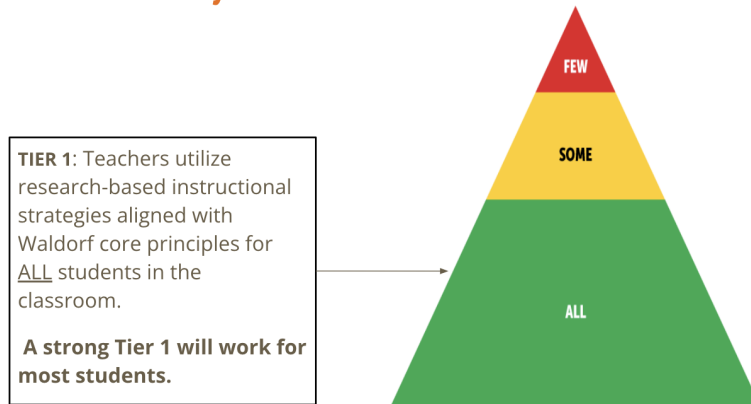
Riversage School will use the California Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Framework to meet the diverse academic, behavioral, and social emotional learning needs of its students. Our continuum of supports are differentiated to meet the needs of the whole child.

While MTSS is a whole system of engagement for all learners, it also recognizes some students may need supplemental support at times, and a few students may require more intensified support to be successful. Student success is created through a multi-tiered system of support with general and special education integrated at all three tiers. As the level of support becomes more intense, students receive primary interventions in addition to more targeted and individual supports.

Tier I - Universal Supports–

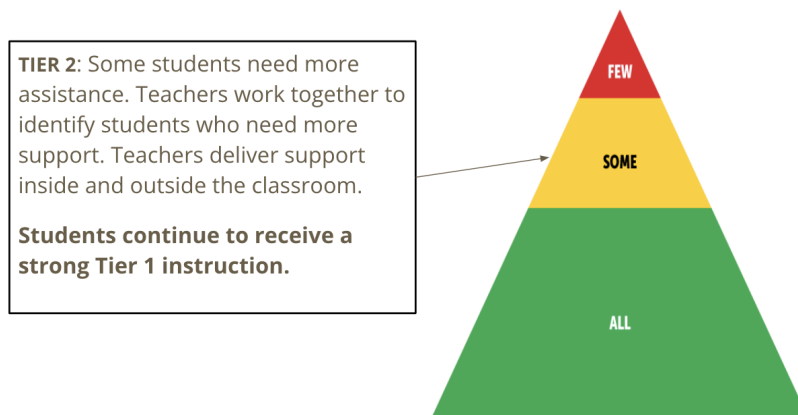
Teachers use evidence-based practices that support the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional success of all students in the most inclusive and equitable learning environment. Riversage School's Waldorf educational program, including looping, restorative practices, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approaches, encourages creating flexible designs that have customizable options, allowing all learners to optimize supports and appropriate challenges from the beginning. Our unique school design allows for teachers to plan and execute interventions that are adjusted and accommodate the unique behavioral and academic needs of their students.

Intervention Pyramid



Tier 2 - Supplemental Supports—

Some students may require additional services to support their academic, behavioral and social emotional support. These are additional supports to supplement what is offered in the classroom, and are most often small group interventions delivered to students within the classroom or individually or in small groups outside of the classroom. In addition to academic intervention, behavior support planning, social skills, and therapy groups can be delivered to students as support services. The progress of students receiving supplemental supports will be monitored through formative assessments, diagnostic assessments, and anecdotal observations on students' behavior plans.



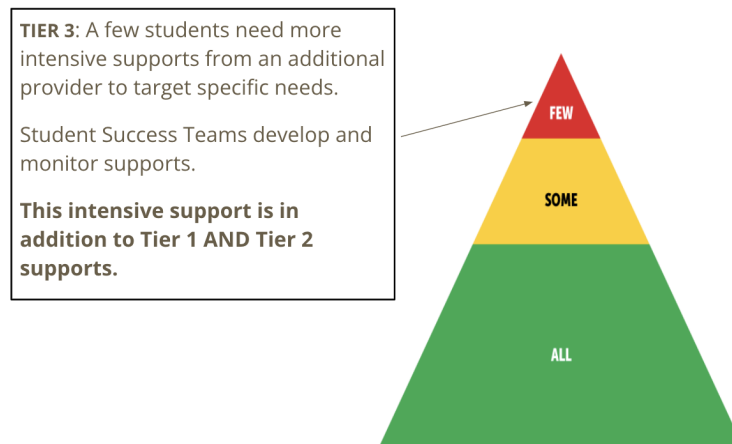
In Tier 2 intervention groups:

- Instruction is targeted on specific skills, not just redoing previous assignments.
- Data is tracked throughout intervention to determine student progress.
- Teachers use data from classroom assessments to determine students who need additional support

Tier 3 - Intensified Supports—

This tier is targeted academic, behavioral and social emotional support directed towards the few students with greater needs. As the most intensive of the three tiers, it may require one-to-one support or address a considerable skill gap for the students at the lowest levels of academic or social emotional achievement.

Examples of some of the services included in this intensified support are specialized academic instruction, behavior improvement plans, and therapy services. The progress of students receiving intensified supports will be monitored through formative assessments, diagnostic assessments, and anecdotal observations on students' behavior plans that include data collection, data analysis, and modification on behavior plans based on collected data.



Students in Tier 3 interventions should still receive Tier 2 supports and strong Tier 1 instructional practices. Tier 3 interventions do not always lead to a special education assessment.

Riversage School recognizes the essential components for MTSS to thrive are:

- Administrative leadership is strong, and actively engaged administrative leaders are committed to improving teaching and learning within a system that empowers educators and school personnel
- An integrated educational framework includes all stakeholders, and they work collaboratively to ensure equity and inclusivity in a positive school climate and structure where all students participate in all school related activities.
- Family and community engagement builds trusting family and community partnerships with the school to provide shared interests, goals, open communications, access to information and provide engagement opportunities.

Students Who Are Academically High Achieving

The curriculum inspired by Waldorf education is, by nature, interdisciplinary. It involves academic learning supported by a rich artistic curriculum along with movement instruction and social learning. Ideally, this creates a climate where all children succeed in some areas, while seeing their classmates excel in others. This learning atmosphere builds individual self-esteem, as well as students' respect for each other as important members of their classroom learning community.

Block scheduling, looping and a thematic, interdisciplinary, project-based approach assists high achievers to develop and pursue extensions of what is being taught. Within the Waldorf classroom, the Class Teacher has a great deal of flexibility in designing instruction, and looping allows for them to identify early on which learners might be needing a more accelerated curriculum and navigate their progress with them. In addition, the Main Lesson/Expeditionary project-based learning model allows individual

students to tailor their projects to their own interests and, if necessary and desired, go beyond the given assignment at any point.

Utilizing a small, personalized environment, teachers are able to move students in and out of groups, allowing high achievers an opportunity to work with their peers or independently.

The multi-modal approach of Waldorf Education provides opportunities for struggle for students who are academically strong; oftentimes a student who is advanced in an academic area may require assistance from peers when engaging in tasks like woodwork or handwork. Experiences of productive struggle prepare advanced learners for the academic challenges they may face later in their educational career and help them appreciate the strengths of their peers in other areas.

The social-emotional development of the gifted population can appear as asynchronous³⁹ and gifted students can exhibit developmental over-sensitivities, specific to children identified or recognized as gifted.⁴⁰ At Riversage School, teachers will have awareness and training to support the social-emotional development of the gifted population. Social-emotional competency is integral for gifted learners to express and reach their potential. Supporting students' social-emotional development is embedded into the curriculum throughout the grades. When creating educational programming and when organizing the classroom environment, teachers will give forethought in this process to support gifted learners. Specifically, for gifted learners, teachers will identify individual areas of asynchronous social-emotional development and individualize their expectations of students. Support also will be provided in the Human Development curriculum and counseling services, if required.

As with all other individual students and student groups, the Principal and classroom teachers will monitor the progress of gifted and talented students and students achieving above grade level to ensure they are being consistently challenged.

English Learners

Riversage School will meet all applicable legal requirements for English learners, including long-term English Learners or English Learners at risk of becoming long-term English Learners, as they pertain to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, EL and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, reclassification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing requirements. Additionally, Riversage School will implement policies to ensure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding EL students and the rights of students and parents. The Principal will be responsible for overseeing the identification, assessment, monitoring, and reclassification of English Language Learners.

Riversage School will commit to supporting EL students in successfully achieving English language proficiency as rapidly and effectively as possible in order to achieve parity with native speakers of English, using best practices and developmentally appropriate techniques, while at the same time

³⁹<http://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources/social-emotional-issues/asynchronous-development>

⁴⁰ <http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/dabrowski.htm>

honoring students' home languages. At Riversage School, students' home languages will be seen as assets, and an important educational resource.

Riversage School recognizes the EL population is diverse due to differences in students' exposure to English as well as individual competence in their first language. These differences, along with other social and environmental factors, influence each child's ability to successfully learn to read and speak English. Therefore, Riversage School will employ a systematic and strategic approach for strengthening and accelerating the academic achievement of English Learners so they can successfully acquire the English language and become Reclassified Fluent English Proficient ("RFEP"). Waldorf education incorporates the 6 components of SDAIE. Main/Expeditionary lessons and single subject classes routinely make learning real; use concrete, visual representations; incorporate realia; use TPR; and include demonstrations, role playing, experiments, and peer discussions.

In addition to our language rich Waldorf curriculum, all teachers of EL students will use the most current California English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework and English Language Development Standards for California Public Schools, as published by the California Department of Education, to guide and inform their practice and ensure all students reach and demonstrate English language fluency.

California ELD framework defines two types of instruction crucial to the success of English Learners. "Integrated ELD" is the use of the CA ELD standards throughout the day in all content areas to support ELs academic and linguistic development. "Designated ELD" is a specific time during the day where teachers use the CA ELD standards to attend to EL's particular English language development needs, in order to be successful in content instruction. Content instruction should support ELs to develop language called for in the content standards in English, Math, and Science, and designated ELD should build into and from content instruction. This statewide approach is perfectly in line with Riversage School's integrated approach to curriculum and instruction.

To best support ELs, our program strives to balance language acquisition, content-learning, and social-emotional development and will take into account unique needs of students at each of the new state ELD performance level descriptors: Emerging, Expanding, and Bridging. To ensure we meet the needs and challenges of our EL students, our instructional strategies and academic interventions are grounded in the following:

- Develop an understanding of how content is organized in different text types across disciplines using text organization and structure, language features, and vocabulary depending on purpose and audience
- Decoding skills with early, explicit, and intensive instruction in phonological awareness and phonics
- Provide increased opportunities for ELs to develop sophisticated vocabulary knowledge including strong academic language
- Read, analyze and create a variety of literary and informational text types that use challenging narrative and expository texts to teach comprehension strategies
- Promote reading fluency with a focus on vocabulary and increased exposure to print

- Ensure that independent reading is structured and purposeful with a good reader-text match
- Provide opportunities in the classrooms to engage in structured academic talk and demonstrate knowledge of content through oral presentations, writing, and multimedia

While these strategies should be considered essential for all learners, they are particularly important given the specific needs of English Learners.

Process for Identifying English Learners

Riversage School will adhere to all applicable state and federal laws and regulations with respect to serving students who are English learners. In order to identify students who are English learners in a timely fashion and to provide appropriate instructional support and services, all parents will be required to complete a Home Language Survey upon enrollment at the school. Cal. Education Code § 52164.1. For students who have previously enrolled in a California public school, a review of a student's transcript and academic records may provide additional information as to the student's EL status. A student's transcripts and EL records will be requested from the student's prior school(s) to ensure students are adequately placed. CALPADS will be used as an additional resource when attempting to identify a student's English learner status.

English Language Proficiency Assessments

After identification, students will be administered the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the California Department of Education and related laws and regulations. The ELPAC will serve as the primary English language proficiency assessment used to determine a student's level of English proficiency. The ELPAC has four proficiency levels (Level 4: well developed; Level 3: moderately developed; Level 2: somewhat developed; and Level 1: minimally developed) and is aligned with the 2012 California ELD Standards.

The ELPAC consists of two separate assessments:

1. Initial Assessment ("IA")
The ELPAC IA is used to identify students as either an English Learner, or as fluent in English. The IA is administered only once during a student's time in the California public school system based upon the results of the home language survey. The locally scored IA will be the official score. The IA is given to students in grades K–12 whose primary language is not English to determine their English proficiency status.
2. Summative Assessment ("SA")
ELs will take the SA every year until they are reclassified as fluent English proficient. The ELPAC SA is only given to students who have previously been identified as an EL based upon the IA results, in order to measure how well they are progressing with English development in each of the four domains. The results are used as one of four criteria to determine if the student is ready to be reclassified as fluent English proficient, to help inform proper educational placement, and to report progress for accountability.

Both the ELPAC SA and IA are paper–pencil assessments administered in seven grade spans—K, 1, 2, 3–5, 6–8, 9–10, and 11–12. In kindergarten and grade 1, all domains are administered individually. In grades 2–12, the test is administered in groups, exclusive of speaking, which is administered individually.

Testing times will vary depending upon the grade level, domain, and individual student. Both the ELPAC IA and SA are given in two separate testing windows through the school year.

The IA testing window will be year-round (July 1–June 30). Any student whose primary language is other than English as determined by the home language survey and who has not previously been identified as an English Learner by a California public school or for whom there is no record of results from an administration of an English language proficiency test, shall be assessed for English language proficiency within 30 calendar days after the date of first enrollment in a California public school, or within 60 calendar days before the date of first enrollment, but not before July 1 of that school year.

The SA testing window will be a four-month window after January 1 (February 1–May 31). The English language proficiency of all currently enrolled English Learners shall be assessed by administering the test during the annual assessment window.

Results from this assessment will be communicated to parents no later than thirty days after receipt from the testing contractor. The student's teacher also will be notified of the results from this assessment.

Upon initial enrollment at Riversage School, students identified as possible English learners via the home language survey will be assessed using the ELPAC to determine their initial English fluency level and inform teachers of the level of support and assistance a student will need. After being designated as an English learner, a student will also be evaluated and assessed using the assessments found in our ELA curriculum which include reading records, spelling inventories, letter sound recognitions, and phonemic awareness inventories among others. Learning and progress in reading will also be measured and tracked using the easyCBM assessment system.

Students will be monitored in conjunction with the ELPAC General Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) Levels 1 through 4.

Student Placement

After identification and assessment, students are placed in a classroom with a California credentialed teacher who has earned appropriate authorization to teach EL students as determined by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Riversage School offers EL students placement in a classroom which provides a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) environment to assist students who are deemed to have less than reasonable English fluency per their ELPAC assessment results. Students who demonstrate reasonable English fluency will be placed in an English Language Mainstream (ELM) classroom environment and receive appropriate instruction and support via their classroom teacher and teacher assistant. Both classroom environments provide students with English Language Development (ELD) and Specially Designed Academic

Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies to ensure they reach full English language proficiency in the shortest time frame possible.

Instructional Program

Riversage School offers all its students a robust educational program designed to meet the needs of all students, including English learners. Riversage School is committed to assisting EL students in successfully achieving English language proficiency at the fastest possible rate. Furthermore, English Learners have full access to our educational program which follows the CA Common Core State Standards.

In accordance with the guidance offered by the California Department of Education (2015), Riversage School will provide EL students both integrated and designated English language development instruction. This dual approach will ensure students are receiving targeted and specific ELD instruction during a designated part of the instructional day, and also are receiving and acquiring ELD instruction through other content areas.

The designated ELD instruction will focus on the CA ELD Framework and Standards and make use of the Wonders for English Learners and California StudySync curriculum programs. This dedicated instructional block will enable teachers to focus on developing students' skills, knowledge, and abilities of the English language. The designated ELD instruction is an opportunity to develop students' knowledge about discourse and discussion, grammatical structures, and vocabulary development which is essential for their participation in all other academic content areas; a strong emphasis is placed on oral language development during designated ELD instruction. According to the 2014 ELA/ELD Framework, the key features of designated ELD instruction are:

1. **Intellectual quality-** students are provided with intellectually motivating, challenging, and purposeful tasks, along with support to meet the tasks
2. **Academic English focus-** students' proficiency with academic English and literacy in the content areas, as described in the ELD Standards, the CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy, and other content standards
3. **Extended language interaction-** extended language interaction between students, including ample opportunities for students to communicate in meaningful ways using English is central. Opportunities for listening or viewing and speaking are thoughtfully planned and not left to chance. As students' progress along the ELD continuum, these activities also increase in sophistication
4. **Focus on meaning-** instruction predominantly focuses on meaning, connecting to the language demands of ELA and other content areas, and identifies the language of texts and tasks critical for understanding meaning (California Department of Education, 2014)

The integrated approach to ELD instruction focuses on the development and learning of English throughout the day and across the disciplines. Teachers will use the CA ELD Standards alongside their content standards to support students' linguistic and academic learning and development. This approach will focus on students' ability to read, analyze, interpret, discuss, and create texts of various types based on their grade level. This will help develop students' awareness and understanding of language, and

demonstrate their learning in multiple forms including presentations, writings, and oral conversations and discussions.

In both the integrated and designated ELD approaches, teachers and teacher assistants use modeling and visuals to support students' recognition of essential information in all academic subjects. Teachers are mindful of the stages of language acquisition and differentiate instruction within the classroom to meet the needs of each student. All instruction will be relevant to skills and content presented in other content areas, with particular emphasis on language arts. Instruction will also emphasize non-transferable skills, functional vocabulary, and pre-teaching information that will support the students throughout the school day. The goal is to ensure a quality EL instructional program which enables EL students to attain English proficiency, achievement in all academic subject areas, and full access to the range of educational opportunities offered to all students. Additionally, teachers and teacher assistants will work with EL students through daily reading, writing, and discussion activities to monitor student's literacy habits and skills.

To ensure EL students are accessing and participating in the Riversage School's educational program while transitioning and developing English proficiency, Riversage School will:

- Maintain ELD folders for each EL student to ensure monitoring of benchmark growth of at least one ELD level each academic year. Each EL student will have a folder containing: Home Language Survey, ELPAC scores, CAASPP scores (where appropriate), writing samples to determine their progress, and curricular assessments used in determining progress towards English fluency. At each reporting period, the individual who is designated to coordinate services, including testing, for EL students⁴¹ and the general education teacher will perform a review of students' ELD progress using the ELD folder to track student progress and determine when a student is ready to be reclassified and ensure progress in being made towards the state ELD performance level descriptors Emerging, Expanding, and Bridging
- Support English learners in the classroom by placing students in classrooms with a qualified teacher who possesses the appropriate qualifications
- Make professional development opportunities available to all teachers focused on research and best practices in language acquisition so they become skilled in meeting the needs of EL students
- Ensure instructional materials and curriculum frameworks are aligned with the most currently adopted California English Language Development Standards ELD Monitoring: Students identified as English Learners will have their performance tracked using the following assessments: standardized test scores on the ELPAC and CAASPP English Language Arts & Literacy scores, Riversage School's literacy based assessments per easyCBM, and teacher-created assessments. At each reporting period, teachers track student progress toward each ELD standard in the ELD folder and select student work to include demonstrating student growth and mastery towards ELD grade level standards. Results of student progress are reviewed with the EL Coordinator to ensure students are making adequate progress
- Ensure students who are dually identified as English Learners who have a disability, receive a linguistically appropriate IEP by including English Language Development goals and by

⁴¹ This person shall be referred to throughout the charter as the EL Coordinator, though Riversage School does not employ a person whose sole title is "EL Coordinator."

including an expert in second language acquisition who understands how to differentiate between limited English proficiency and a disability on the IEP team

While all students who are classified as EL will receive designated ELD instruction, we know that support for ELs who are learning to read in TK/K and first grade is particularly important. Early intervention is the key to proficiency later on. To address this critical issue, students who are identified in Levels 1 and 2 will be offered a richer language experience focusing on the four domains: speaking, listening, writing and reading. In the early grades, this will include being invited to participate in the kindergarten program's storytelling and the accompanying puppet shows, where the same story will be told daily, word for word, for an entire month. Puppet shows of the same story will be enacted weekly. This gives children a way of developing vocabulary-rich language in an experiential way aligned with Waldorf principles. Other activities will include introducing academic language, providing opportunities to perform academic tasks while speaking in English, increasing vocabulary and teaching explicitly English grammar and idioms. During designated ELD, vocabulary is taught explicitly alternating between commonly used vocabulary and academic language.

Staffing & Professional Development

To ensure EL students have access to qualified teachers, Riversage School will hire teachers who have appropriate EL authorization as designated by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Teachers of EL students will participate in continuous professional development opportunities to ensure they remain abreast of the latest developments in the area of teaching EL students. In addition, all teachers will be familiar with the CA ELD Standards and will engage in professional development activities designed to articulate between the ELD standards and Riversage School curricula.

Reclassification

The goal for all English learners is reclassification to English proficiency upon demonstration of mastery and command of the English language. In order to achieve reclassification, students will be assessed and monitored to ensure adequate progress until meeting all reclassification criteria. These criteria are:

1. English language proficiency as demonstrated on the ELPAC assessment
2. Evidence of curricular mastery as demonstrated on student's progress report and evidenced through various assessments, including, but not limited to, University of Oregon's easyCBM assessment system.
3. Proficiency in English Language Arts/Literacy evidenced by CAASPP scores (in grades 3rd through 8th)
4. Parental opinion and consultation, achieved through notice to parents or guardians of the language reclassification and placement including a description of the reclassification process and the parents' opportunity to participate, and encouragement of the participation of parents or guardians in the reclassification procedure including seeking their opinion and consultation during the reclassification process
5. Comparison of the student's performance in basic skills against the performance of students of the same age whose native language is English

Students' academic progress will be evaluated at least annually, to determine their eligibility for reclassification based on their successful attainment on all the above noted criteria. Upon attainment of all these criteria, a student will be reclassified as fluent English proficient.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Program Effectiveness

After reclassification, a student will continue to be monitored to ensure success in our educational program. In order to accurately monitor students' progress and EL status, an ELD folder will form part of a student's cumulative file. This folder will contain students' standardized test scores, copies of parental notifications, and any other assessment records used to place and evaluate a student's performance and achievement.

Annually, students' ELD folders will be reviewed upon receipt of their test scores which will serve as a determinant of their continued achievement and success in the educational program of the school. The efficacy and success of the EL instructional program will be determined by:

- The advancement of at least one performance level per the ELPAC each academic year
- RFEP students meeting their grade level performance standard on the CAASPP English/Language Arts test within four years of initial reclassification to RFEP
- Teachers of EL students holding a valid CA teaching credential with appropriate EL authorization as determined by the CA Commission for Teacher Credentialing
- Teachers of EL students receiving professional development in ELD teaching strategies
- Monitoring student identification and placement
- Monitoring parental program choice options
- Monitoring availability of adequate resources

When the number of EL students enrolled at the school exceeds 21 students, school administration will establish an English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC) which will serve in an advisory capacity to school administrators regarding the programs and services available for English learners.

Progress Monitoring

Riversage School will closely monitor each ELs progress and any instances in which a student is not making sufficient progress towards reclassification. As required by ESSA, RFEP students will be monitored for five years following reclassification. The Principal and classroom teachers will work together to identify the reasons why a student has not acquired English at an expected rate and determine the best support system for that student moving forward.

Per education code, parents will receive annual written notification within thirty days of receipt of test results from the school. This same written notification will take place for initial assessments. In the notification letter, parents will receive overall assessment scores for ELPAC, a copy of their student's score report, the latest assurances related to language programs in California, notification of their child's LTEL or LTEL risk status, and an invitation to a reclassification meeting as appropriate.

Long Term English Learners (LTELs) and Students At-Risk of Becoming LTELs

Under California law, Long Term English Learners (LTELs) are defined as those students who have spent seven years or more in California schools, score Far Below Basic or Below Basic on the state academic exams in English Language Arts (or presumably equivalents under the new CAASPP testing) and are failing to progress on the state's English language proficiency exam (AB 2193, Lara). When LTELs enroll at Riversage School, or students are classified as LTELs after enrolling at Riversage School, the Principal and classroom teachers will work together to identify the reasons why a student has not acquired English at an expected rate and determine the best support system for that student moving forward. Riversage School will prioritize resources (e.g., curriculum for ELD instruction) for students at risk of being identified as LTELs. Students and parents will be made aware of the risks associated with LTEL status, as well as specific barriers to reclassification and ways to address them.

Students with Disabilities

Riversage School anticipates enrolling approximately 10% to 13% students who receive special education and related services. The Waldorf Educational program with its whole child approach can be attractive for families of students who aren't flourishing in traditional education. The Riversage School special education program will facilitate student growth and promote success by providing high quality special educational services and supports to all students with special needs in the least restrictive environment.

Riversage School believes students with disabilities benefit educationally, socially and emotionally from the opportunity to receive designated instructional and related services consistent with the student's Individualized Education Program ("IEP") in the least restrictive environment with an inclusive model. Students with disabilities are fully included within the general education classroom, through supports, services, accommodations and modifications. If the IEP team determines that the most appropriate and least restrictive environment for the student is a setting other than full inclusion within the general education classroom, Riversage School would collaborate with its SELPA to find an appropriate placement.

Riversage School shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ("Section 504"), the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA").

Riversage School will be its own local educational agency ("LEA") for purposes of special education and plans to join the El Dorado Charter Special Education Local Plan Area ("SELPA") in conformity with Education Code Section 47641(a).

As a member of the El Dorado Charter SELPA, Riversage School will achieve full compliance with SELPA policies, state and federal laws. The El Dorado Charter SELPA's Special Education Director is available for consultation and advising for the general and special education staff of Riversage School. Riversage School shall comply with all SELPA policies and procedures, and shall utilize appropriate SELPA forms.

Riversage School shall be solely responsible for its compliance with Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Riversage School shall not deny admission to any pupil on the basis of disability or the nature of or extent of a disability. The facilities shall be accessible for all students with disabilities.

Staffing

All special education services at Riversage School will be delivered by individuals or agencies qualified to provide special education services as required by California's Education Code and the IDEA.

Riversage School is responsible for the hiring, training, and employment of site staff necessary to provide special education services to its students, including, without limitation, special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and resource specialists. Riversage School ensures all special education staff hired or contracted by Riversage School are qualified pursuant to SELPA policies, and meet all legal requirements.

Riversage School shall provide well-planned staff development activities and participate in available appropriate SELPA trainings to support access by students with disabilities to the general education classroom, general education curriculum, integration of instructional strategies and curriculum adaptations to address the diverse learner, and interaction with non-disabled peers. Riversage School shall continually assess the staff development needs of its faculty and staff with regard to the delivery of special education services and related laws and regulations and will provide related training, as appropriate.

Identification and Referral Process

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

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

Following Riversage School's comprehensive identification and referral process, Riversage School will take the following steps for students who are referred for Special Education Assessment by the SST or other means.

The referral process is a formal, ongoing review of information related to students who are suspected of having disabilities and who show potential signs of needing special education and related services. Parents may also refer their child for assessment for special education services. Teachers, other Charter School personnel, and community members may also refer a child for an assessment. Within fifteen days (not counting school vacations greater than five days) of the receipt of a referral for assessment, the parent will receive a written response from Riversage School.

The parent must consent to the Permission to Assess (“PTA”) by signing the PTA before the assessment can take place. Riversage School has 60 days (not counting school vacations greater than five days) from the receipt of the parent’s signed PTA to complete the assessment and hold an IEP meeting.

If the parent does not consent to the PTA, Riversage School may take steps to protect the student if it is believed that the student is being denied necessary services. Riversage School may request that the parent meet to resolve this difference of opinion, or failing that, initiate a due process hearing to override the parent’s refusal to consent to assessment.

Assessment Process

The term “assessments” shall have the same meaning as the term “evaluation” in the IDEA, as provided in Section 1414, Title 20 of the United States Code. Riversage School will determine what assessments, if any, are necessary and arrange for such assessments for referred or eligible students in accordance with applicable law. Riversage School shall obtain parent/guardian consent to assess Riversage School students.

The assessment will gather information about the student to determine whether the student has a disability, and if eligible, the nature and extent of special education services that the student may need. Assessments may include, but are not limited to, individual testing, observations of the students at school, interviews with the student and school personnel who work with the student, and a review of school records, reports and work samples.

Riversage School’s guidelines for assessment include, but are not limited to:

- Student will be assessed only after parent consents to the Permission to Assess, or as ordered following a due process hearing
- Student will be assessed in all areas related to their suspected disability
- Assessment will be administered in the student’s primary language or a qualified interpreter will be provided
- Assessment will include a variety of appropriate tests to measure student’s strengths and needs. The person administering the tests will be qualified to do so
- Assessment will be adapted for students with impaired sensory, physical, or speaking skills
- A multidisciplinary team, including at least one teacher or other specialist with knowledge of the student’s suspected disability, will assess the student
- Testing and assessment materials and procedures must not be racially, culturally, or sexually discriminatory
- Riversage School shall conduct assessment and standardized testing of students with disabilities using state and SELPA guidelines for modifications and adaptations

If the parent disagrees with Riversage School’s assessment of their child, the parent may obtain an independent educational assessment and has the right to obtain the independent educational assessment at public expense only if Riversage School is not able to demonstrate that its evaluation was appropriate.

Upon the parent's request, Riversage School will provide information about how to obtain this independent assessment by a qualified examiner.

Developing & Implementing the IEP

After a student has been assessed, an IEP meeting will be held. Riversage School shall arrange and notice the necessary IEP meetings. IEP team membership shall be in compliance with state and federal law. Riversage School understands the decisions regarding eligibility, goals/objectives, program, services, placement, and exit from special education shall be the decision of the IEP team, pursuant to the IEP process. Programs, services and placements shall be provided to all eligible Charter School students in accordance with the policies, procedures and requirements of the SELPA and State and Federal law.

The IEP meeting will be held at a time and place convenient for the parent, Riversage School, and any invited parties. At the IEP meeting, the IEP team will discuss the assessment results and determine whether the student is eligible for special education services, based upon state and federal criteria. If the student is eligible, then an IEP will be developed at the meeting. The IEP team will include:

- The parent and/or their representative. The parent is an important member of the IEP team. If the parent cannot attend the IEP meeting, Riversage School will ensure the parent's participation using other methods, such as conferencing by telephone. Riversage School will ensure the parent understands what is going on at the meeting. If necessary, Riversage School will provide an interpreter if the parent has a hearing disability or their primary language is not English
- A Riversage School staff member or qualified representative who is knowledgeable about the program options appropriate for the student
- An individual with expertise in second language acquisition who understands how to differentiate between limited English Proficiency and a disability will be included in the IEP team for dually identified students
- The student's teachers. In the case of new students who may not presently be assigned to teacher(s), a teacher with the most recent and complete knowledge of the student and who has observed the student's educational performance will participate as an IEP team member. If a teacher with the most recent and complete knowledge is not available, the teacher on the IEP team will be a special education teacher qualified to teach a student of their age
- At least one special education teacher
- Other persons, such as the student, whom the parent or Riversage School wishes to invite
- When appropriate, the persons who assessed the child or someone familiar with those assessment procedures

The team must consider the least restrictive educational setting for the student. Mainstreaming to regular education will be considered to the extent possible. After the written IEP has been finished, it will be implemented by Riversage School. The parent can review and request revisions of the plan. The IEP will contain:

- The services that the student will receive
- How these services will be delivered
- The instructional programs where these services will be delivered

- The rationale for placement decisions
- Annual goals and short-term objectives focusing on the student's current level of performance
- How the student's progress will be measured
- Transition goals for work-related skills
- English Language Development goals for students who are dually identified as English Learners and special education students

Times for IEP meetings:

- Once a year, the IEP team will meet to review and determine the student's progress and placement to make any needed changes to the IEP
- Every three years, the IEP team will meet to review the results of a mandatory comprehensive reevaluation of the student's progress
- After a student has received a formal assessment or reassessment, the IEP team will meet to review results, consider placement and make any needed changes to the IEP.
- When a parent or teacher feels that the student has demonstrated significant educational growth or a lack of anticipated progress, the IEP team will meet to discuss concerns and make any needed changes to the IEP.
- When a parent or teacher requests a meeting, the IEP team will meet to develop, review, or revise IEP.
- When a student is approaching a transitional age such as childhood into adolescence or adolescence into adulthood, the IEP team will meet to to make any needed changes to the IEP
- When a student with an IEP is faced with a suspension for more than ten days or an expulsion, the IEP will meet to determine whether the student's misconduct was a manifestation of the student's disability (Student discipline and procedures for suspension and expulsion shall comply with federal and state laws and regulations, and shall include positive behavioral interventions)

Riversage School will make available to all parents and teachers, SELPA, state, and federal literature regarding special education programs, regulations, and laws.

Non Public Placements & Non Public Agencies

Riversage School shall be solely responsible for selecting, contracting with, and overseeing all non-public schools and non-public agencies used to serve special education students in accordance with applicable law and SELPA policy.

Non Discrimination

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

Parent/Guardian Complaints

Riversage School shall adopt policies for responding to parental concerns or complaints related to special education services. Riversage School shall receive any concerns raised by parents/guardians regarding related services and rights.

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

Due Process & Procedural Safeguards

Riversage School, as an organization, may initiate a due process hearing or request for mediation with respect to a student enrolled in Riversage School if it determines such action is legally necessary or advisable. In the event that the parent/guardian files for a due process hearing, or request mediation, Riversage School shall defend the case.

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

Riversage School shall ensure that parents receive and understand the Parental Rights and Procedural Safeguards for Special Education upon: initial referral for evaluation of their child for special education service; each notification of an IEP meeting; registration of a complaint or a request for a mediation or due process hearing; and upon parent request.

Interim & Initial placements

Riversage School shall comply with Education Code Section 56325 with regard to students transferring into Riversage School within the academic school year. In accordance with Education Code Section 56325(a)(1), for students who enroll in Riversage School from another school outside of the SELPA, Riversage School shall provide the pupil with a free appropriate public education, including services comparable to those described in the previously approved IEP, in consultation with the parent, for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days, by which time Riversage School shall adopt the previously approved IEP or shall develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP that is consistent with federal and state law.

In accordance with Education Code Section 56325(a)(2), in the case of an individual with exceptional needs who has an IEP and transfers into Riversage School from a school within the same SELPA, Riversage School shall continue, without delay, to provide services comparable to those described in the existing approved IEP, unless the parent and the Riversage School agree to develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP that is consistent with federal and state law.

For students transferring to Riversage School with an IEP from outside of California, Riversage School shall provide the pupil with a free appropriate public education, including services comparable to those described in the previously approved IEP in consultation with the parents, until Riversage School conducts an assessment pursuant to paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of Section 1414 of Title 20 of the

United States Code, if determined to be necessary by Riversage School, and develops a new IEP, if appropriate, that is consistent with federal and state law.

Funding

Riversage School shall budget adequate resources to educate students with disabilities per state and federal funding that will be subject to the allocation plan of the SELPA.

In addition, students with disabilities derive a direct benefit from many other line items in the budget, particularly salaries and benefits for administrators, Special Education staff, general education teachers and paraprofessionals who provide direct services to all students; curriculum materials and instructional supplies; health office supplies; and equipment. Indirect costs include staff development; travel, conferences and dues; facility-related expenses; and general administrative expenses. Consistent with the experience of all public schools, Riversage School may use general funds to meet the needs of its Special Education students.

Riversage School shall receive its allocated share of AB602 special education funds and shall be fiscally responsible for the provision of special education services and instruction to the students it serves. The allocated amount shall be calculated using a funding model determined by agreement between Riversage School and the SELPA. In addition to AB602 funding, Riversage School will receive IDEA Local Assistance funding based on the number of special education students Riversage School serves. Riversage School shall keep daily attendance for each student which shall be reported and certified according to established policies and procedures.

Supplemental Instructional Materials

Specialized, adapted, and modified instructional materials will be provided for students as determined by their individual IEP requirements to allow access to general education curriculum and the California Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. Social skills and transitional skills will be addressed. Adaptive technologies that will be implemented for students who require them will include audio-books, manipulatives for math, text-to-speech and speech-to-text programs, and occupational therapy materials.

Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504

Riversage School will be solely responsible for its compliance with Section 504 and the ADA. Facilities of Riversage School will be accessible for students with disabilities in accordance with the ADA.

Riversage School will adopt a policy which outlines the requirements for identifying and serving students with a 504 accommodation plan, which will be found in our Riversage School Parent Student Handbook.

Riversage 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 core instructional activities of Riversage School. A student who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of

such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment, is eligible for protections under Section 504.

A 504 Team will be assembled by the principal and shall include the parent or guardian, the teacher, and any other qualified persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment. The 504 Team will review the student's existing records, including academic, social and behavioral records, and is responsible for making a determination as to whether an evaluation for 504 services is appropriate. The principal will be responsible for overseeing the identification, assessment, monitoring, and servicing of students with 504 Plans.

If the student has already been evaluated under the IDEA (and found to be ineligible) those evaluations may be used to help determine eligibility under Section 504. The student evaluation shall be carried out by the 504 Team who will evaluate the nature of the student's disability and the impact upon the student's education. This evaluation will include consideration of any behaviors that interfere with regular participation in the educational program and/or activities. The 504 Team will consider all applicable student information in its evaluation including but not limited to the following information:

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

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

If the student is found by the 504 Team to have a disability under Section 504, the 504 Team shall be responsible for determining what, if any, accommodations are needed to ensure that the student receives the free and appropriate public education ("FAPE"). In developing the 504 Plan, the 504 Team shall consider all relevant information utilized during the evaluation of the student, drawing upon a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, assessments conducted by professional staff at Riversage School. The parent or guardian shall be invited to participate in 504 Team meetings where program modifications for the student will be determined and shall be given an opportunity to examine in advance all relevant records.

The 504 Plan shall describe the Section 504 disability and any program modification that may be necessary. In considering the 504 Plan, a student with a disability requiring program modification shall be placed in regular instruction at Riversage School along with those students who are not disabled to the extent appropriate to the individual needs of the student with a disability.

All 504 Team participants, parents, guardians, and teachers must have a copy of each student's 504 Plan. A copy of the 504 Plan shall be maintained in the student's file. Each student's 504 Plan will be reviewed at least once per year to determine the appropriateness of the Plan, continued eligibility, or a discontinuation of the 504 Plan. Riversage School will maintain on file a Section 504 Board Policy and Parent-Student Rights Form; this will be provided to our authorizing agency upon request.

J. LOCAL CONTROL & ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN (LCAP)

Riversage School will comply with all requirements for charter schools pursuant to California Education Code 47605(c)(5)(a)(ii) including developing annual goals for all pupils and for each subgroup of pupils as identified in California Education Code 52052, for each of the applicable eight state priorities identified in California Education Code 52060(d). These outcomes are included in Element 2, which describes the measurable pupil outcomes for the school-wide goals, for relevant sub-groups and the corresponding assessments. Riversage School will comply with all elements of the Local Control and Accountability Plan pursuant to regulations and templates adopted by the State Board of Education and reserves the right to establish additional, school-specific goals and corresponding assessments throughout the duration of the charter. The Local Control and Accountability Plan, as described in Education Code 47606.5, will be submitted to the County Office of Education no later than July 1 of each year, in accordance with Education Code 47604.33.

K. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Riversage School provides innovative teaching methods through many pedagogical features. Riversage School teachers follow the same students through the grade levels allowing for the development of trusting, long-term relationships. Waldorf teachers are encouraged to cultivate within themselves a sense of wonder and discovery throughout the process of developing and presenting lesson material, while also teaching from the richness of their experience. This, in combination with the practical necessity of developing new curricula each year as one advances through the grade levels, invariably leads to creative and innovative lesson plans. Riversage School teachers further innovate by incorporating art, movement, and song into core lessons to more fully engage the body in the learning process. Riversage School is also original in its assessments. In order to cultivate cooperation and a focus on self-advancement rather than competition, Riversage School relies on broad, whole child, formative evaluations, incorporating traditional assessments of academic progress with analysis of the development of other skills, such as artistic ability, fine motor and gross motor skills, social and emotional capacities, and musical competency. Summative assessment includes a balance of qualitative and quantitative measurements. Tests as well as portfolios and year-end narrative reports by teachers form the student profile reports. Riversage School administers the required year-end CAASPP tests, tracks student progress, and adjusts focus to core subject areas as statistically based evidence indicates such focus.

Professional development is essential to equip teachers to design and deliver this multifaceted educational program. The Principal serves as the instructional leader of the school and facilitates professional development utilizing the principles and structure of a Professional Learning Community.

During the summer, all teachers attend a week-long intensive focused on their grade, which includes planning their instructional blocks, identifying power goals, creating resource lists, selecting texts, meeting with mentors and collaborating with peers. At this time, those trainings are held in Colorado at the nationally accredited Gradalis Teacher Education program. This week-long intensive connects Riversage School teachers with colleagues from across the United States who will be teaching the same grade level, creating virtual grade-level teams, who can share resources, texts and instructional strategies.

In addition to the summer intensive, there are five full days of teacher professional development immediately before the school year starts. When the school year begins, each teacher has two mentor meetings per month. At these meetings, teachers and their mentors engage in an ongoing analysis of student data and identify or revise goals, objectives and strategies for the current and upcoming units. They also work together to identify professional development goals and concrete strategies to achieve those goals, such as observing other teachers, attending workshops, and researching content and strategies.

Additional Training

- Special Education training for general education teachers and staff
- Integrating ELD standards and supports into the regular education classroom
- Implicit bias training
- Training in utilizing Riverside Insights' easyCBM and CAASPP data to inform classroom instruction
- Ongoing training and conferences as needed for the continuous improvement of the curricular program
- CMC, CABE, CSTA, CATE, CCSS conferences
- Mandated trainings, such as blood-borne pathogens, mandated reporting and safety procedures

Element 2— Measurable Pupil Outcomes

Governing Law: *The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. “Pupil outcomes,” for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the charter school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the charter school’s educational program. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both schoolwide and for all pupil subgroups served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subdivision (a) of Section 52052. The pupil outcomes shall align with the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served by the charter school. Education Code 47605(c)(5)(B).*

A. MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES

Riversage School is committed to ensuring all students develop and progress along three interdependent educational domains: academic excellence, social emotional well-being, and social responsibility. The academic excellence outcomes were developed with the California Common Core State Standards (CA CCSS), the Next Generation Science Standards, and the CA Framework for History & Social Science as guides, and directly reflect Riversage School’s unique educational program. Overall, these outcomes represent the skills, knowledge, and qualities students will demonstrate at developmentally appropriate levels.

In order to best serve our students and community, Riversage School will remain responsive to statutory changes and will review and update outcomes and assessment methods accordingly. The CA CCSS and assessments for students with exceptional needs or limited English proficiency are adapted appropriately according to their Individualized Education Programs (IEP) and/or English language proficiency levels to ensure all students are accessing the curriculum and meeting grade level expectations.

The assessment methods and ways in which the pupil outcome data is gathered, analyzed, and used is found in Element 3 of this charter petition.

B. CHARTER SCHOOL OUTCOMES ALIGNED TO STATE PRIORITIES

<p>State Priority #1— Basic Services The degree to which teachers are appropriately assigned (E.C. §44258.9) and fully credentialed, and every pupil has sufficient access to standards-aligned instructional materials (E.C. § 60119), and school facilities are maintained in good repair (E.C. §17002(d))</p>	
<p>Goal to Achieve Priority– Ensure operations and facilities are mission-aligned, meet needs of educational program, and facilitate achievement of student learning outcomes</p>	
Measurable Outcomes	Subpriority A: 100% of core teachers will hold a valid CA Teaching Credential with appropriate English learner authorization as defined by the CA Commission on Teaching Credentialing

	<p>Subpriority B: 100% of pupils will have access to standards-aligned materials and additional instructional materials as outlined in our charter petition</p> <p>Subpriority C: Annually, 90% of all items on monthly site inspection checklists will be in compliance/good standing and 100% of identified required corrections will be corrected within three months. Daily cleanliness spot checks will ensure appropriate cleanliness</p>
Methods of Measurement	<p>Subpriority A: Initial and annual verification of core teacher credentials as reported by the CA Commission on Teacher Credentialing; CALPADS Report 3.5 NCLB Core Course Section Compliance; Annual School Accountability Report Card.</p> <p>Subpriority B: Director of Finance & Operations and Principal review all instructional materials before purchase pursuant to E.C. § 60119. Stakeholder survey questions will determine if teachers have sufficient materials</p> <p>Subpriority C: Monthly site inspection checklists and annual climate survey questions will determine if stakeholders are satisfied with facilities</p>
Actions to Achieve Goal	<p>Subpriority A: Director of Finance & Operations will review credential status & applicants for core teaching positions will be screened.</p> <p>Subpriority B: All instructional materials purchased will be aligned to CA Common Core State Standards and aligned with our charter petition</p> <p>Subpriority C: Daily general cleaning by custodial staff will maintain campus cleanliness; annual and monthly facility inspections will screen for safety hazards</p>
<p>State Priority #2— Implementation of Common Core State Standards <i>Implementation of Common Core State Standards, including how EL students will be enabled to gain academic content knowledge and English language proficiency</i></p>	
<p>Goal to Achieve Priority– Ensure operations and facilities are mission-aligned, meet needs of educational program, and facilitate achievement of student learning outcomes</p>	
Measurable Outcomes	<p>Subpriority A: 100% of teachers will participate in annual professional development on the implementation of CA CCSS</p> <p>Subpriority B: 100% of teachers of science will participate in annual professional development on the implementation of Next Generation Science Standards</p> <p>Subpriority C: 100% of teachers of English learners will participate in annual professional development on the implementation of English Language Development Standards</p>

Methods of Measurement	<p>Subpriorities A, B & C: Professional development calendar and rosters will evidence participation by teachers in professional development activities.</p> <p>Regular review of teacher Expeditionary/Block plans and assessment for standards-alignment</p>
Actions to Achieve Goal	<p>Subpriorities A, B & C: Identify and participate in intensive professional development and training on the standards implementation.</p>
<p>State Priority #3— Parental Involvement <i>Parental involvement, including efforts to seek parent input for making decisions for schools, and how the school will promote parent participation</i></p>	
<p>Goal to Achieve Priority– Develop a school culture that supports student-learning outcomes, is responsive to stakeholder feedback, and ensures organizational sustainability & equity</p>	
Measurable Outcomes	<p>Subpriority A: Maintain parent representation on the Governing Board - Parent response on climate survey questions will indicate parents feel welcome to participate and that the school seeks their input with at least 85% agreeing or strongly agreeing, with an increase of 2% per year from baseline in year one until goal is met or exceeded.</p> <p>Subpriority B: Riversage School will co-sponsor at least three events annually with Friends of Tahoe-Truckee Waldorf (FOTTW) parent group.</p>
Methods of Measurement	<p>Subpriority A: Governing Board meeting agendas and minutes identify Parent Members Annual climate survey</p> <p>Subpriority B: Calendar of school events and documentation from event</p>
Actions to Achieve Goal	<p>A. School administration will work to recruit parents to the Board via classroom newsletters and monthly parent meetings</p> <p>Riversage School Administration will meet with leadership of FOTTW to identify opportunities and events to create and nurture community on campus</p> <p>B. Results of parent satisfaction surveys will be analyzed by staff and presented to the Governing Board for discussion and implementation</p>
<p>State Priority #4— Student Achievement <i>Pupil achievement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:</i></p> <p>A. CAASPP</p> <p>B. The California School Dashboard</p>	

- C. Percentage of pupils who have successfully completed courses that satisfy UC/CSU entrance requirements, or career technical education*
- D. Percentage of ELs who make progress toward English language proficiency as measured by the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California*
- E. EL reclassification rate*
- F. Percentage of pupils who have passed an AP exam with a score of 3 or higher*
- G. Percentage of pupils who participate in and demonstrate college preparedness pursuant to the Early Assessment Program (E.C. §99300 et seq.) or any subsequent assessment of college preparedness*

Goal to Achieve Priority: Improve outcomes for all students by improving instruction and programs

<p>Measurable Outcomes</p>	<p>Subpriority A & B: For each cohort, the Distance from Meeting the Standard in English Language Arts and Mathematics will fall into the California School Dashboard’s “increase” or “significant increase” category. For each subject, these growth rates shall be maintained until the cohort reaches a “high” status on the CA Dashboard.</p> <p>Subpriority C: Grade levels not applicable to Riversage School</p> <p>Subpriority D & E: The percentage of English Learners either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ reclassifying; or ○ improving on the ELPAC as defined by the California School Dashboard Report’s English Learner Progress Indicator (ELPI); or ○ maintaining a “high” status level of performance on the ELPAC, as defined by the California School Dashboard Report’s English Learner Progress Indicator; <p>will improve by 2% each year until Riversage School’s ELPI reaches reaching a “high” status level, as defined by California School Dashboard Five-by-Five Placement Reports</p> <p>Subpriority F & G: Grade levels not applicable to Riversage School</p>
<p>Methods of Measurement</p>	<p>A & B: Student performance on CAASPP as shown on the California School Dashboard</p> <p>D & E: ELPAC Score Reports; EL Reclassification rates</p>
<p>Actions to Achieve Goal</p>	<p>A & B: Implement Waldorf educational program including,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● classroom instruction conducive to student learning ● arts-integration ● expeditionary blocks ● CA CCSS aligned instructional materials ● Professional development to improve instruction ● Multi-Tiered Systems of Support <p>D&E: All actions in A & B, and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Professional development to improve ELD instruction

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rich language environment in all classrooms ● ELD Coordinator will monitor progress of ELs & RFEPs, communicate with parents of English Learners on goals and pathways to reclassification ● Core teachers of English Learners will have appropriate English learner authorization as defined by the CA Commission on Teaching Credentialing ● Designated ELD instruction
<p>State Priority #5— Student Engagement <i>Pupil engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:</i></p> <p>A. <i>School attendance rates</i> B. <i>Chronic absenteeism rates</i> C. <i>Middle school dropout rates (EC §52052.1(a)(3))</i> D. <i>High school dropout rates</i> E. <i>High school graduation rates</i></p>	
<p>Goal to Achieve Priority: Develop a school culture that supports student-learning outcomes, is responsive to stakeholder feedback, and ensures organizational sustainability & equity</p>	
<p>Measurable Outcomes</p>	<p>Subpriority A: Starting from a baseline set in the first year of operation, Riversage School will increase its annual ADA rate by 1% each year until reaching an annual ADA rate of 95%</p> <p>Subpriority B: Starting from a baseline to be set in the first year of operation, the rate of Riversage School students missing 10% or more of the school year will decline by at least 3% each year until it is less than 10% (reaching a “medium status” on the California School Dashboard’s Five by Five Placement report), and then decline at least 0.5% until reaching a rate of less than 5% (“low status” on the California School Dashboard’s Five by Five Placement report). A Green or Blue rating on the California School Dashboard will be maintained thereafter.</p> <p>Subpriority C: Riversage School will have no dropouts</p> <p>Subpriority D: Grade levels not applicable to Riversage School</p> <p>Subpriority E: Grade levels not applicable to Riversage School</p>
<p>Methods of Measurement</p>	<p>A. Midyear and end of year ADA reports. Monitoring through MTSS. B. End of year absence reports. Monitoring through monthly and quarterly attendance reports C. DataQuest One Year Dropout Data</p>
<p>Actions to Achieve Goal</p>	<p>A, B & C :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide professional development for teachers to establish and maintain safe and effective small learning communities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide developmentally appropriate and engaging educational program ● Leadership team will collect and review climate data from students, teachers, staff, and parents, and then collaborate with stakeholders to address any climate challenges that might be impacting attendance ● Implement MTSS to ensure students who are chronically absent and their families are receiving support. ● Send periodic attendance updates to families reminding them of the importance of in-school attendance as the primary way of learning. Inform parents of Attendance & Truancy policy
<p>State Priority #6— School Climate <i>School climate, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:</i></p> <p>A. Pupil suspension rates B. Pupil expulsion rates C. Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness</p>	
<p>Goal to Achieve Priority: Develop a school culture that supports student-learning outcomes, is responsive to stakeholder feedback, and ensures organizational sustainability & equity.</p>	
<p>Measurable Outcomes</p>	<p>Subpriority A: Riversage School will maintain an annual suspension rate of less than 1%</p> <p>Subpriority B: Riversage School will maintain an annual expulsion rate of less than 1%</p> <p>Subpriority C: Surveys on pupils, parents, and teachers will indicate a high rate of satisfaction, including a sense of safety and school connectedness.</p>
<p>Methods of Measurement</p>	<p>A. Annual School Accountability Report Card and CALPADS Report 7.1 Discipline Incidents B. Annual School Accountability Report Card and CALPADS Report 7.1 Discipline Incidents C. Annual Climate Survey</p>
<p>Actions to Achieve Goal</p>	<p>Implement Social Emotional Learning Program (Compassionate Campus) & MTSS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers will be trained and follow the Social Emotional well-being component of our Charter, including Compassionate Campus ● Leadership Team will work with teachers and families to manage student behavior issues and concerns and connect families to additional resources as needed ● Leadership Team will review stakeholder surveys and other feedback and respond to areas for improvement by developing actions with stakeholder input.

	<p>Build sense of safety & connectedness through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Training students and staff to adhere to School Safety Plan ● Reviewing & refining School Safety Plan with stakeholder input ● Collaborating with Parent Groups to hold school events & activities ● Frequent communication
<p>State Priority #7— Course Access</p> <p><i>The extent to which pupils have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study, including programs and services developed and provided to unduplicated students (classified as EL, FRPM-eligible, or foster youth; E.C. §42238.02) and students with exceptional needs. “Broad course of study” includes the following, as applicable:</i></p> <p><i>Grades 1-6: English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, health, physical education, and other as prescribed by the governing board. (E.C. §51210)</i></p> <p><i>Grades 7-12: English, social sciences, foreign language(s), physical education, science, mathematics, visual and performing arts, applied arts, and career technical education. (E.C. §51220(a)-(i))</i></p>	
<p>Goal to Achieve Priority: Develop a school culture that supports student-learning outcomes, is responsive to stakeholder feedback, and ensures organizational sustainability & equity</p>	
<p>Measurable Outcomes</p>	<p>Annually, 100% of students, including all student groups, unduplicated students, and students with exceptionalities, will have access to the Riversage School educational program as outlined in the charter</p>
<p>Methods of Measurement</p>	<p>Annual review of student schedules</p>
<p>Actions to Achieve Goal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Professional development for all staff on students’ rights to participate in the educational program ● Review of student schedules to ensure course access for all students
<p>State Priority #8— Pupil Outcomes- Other Student Outcomes</p> <p><i>Pupil outcomes in the subject areas described in Education Code Section 51210 and subdivisions (a) to (i), inclusive, of Education Code Section 51220</i></p> <p><i>(a) English</i></p> <p><i>(b) Mathematics</i></p> <p><i>(c) Social sciences</i></p> <p><i>(d) Science</i></p> <p><i>(e) Visual and performing arts,</i></p> <p><i>(f) Health</i></p> <p><i>(g) Physical education</i></p> <p><i>(h) Other studies that may be prescribed by the governing board</i></p>	

Goal to Achieve Priority: Improve outcomes for all students by improving instruction and programs

<p>Measurable Outcomes</p>	<p><i>(a) English</i> 80% students will perform at or above grade-level on easyCBM formative assessments in April of the school year</p> <p><i>(b) Mathematics</i> 80% students perform at or above grade-level on easyCBM formative assessments in April of the school year</p> <p><i>(c) Social sciences</i> All students' ability to read and comprehend nonfiction text will improve as measured by the easyCBM Reading assessment, with at least 80% of students meeting or exceeding grade level expectations.</p> <p><i>(d) Science</i> All students' ability to read and comprehend nonfiction text will improve as measured by the easyCBM Reading assessment, with at least 80% of students meeting or exceeding grade level expectations.</p> <p><i>(e) Visual and performing arts</i> 80% of all students will demonstrate grade-level proficiency in visual and performing arts as measured in an Arts Rubric System and aligned to expected grade-level outcomes.</p> <p><i>(f) Health</i> 80% of students produce health journals providing evidence of overall practice of health-supporting daily practices in nutrition and exercise.</p> <p><i>(g) Physical education</i> Starting with the baseline set in year one, Riversage School will increase the percentage of students meeting standard in 4 of 5 test California Physical Fitness Test components by 3% until it reaches 80%</p> <p><i>(h) Other studies:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>i. Cyber Civics:</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">- 80% of students will meet grade level expectation as measured on rubric-graded journals on semester basis- 80% will meet rubric-graded participation expectations on semester basis<i>ii. Compassionate Campus</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">- 80% of students will meet grade level expectation as measured on rubric-graded journals on semester basis- 80% will meet rubric-graded participation expectations on semester basis
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	<p><i>iii. Eco-literacy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 80% of students will meet grade level expectation as measured on rubric-graded journals on semester basis - 80% will meet rubric-graded participation expectations on semester basis
<p>Methods of Measurement</p>	<p>a, b, c, & d: easyCBM</p> <p>e & f: Formal assessments include: pre and post testing, end of unit quizzes, and essay exams. Authentic assessments include: presentations, projects, rubrics, peer feedback and teacher feedback as a form of assessment to demonstrate proficiency.</p> <p>g: <i>California Physical Fitness Test</i></p> <p>h: Formal assessments include: pre and post testing, end of unit quizzes, and essay exams. Authentic assessments include: presentations, projects, rubrics, peer feedback and teacher feedback as a form of assessment to demonstrate proficiency.</p>
<p>Actions to Achieve Goal</p>	<p>Implement Waldorf-informed educational program including,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● classroom instruction conducive to student learning; ● arts-integration, ● expeditionary blocks, ● Standards- aligned instructional materials ● Professional development to improve instruction, <p>Implement Multi-Tiered Systems of Support;</p> <p>Implement supporting pillars</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Compassionate Campus ● Cyber Civics ● Eco-literacy

Rationale for Science & History Social Science Outcomes

We will focus on literacy, using student progress on the easyCBM to track growth in reading. According to the NGSS, "Literacy skills are critical to building knowledge in science." In fact, Appendix M of NGSS describes the collaborative alignment of NGSS and CCSS in terms of literacy development: "the NGSS development team worked with the CCSS writing team to identify key literacy connections to the specific content demands outlined in the NGSS."

We also plan to use literacy as the formative measure of student readiness in history-social science. There is currently no standardized summative assessment for history in California. However, in the updated History-Social Science Framework, the State Board of Education emphasizes student literacy as a key

indicator for success in history: "a focus on student literacy in history–social science classrooms not only helps students learn content; it develops the skills necessary to participate effectively in a literate democratic society." The framework goes on to highlight the role of literacy as a lever for access to all academic content, particularly in the history-social science classroom: "As the CA Common Core for ELA/Literacy and California's English Language Development Standards emphasize, in order to be successful in most content areas, students must develop essential reading, writing, and analysis skills. Studying disciplines like history and the related social sciences require students to employ complex vocabulary, understand discipline-specific patterns of language, and exercise analytical thinking skills."

Element 3— Assessment Methods

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

A. ASSESSMENTS

Riversage School will focus on the types of continuous formative assessment that are in line with the mission and vision of Riversage School, well integrated with what will be taught in the classroom, and developmentally and culturally appropriate. Assessments will initiate instructional decision-making and be an outgrowth of it. Assessments will be varied and designed to measure student progress in multiple ways, including tests and quizzes, performance-based assessments, authentic assessments, and teacher observation, and use a combination of publisher assessment tools with teacher-created assessments that align to our model of instruction. This combination of formative assessments will be used to track progress on specific standards-aligned goals. Assessments will be chosen and used according to the goals targeted. Assessments will reflect our commitment to recognize each child as an individual and develop a learning program that will avoid labeling and help create a non-competitive environment for our students. Assessments will also be adjusted as needed to measure specific goals so that teachers know they are getting valid assessment data.

Riversage School utilizes the following assessments of student learning:

CAASPP: One measure of academic achievement is state standardized tests, as mandated by the Charter Schools Act and other state law; Riversage School will comply with the required state assessments as defined by Education Code 47605(d)(1).

The California Physical Fitness Test for Grades 5 & 7: The State Board of Education designated the FITNESSGRAM® as the Physical Fitness Test (PFT) for students in California public schools. The FITNESSGRAM® is a comprehensive, health-related physical fitness battery developed by The Cooper Institute. The primary goal of the FITNESSGRAM® is to assist students in establishing lifetime habits of regular physical activity.

The California Science Test: The California Science Test is an online assessment based on the California Next Generation Science Standards and will be administered to all 5 and 8th grade students. This is one measure of academic achievement in the area of science as mandated by the Charter Schools Act and other state law; Riversage School will comply with required state assessments as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(1).

The California Alternative Assessment for Students with Disabilities: California's statewide alternate assessments for English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The purpose of the CAAs is to measure what students know and can do. These measures help identify and address gaps in knowledge or skills early so students can receive the

support they need. The CAAs are aligned with alternate achievement standards—called the Core Content Connectors—and linked to the Common Core State Standards for ELA and mathematics.

English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC): The ELPAC is the assessment administered to students whose primary language is a language other than English. This assessment is to students in grades kindergarten through 12th and consists of an Initial ELPAC and a Summative ELPAC.

Teacher Created Unit Assessments: Upon culmination of a content unit, teachers use locally developed assessments to assess students’ learning and mastery of content.

First Grade Readiness Assessment: This assessment helps teachers determine students’ readiness to move from Kindergarten to First Grade and measures fine and gross motor skills; visual, tactile and auditory development; speech, language, and cognitive development; social and emotional integration; and other aspects of early childhood development. Administered in the spring of Kindergarten year.

Common Core-Aligned Waldorf Student Progress Reports : These are released to parents and students three times per year. They are rubric-rated (emerging, practicing, scaffolding) CCSS-aligned academic goals. These reports also contain social-emotional goals appropriate to each grade level.

The easyCBM: In addition to standardized testing in spring and ongoing formative and summative assessment by teachers, our teachers will use an “in house” benchmark assessments 2 times a year. These are based on CAASPP aligned goals for each grade. The assessments are recorded on the student progress resorts and shared with the parents.

These create benchmarks early in the year, track areas to be improved mid year so as to inform instruction and serve as additional predictors for the summative assessment in the late spring. The easyCBM was developed by educational researchers at the University of Oregon and is designed to give teachers insight into which of their students may need additional instructional supports as well as to provide a means by which they can measure the effectiveness of their teaching. System reports provide information that supports evidence based decision making. easyCBM includes a variety of curriculum-based measures in the content areas of early literacy in both English and Spanish as well as oral reading fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension; the program also offers mathematics measures with reach to both the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Focal Point Standards and the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics, with built-in read-aloud and Spanish translation accommodations.⁴² The CDE has identified easyCBM as an academic progress indicator that meets the criteria required for verified data.⁴³

Expeditionary Block Student-Created Textbooks: Serving as student textbooks and a useful tool for ongoing student evaluation, every student in grades 1-8 will create hand-written and illustrated books for every unit of study that will be increasingly personalized as the students go up the grades and will be deeply reflective of the individual student. These illustrated books are used daily, periodically assessed throughout the thematic block, and summatively assessed at the end of each thematic block. Rubrics are

⁴² <https://www.easycbm.com/>

⁴³ <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ch/verifdatacrit.asp>

used in grades 4-8. In grades 1-3, teacher verbal feedback is given to encourage the students' work. This student work will be evaluated using standards-aligned specific grade level rubrics that will be particular to the block being studied.

Student Reflections: Self and peer reflections occur in tandem with self-assessments and allow students to think about their work and allow them to document their views and thoughts on their learning. These are used primarily in grades 6-8.

Games & Movement Assessments: Biweekly assessment will occur in every lesson informally and at the end of curricular blocks formally. In addition to Fitness Testing in grades 5 & 7, students will demonstrate their mastery of physical education standards and unique Riversage School outcomes by participating in athletic events such as, the 5th grade Pentathlon, the 6th grade Medieval Games, and the 7th and 8th grade Track and Field Meet. These events will culminate blocks of interdisciplinary study that will combine core academic content with Games & Movement content.

Art Portfolio: Paintings, drawings, and other visual arts will be reviewed weekly, and in summation at the end of the year for overall growth. Every student will participate in weekly painting, drawing, and geometric drawing lessons. These portfolios will be useful for analyzing students' attention to detail, ability to follow directions, understanding and use of color, shading technique, and fine motor skill development. They will also provide insight into a student's socio-emotional state and cognitive development.

Culminating Assessment/8th Grade Student Project: All 8th graders will complete an in-depth research project about a student-selected and teacher-approved subject, aligned to core content learning in the grade. Students will work in conjunction with an adult advisor with an interest or expertise in the field of study who will oversee the student's project over a period of six months. The project will include three components: a research paper, a physical, hands-on creation of the student's making that showcases/is connected to the topic of research, and an oral presentation with visual components. Each will be evaluated with standards-aligned rubrics.

B. DATA SOURCES

The use of data will inform instruction and improve student achievement. Throughout the year, teachers and administrators collect, analyze, synthesize, and report student performance using various data points to create a broad picture of student learning. These data points include standardized test results, teacher developed assessment data, and student work as evidence of learning. The primary data sources used at Riversage School include:

California School Dashboard

The California School Dashboard will be used by Riversage School leadership to obtain a broad-based picture of student performance. The Dashboard will be used to analyze student group performance data and to assist in identifying strengths, challenges, and areas in need of improvement.

CAASPP Results & Curriculum Assessments

Standardized testing data is used as one metric of student achievement and success. The individual and cumulative results of the CAASPP tests are used to inform practice and improve instructional methods. Annually, teachers are provided with extensive reports on the performance of students in the current and prior years. This information serves as a guide for teachers who tailor their instruction and focus their efforts on areas of need. Upon receipt, parents are provided their child's performance reports, and results are discussed each fall during parent-teacher meetings.

The Riversage School Governing Board will also be presented with a summary of student performance results annually and improvement strategies will be presented and discussed. This information is as a way of keeping the Board abreast of the overall performance of students and as evidence of the efficacy of the educational program of the school.

C. COMMUNICATING ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Results from myriad assessment activities will be collected and analyzed continuously in order to drive program improvement across all facets of the Riversage School . We will regularly report on and distribute information about Riversage School's progress to all stakeholders including summary data showing student progress toward the school's goals and outcomes, including dissemination of the School Accountability Report Card (SARC). Annual stakeholder survey results will be disseminated to the entire school community as well.

Parents/guardians will have real-time access to their child's grades, attendance and other metrics via an online student information system, such as PowerSchool or a similar student information system. Computers will be available on campus, along with training, for parents who do not have computer access at home. Parents will be regularly informed of their child's progress as measured by assessments through both informal and formal communications.

Informal communication between teachers and parents will occur throughout the year through notes, apps, such as Parent Square, evaluated work sent home, phone calls, and meetings. Formal communication will include the following:

Fall & Spring Conferences: Grades TK – 8. Teachers will meet with individual parents once in the Fall and again in the Spring to review student progress. Written feedback will be provided that will include results of benchmark assessments as well as ongoing, formative teacher assessments and observations recorded on the Waldorf Student Progress Report Form. Student work will be shared as further evidence of student performance and growth towards meeting schoolwide and grade level expectations.

6th - 8th Grade Report Cards:The Waldorf Student Progress Reports provide standards-aligned grades in core subject areas. These reports feature descriptive, standards-based grades, and comments that are assigned to all subjects taught. These reports will be utilized to keep parents apprised of student progress and students apprised of their own progress three times per year, in Fall, Spring and end of year.

End of Year Narrative Report: Grades TK – 8. In addition to the forms of feedback cited above, the End-of-year Report will provide an in-depth, personalized evaluation of each child's

progress. The teacher will write a descriptive narrative of the child's achievements, challenges, and participation in major areas of schoolwork—such as math, reading, writing, social studies, science, specialty subjects, social/ emotional interactions, and physical activities. These reports will be mailed to parents after the last day of school.

D. PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY

Riversage School will consider retention carefully and in consultation with the full team of teachers, administrators, parents, and, when appropriate, the student. The process will involve multiple meetings, held as SST meetings to track supports and progress. In these meetings, multiple factors will be considered, including but not limited to: standardized test scores, internal assessments, teacher assessments, student work, social-emotional factors, student age, relationships with peers, behavior, indicators of child's developmental stage, and attendance.

Every effort will be made to support students progressing with their class, including giving instructional support during the school day and after school when possible, collaborating with families in a community of care, and school-based counseling, when appropriate. Decisions on retention will be ultimately made in the best interest of the student as a whole human being –academically, social-emotionally, and developmentally. Decisions will be made ideally as a collaborative team with administration, teachers and parents, but may be made by administration if the team is not in agreement.

The Principal will have the ultimate decision-making authority on retention. Appeals of retention decisions will be able to be made to the Board by submitting a written statement indicating disagreement with the decision to retain and the reasons for the disagreement. The parents will appear before the Board to share information, as will the Executive Director. The Board will decide whether or not the retention decision should stand.

Element 4 – Governance

“The governance structure of the charter school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the charter school to ensure parental involvement.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(D).)

Public Operating Principles

Riversage School is operated by Little Gems of the Sierra Preschool Inc. (DBA Little Gems of the Sierra or “Sierra Sage”), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit public benefit corporation.

Pursuant to California Education Code Section 47604(d), the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District (“TTUSD” or “District”) shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of Riversage School, which is operated by a California nonprofit benefit corporation, or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by Riversage School as long as the District has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

The Governing Board of Riversage School (“the Board”) will oversee the operation of the charter school and an early childhood education center. The Board shall comply with Education Code Section 47604.1, including that Sierra Sage be subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act, Public Records Act, Political Reform Act, Government Code 1090, as well as conflict of interest provisions in the Corporations Code with respect to its charter school operations.

The Articles of Incorporation are attached in Appendix D.

Governance Structure

The affairs of Riversage School are managed and its powers exercised under the ultimate jurisdiction of the Board. The Board oversees Riversage School. Per the Bylaws, the Board reserves the right to add members as long as it does not exceed 15 members. Riversage School shall be operated in alignment with the sponsorship and charter authorization of Tahoe Truckee Unified School District.

The Board will comply with Education Code Section 47604.1 and the Brown Act with regard to the notice required, conduct, and location for meetings to consider business related to the Riversage School. Notices for Board meetings related to Riversage School operations will be posted in multiple locations at the school that are accessible to the public, and on the school’s website, for the benefit of parents and other interested persons at least 72 hours before Riversage meetings so that any interested person wishing to attend is made aware of and able to plan for attendance at such meetings. Public places include the school’s bulletin board and immediately outside the school office door. The Board will prepare and maintain minutes from meetings, and the minutes are accessible at the school site to interested persons.

On a bi-annual basis, all Board members will attend training that includes education on roles and responsibilities, self-evaluation, effective board leadership, and updated state regulations that may impact the school. In addition, the school works with outside organizations (e.g., Charter Schools Development Center, outside consultants) to provide extensive training on the Brown Act and Board governance. New Board members are trained in their roles and responsibilities.

Every member of the Board has a right to participate in all discussions during meetings and may vote on all issues before the Board. A quorum of the members must be present in order for the Board to conduct business. In the absence of consensus on any issues, decisions are made by a majority vote.

Governing Board Major Roles and Responsibilities

The Board is a group of volunteers who provide their time, resources and expertise to Sierra Sage programs, including Riversage School. The overall duties of the Board include, but are not limited to:

- Promotes and guides the mission and vision of the school;
- Hires and evaluates the Founding Executive Director;
- Ensures the development and maintenance of sound internal fiscal control policies governing all financial activities
- Approves major contractual agreements and purchases, as set forth in the fiscal policies and procedures of Riversage School;
- Receives reports directly from the Founding⁴⁴ Executive Director of the total operation of the school including, but not limited to, budget, curriculum, activities, student achievement data, staff performance, and renewal of staff contracts;
- Acts as a fiscal agent, which includes the receipt of funds for operations;
- Develops, reviews, or revises performance measures, including school goals;
- Reviews the school master calendar and schedule of Board meetings;
- Develops Board policies and procedures;
- Participates in the dispute resolution process, when necessary;
- Approves charter amendments;
- Approves annual fiscal audit and performance report; and
- Ratifies compensation plans and stipend schedules, as needed.

To ensure Riversage School's ongoing success, the Board also provides external accountability, internal oversight and leadership.

Importantly, the Board will be responsible for providing fiscal accountability by approving and monitoring the budget. The Board, in conjunction with the Founding Executive Director, will also help ensure effective organizational planning by approving long-range goals and annual objectives, monitoring the general policies such as health and safety, use and maintenance of facilities, and fundraising, adhering to federal and state laws, and overseeing that school resources are managed effectively. This goal will be accomplished primarily through hiring, training, supporting, reviewing the performance of, and if necessary, dismissing the Founding Executive Director. The Board may delegate the management of the activities of Sierra Sage to others, so long as the affairs of Riversage School and Sierra Sage are managed, and powers are exercised, under the Board's ultimate jurisdiction.

⁴⁴ The Founding Executive Director is a position that exists during the "founding phase", or Emerging Stage, of the organization, and this position may be held by consecutive employees.

In addition, each board member sits on one of the following committees: Equity and Diversity, Finance, or Audit Committee. All management powers not specifically designated to the Board will be delegated to the Founding Executive Director, who will answer directly to the Board.

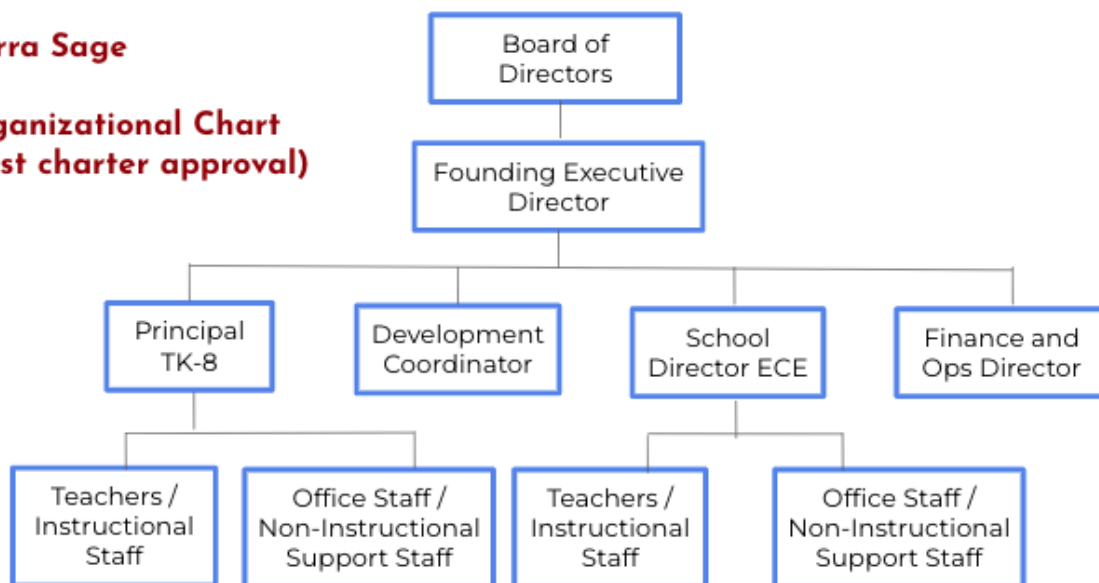
The Board maintains liability for charter school, and approves all policy decisions.

Organization Charts

The organization chart below highlights the relationship of the Board to Riversage School and to its leadership and staff. The Founding Executive Director reports to the Board. The Founding Executive Director is the sole direct report to the Board. The Founding Executive Director, the Finance and Operations Director, and the Development / Enrollment Coordinator are shared employees of each of Sierra Sage’s schools, allowing for the schools to benefit from economies of scale.

Sierra Sage

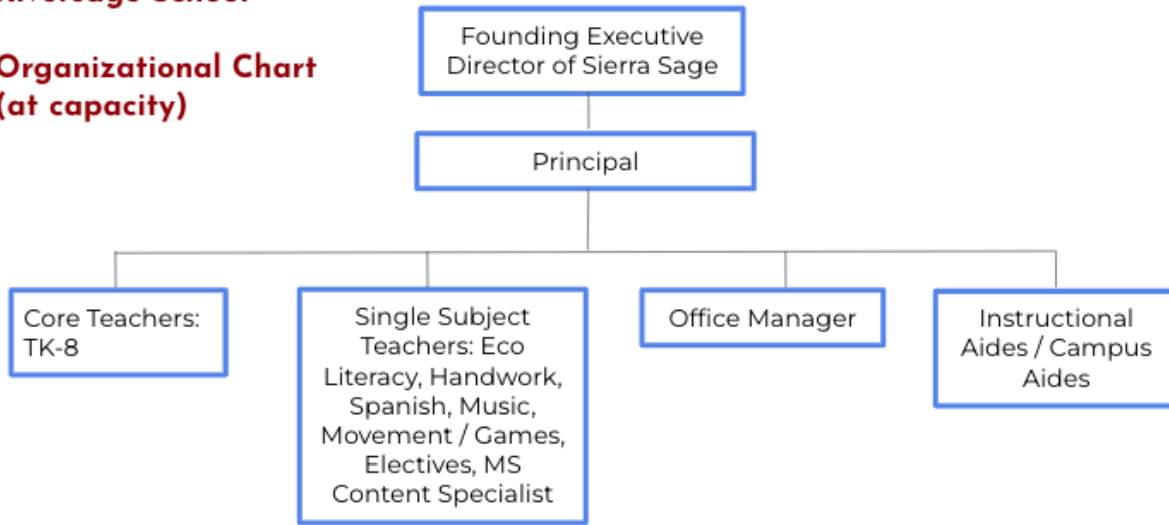
**Organizational Chart
(post charter approval)**



Riversage School site staffing will include the following at capacity:

Riversage School

Organizational Chart (at capacity)



Detailed job descriptions for Sierra Sage home office positions and all charter school site positions are included in Element 5 below.

Board Composition and Member Selection

The Board is composed of community and business representatives with diverse skills needed to oversee the charter school, including science and technology industry experience; business expertise in human resources and finance; extensive educational experience, particularly with Waldorf pedagogy; entrepreneurial and strategic planning; public school facilities knowledge; and community representation. A current list of the Board members follows and their biographies are in Appendix F:

- Lauren Bello, President
- Erin Fountain, Vice President
- Leanne Johnson, Secretary
- Stacey Serra Hammond, Treasurer
- Liz Sheppard, Member
- Tracy Bondi, Member
- Jennifer Knoop, Member
- Sara Rodgers, Member

One Board seat is reserved for a parent representative. In addition to the aforementioned Board members, the charter authorizer for Riversage School may elect for a representative to serve on the Board. The charter authorizer Board representative will have the opportunity to facilitate communications and mutual understanding between Riversage School and the charter authorizer.

Although not required, the Board will strive to create an odd number of board members for voting purposes. The Board will strive to seat new board members as promptly as possible upon any vacancy.

Qualifications of a Board Member

- Supports the mission and vision of Sierra Sage, Riversage School, and the Waldorf Educational Programs
- Places a high value on professionalism
- Agrees to comply with the Brown Act and conflict of interest rules applicable to charter schools
- Motivated to serve on the Board primarily to help guarantee the educational success of the mission of Sierra Sage and Riversage School
- Has prior board experience (not required, but helpful)
- Brings expertise in a desired area, such as education, law, real estate, financial management, governance, marketing, fundraising, equity and diversity, community organizing, strategic planning, charter school operations, and student social emotional learning.

Governance Procedures and Operations

The Board meets at least six times per year; additional meetings may be called as necessary. For each committee, committee meetings will be held at least once per year. The annual calendar for all regular Board and committee meetings will be approved at the Annual Meeting and publicly posted thereafter. All meetings of the Board and its committees shall be called, noticed, and held in compliance with the provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act when discussing matters pertinent to Riversage School. Board and committee meeting locations will be at the Riversage site in compliance with Education Code Section 47604.1 when discussing matters related to Riversage School, with a two-way teleconference location established at each Riversage school site. Per the Sierra Sage Bylaws, the majority of the board members in office constitute a quorum of the Board, with telephonic participation available within the requirements of the Brown Act (in accordance with Government Code Section 54953, agendas posted at and identifying teleconference locations, teleconference locations accessible to the public and providing opportunity for the public to address the Board, at least a quorum of the members of the legislative body participating from locations within the boundaries of the territory over which the local agency exercises jurisdiction, and all votes must be by roll call).

Notices and Agendas

The notices including agendas for regular Board meetings discussing Riversage School matters will be published in advance and distributed to each member of the Board and will be posted near the entrances of the Riversage School site, and on the school's website, for public viewing at least 72 hours in advance of scheduled meetings. The notices and agendas for special board meetings will be published in advance and distributed to each member of the Board and will be posted near the entrances of the Riversage School site, and on the school's website, for public viewing at least 24 hours in advance of special meetings. Minutes of every meeting will be kept at the Sierra Sage Home Office site and are available for review by the public.

Participation in Discussions and Voting

Every Board member has the right to participate in the discussion and vote on all issues before the Board, except as provided in the conflict of interest laws, including, without limitation, Sections 1090 and 81000 *et seq.* of the Government Code. With respect to non-financial interests, any Board member who has a personal non-financial interest that will prevent such Director from applying the Director's disinterested skill and undivided loyalty to the corporation in voting on any issue before the corporation shall not vote on such issue. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any Director not voting may be counted for purposes of determining whether a quorum is present.

Leadership Major Roles and Responsibilities

As an organization that adheres to the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education's Seven Core Principles of Waldorf Education, Sierra Sage intends to develop a collaborative leadership model. Core Principle Six defines Collaborative Leadership as:

Collaborative Leadership: Faculty, staff, administration and boards of a Public Waldorf school collaborate to guide and lead the school with input from stakeholder groups. To the greatest extent possible, decisions related to the educational program are the responsibility of those faculty and staff with knowledge and experience of Rudolf Steiner's educational insights.

Governance and internal administration are implemented in a manner that cultivates active collaboration, supportive relationships, effective leadership, consequential action, and accountability. A Public Waldorf school is committed to studying and deepening its understanding of best practices of governance appropriate to its stage of organizational development.”

Traditionally, Waldorf Schools' Leadership and Administration teams identify three distinct stages of organizational development— Emerging, Maturing, and Excelling. Leadership models are unique to each stage.

During the term of this Charter Petition, Riversage School primarily will be in the Emerging stage. Three realms of leadership activities are delineated and acted upon during this stage.

1. Business leadership: Guarding the rights, responsibilities, and equitable treatment of all employees through policies and procedures.
2. Pedagogical leadership: Ensuring the guidance of the vision and mission through educational program development, accountability, and change.
3. Financial leadership: Developing and maintaining financial accountability systems. Preparing reports, ensuring legal and responsible use of funds and resources.

In all three realms, leaders are systematically collecting and evaluating data tied to objectives in their realm and measuring the ongoing development of a healthy, collaborative, engaged and efficient working environment.

Leadership at the Emerging stage is usually not distributive but hierarchical. Emerging schools are supported by Executive Directors who see their role as fostering the next stage of development wherein increased distributive and collaborative leadership is practiced. Executive Directors must be committed to

open communication and recognition of each person's realm of expertise. The Executive Director's task is to support and develop leaders across the organization to facilitate a transition to a distributive leadership model.

Founding⁴⁵ Executive Director

The Founding Executive Director (ED) assumes the hierarchical role of being the sole Direct Report to the Board.

Primary Responsibilities:

- Ensure adherence to Federal and State Laws and Mandates in day-to-day operation of the organization's programs, and implement Board Policies
- Ensure fiscal responsibility and accountability of the organization's programs
- Prepare reports and documents providing evidence of bullets 1 and 2
- Serve as arbiter and facilitator or designate this person(s) in dispute and complaint procedures
- Work collaboratively, leading towards a distributive leadership approach, with the Riversage Principal, Finance and Operations Director, Development Director and other directors as needed or appointed.
- Be a visionary for organizational development, providing for clear annual goals relevant to the long-range planning of the organization.

Character of the Founding Executive Director

The Founding Executive Director oversees and coordinates communication between all significant directors both on and off site. They are entrusted with inspiring the team, driving operational excellence and developing leadership across the organization.

Finance and Operations Director

The Director of Finance and Operations reports to the Founding Executive Director and is the caretaker of Riversage School's resources. This person is entrusted with leading the school's budget and ensuring the school is working toward its financial objectives all while making sure Riversage School thrives. This person also leads operational initiatives, including knowledge management, contract management, facilities development project management, oversight of information technology and the School Nutrition Program, and project management of processes such as LCAP and Charter Petition Renewal.

Finance and Operations Director Responsibilities:

- Serve as primary caretaker of Riversage School's resources
- Lead Budget and Finance Committee
- Collaborate with the Budget and Finance Committee to produce reports for each regular Board meeting.
- Collaborate with Principal to ensure support of the educational mission of the organization, including:
 - Verifying Principal's recommendations or proposals to the Board as fiscally sound.

⁴⁵ The Founding Executive Director is a position that exists during the "founding phase", or Emerging Stage, of the organization, and this position may be held by consecutive employees.

- Negotiating Certificated Employee Agreements
- Collaborating to prepare annual accountability reports, including the LCAP, and contributing to the preparation of a renewal charter petition
- Healthy Nutrition Program
- Lead operational initiatives:
 - knowledge management,
 - contract management,
 - facilities development
 - project management
 - information technology
- Project manage various business and non-instructional processes

This work requires strong project management skills, ability to understand and analyze budgets, and the ability to work closely with a wide range of stakeholders. The Director of Finance and Operations is also responsible for assisting with recruitment, retention and engagement, including but not limited to leading initiatives to improve recruiting and hiring, employee relations and culture building, and educator and administrator development and support. The Director of Finance and Operations also is responsible for providing Human Resources services for Sierra Sage. This person serves as a key point of contact for ensuring a compliant and productive workplace.

Principal

The Principal of Riversage School leads the development, coordination, articulation, and evaluation of curriculum, instruction, professional development, and assessment. The Principal develops and disseminates the school’s academic benchmarks and works to ensure that the school meets or exceeds these. The Principal will be an active leader in the schools and will guide the instructional vision to ensure that Riversage School enacts the organizational vision and mission. This person’s characteristics include that they possess communication skills including honesty and openness, and the ability to listen with depth and engender trust from the various constituency bodies. The capacities of this person support their ability to facilitate the educational mission of the organization. They will hold both state credentials and Waldorf Credentials, and will have extensive classroom experience and sufficient social emotional maturity to stand as a leader in the day-to-day operations of a public Waldorf school.

Principal Responsibilities

- Reports to Founding Executive Director and works collaboratively with the Finance & Operations Director to ensure resource allocations are fiscally responsible and aligned with Mission, Vision, and Charter and LCAP goals.
- Regularly mentors certificated staff
- Oversees academic instruction and certificated staff evaluation procedures
- Sets academic benchmarks for each grade and ensures on-going measurement of these
- Regularly reports to the Board regarding progress toward meeting Mission, Vision, and organizational strategic outcomes, as set out in the Charter and LCAP
- Facilitates school policies on a daily basis

Advisory Board

In order to provide additional expertise to Riversage in managing a start-up charter school, Sierra Sage has formed an Advisory Board of content experts who will provide guidance to the school's leadership and Board. An advisory board does not have formal legal responsibilities or decision-making authority. The advisory board's tasks and powers are delegated by and subject to the direction and control of the Board.

The Advisory Board currently includes the following members:

Alison Diaz

Alison Suffet Diaz is the Founder of Environmental Charter Schools. With a dynamic team and under Alison's leadership as the Executive Director & CEO for the majority of the last 20 years, ECS has flourished into award-winning schools. Environmental Charter High School is ranked in the top 3% of U.S. public high schools by U.S. News & World Report, and was chosen as one of three national finalists in President Obama's Race to the Top Commencement Challenge. ECS was given the Department of Education's inaugural Green Ribbon Award in environmental and sustainability education and Environmental Charter Middle School – Gardena received the 2015 California Gold Ribbon Schools Award for academic excellence. All ECS schools are WASC accredited.

In June 2019, Alison transitioned into the role of Director of Growth and Sustainability. In this role, she focuses on school growth, leading the expansion of high quality charter school seats into which ECS middle schoolers may matriculate through the launch of ECHS Gardena in 2020-2021. She also manages mission-aligned green school facilities development, management and operations, spearheads sustainability initiatives, liaises with national and local green school partners and oversees development, partnerships and advocacy.

Alison holds a Bachelor of Science in Business from the State University of New York, Albany, and Juris Doctorate from Temple University Law School. At Temple, she participated in the LEAP program, teaching inner-city youth about their constitutional rights. After earning her teaching credential from California State University, Dominguez Hills, Diaz taught for eight years as she developed the blueprint for what would become Environmental Charter Schools. Alison also served as a faculty member at California State University, Dominguez Hills and worked as the Education Specialist for TreePeople.

The State of California Assembly named Diaz the 2011 Woman of the Year. The California Charter Schools' Association awarded her the 2020 Hart Vision School Leader of the Year (Southern CA) Award. PBS SoCal KOCE TV and KCET named her a 2019 Local Heroes Honoree. She serves on the Board of Directors for The Green Schools National Network, is an Advisory Board Member for the Antioch Teacher Education Program, and is a Senior Fellow for the City Scholars Foundation.

Barbara Linares

Barbara began her Waldorf education journey in 1979 as she was searching for a preschool for her young daughter. Noting her similar personal passions and philosophies for guiding children, Waldorf education became one of the greatest influences in her life. Her daughters are K-12 graduates with a Waldorf education.

As the daughter of an airline executive, Barbara lived internationally with her family until the end of high school. In her young adult life, she became interested in natural foods and co-founded Mountain Peoples Warehouse, now UNFI. After a career as a Dental Hygienist, Barbara attended the Rudolf Steiner College and received her School Administration Certificate in 1996. She worked at the college for eight years and was a member of the WASC Accreditation Team. Most of her remaining employment to date consists of work in Waldorf schools in several administrative positions.. Barbara was most recently the Principal at the Golden Valley Tahoe School. Prior to this role, she served as Director of the Yuba River Charter School in Grass Valley. Her many years working in Waldorf schools have provided her with rich opportunities for service along with professional and personal development. She is passionate and strongly focused on the sustainability of Waldorf education; pedagogically, organizationally, financially and socially.

Barbara is a long time resident of Nevada City, CA. She celebrates and enjoys life in a natural setting. Her family and community are a major source of inspiration in her daily living.

Conor Ball

Executive Chef Conor Ball is the seasoned and inventive culinary expert leading the kitchen at Martis Camp, Lake Tahoe's Premiere Private Community. Offering a modern twist on farm-to-table cuisine by blending locally sourced ingredients with his Pacific Northwest background, Chef Ball brings more than ten years of culinary talent and knowledge to his position.

Ball started his professional career in 2006 and has since worked for several Luxury Hotels including Four Seasons, The Inn at Rancho Sante Fe, and Willows Lodge, providing him a decidedly coastal culinary style that melds local ingredients with Pacific Northwest and California flavors. Chef Ball's passion for using local ingredients and creating unique dishes for everyone to enjoy runs deep. Growing up in the small coastal town of Olympia, Washington, Ball's appreciation for natural resources and ingredients derived from his family's sustainable lifestyle. Ball developed a passion and curiosity for what each season has to offer through seasonal farmer's markets and the community sharing of vegetables, fruit and game. Creating a unique experience at Martis Camp, Chef Ball's adventures of catching game, picking wild berries, and harvesting vegetables and herbs are present in every dish. With a degree in culinary arts and years of experience working in his home state of Washington and California, Chef Ball brings creative vision, disciplined technique and a true passion for cooking to all outlets of Martis Camp, including its innovative Cliff Room experience, Camp Lodge Bistro, Lookout Ski Lodge, Family Barn Restaurant, Banquets and Special Events.

As Executive Chef, Conor Ball oversees the property's culinary team and all dining experiences at Martis Camp. Most recently he was the recipient of two gold medals at the 2017 Tahoe Autumn Food and Wine Festival for best food as well as best food and wine pairing. In his free time, Chef Ball enjoys spending time with his family in Truckee, running, hiking, and skiing in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. He is passionate about assisting with the implementation of the school meals program of Riversage School.

Donna Newberg Long

Donna Newberg-Long has been the Founding Principal of three schools: one independent / private Waldorf K-8 in Hawaii; one K-12 Charter School with standards-based, Core Knowledge curriculum in Colorado; and one Waldorf-inspired Charter in Colorado. Dr. Long was a Waldorf Class teacher for 24 years. Her experience as an Administrator included developing systems, programs, and curricula, as well as all aspects of a successful school, including school culture, arts programming and Special Services for grades K-12. She also has experience with largely Second Language Learners and low-income students in urban Denver. Her specialties include strategic planning, problem-solving, out of the box thinking, and developing schools focused on Waldorf principles and community. She builds shared leadership models through developing capacities for sustainable schools and inspired Waldorf curricula. She has developed accredited Waldorf Teacher Training for Kindergarten through Grade 8 teachers.

She received her Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from the University of Denver and her Master's Degree in Education and Waldorf Certification from Antioch New England Graduate School. Donna is dedicated to Waldorf education and spent a number of years in charter and public schools to broaden her view of the challenges and opportunities available for public Waldorf education through the charter movement. While at Malamalama Waldorf School in Hawaii, she was awarded the Woman of the Year in Education by the Who's Who in Hawaii Directory. She managed all aspects of securing and building a location for the school such as obtaining a 20 acre site, working with rezoning and licensing, and project managing design and construction. In Seattle, she taught 5th through 8th grade at Seattle Waldorf School while also chairing the College of Teachers. She was the founding Principal of Peak to Peak Charter School in Lafayette, Colorado, a top 100 school in the nation, after which she worked in Denver with failing schools, diverse populations and English Language Learners. She began consulting at Mountain Phoenix Community School, a charter school inspired by Waldorf education, in 2009 and became Principal while she led the school in its move to Wheat Ridge and its exponential growth in enrollment from 42 students to over 500 in 4 years. She maneuvered through the challenges of teaching in the public system while working with State and Common Core Standards and also maintaining the integrity of Waldorf education in this setting.

Currently Dr. Long is a faculty member and Director of Administration for Gradalis Teacher Education. She co-leads the Gradalis Business Services department—providing support for schools through Board and Administrator Training—offering guidance for public and independent schools as they tackle strategic planning, 3-fold governance and self study that can lead to healthy and vibrant futures for Waldorf schools.

Kami Cotler

Kami Cotler has been active in the charter school movement since 2003. Kami began her education career in a small, rural district in Virginia, where she taught in an interdisciplinary, alternative program for at-risk high school students. Returning to Los Angeles in 2001, she was introduced to the charter world when she joined the faculty of Environmental Charter High School. Seeking a quality elementary school for her son, she became involved with the founding of Ocean Charter School, a K-8 arts-integrated charter, and served as its founding co-director. Ms. Cotler also consulted with start-up charters including the Goethe International Charter School and then rejoined ECS to help establish Environmental Charter Middle School-Gardena, where she was founding principal for four years. She transitioned from Principal to serve as the Director of Strategic Initiatives at Environmental Charter Schools, where she managed

LCAP development, advised on policies and SPED and ELD compliance, and oversaw much of ECS's initial COVID-19 response.

Kate Bean

Kate Bean was the founder and executive director of Aveson Charter Schools, a charter schools group in Pasadena, CA which began in 2007 and serves grades TK-8. Bean started her education career as a teacher with Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Following her seven year tenure, she worked with two consulting firms. One focused on implementing new project-based and technology models, while the other focused on supporting No Child Left Behind initiatives in California. It was through her experience with NCLB that Bean met the team of educational professionals with whom she would introduce a new personalized mastery learning and teaching model to public education through Aveson Charter Schools. One of the many successful programs implemented while Bean was at Aveson was the food services program for the school, which provided fresh and delicious meals not only for Aveson students but also on a contractual basis for several other local charter schools.

Bean was recently accepted into the Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative and will begin her fellowship there in January. The Advanced Leadership Initiative Fellowship is designed to enhance and leverage the skills of highly accomplished, experienced leaders who want to apply their talents to solve significant social problems, including those affecting health and welfare, children and the environment, and focus on community and public service in the next phase of their careers.

Lauren Monson

Lauren Monson is an attorney who practices in the areas of labor relations and employment counseling for municipalities, advising on reasonable accommodations, FMLA and other related leave issues, disciplinary matters, labor contract interpretation, and claims of discrimination and harassment. She has also provided guidance to employers on public record requests, document retention policies, and workplace violence policies. In addition, Lauren has experience in conducting workplace investigations related to disciplinary matters and employee complaints of discrimination and harassment.

Lauren began her legal career in 2006 as a Deputy City Attorney at the San Francisco City Attorney's Office. Lauren first worked on the Children and Family Services Team, representing the San Francisco Human Services Agency in all aspects of dependency proceedings in San Francisco Superior Court. She then moved to the Labor Team where she represented the City and County of San Francisco, including its constituent agencies and departments, in all aspects of employment litigation in both state and federal court. In addition to providing labor and employment advice to City departments, as a Deputy City Attorney Lauren represented the City in labor grievances and arbitrations, labor negotiations, and administrative hearings in front of the Department of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE) and the Public Employee Relations Board (PERB). Lauren also has served as a Deputy City Attorney for the City of San Rafael providing labor and employment advice as well as advice in general municipal law.

Lauren earned her Juris Doctorate from the University of San Francisco School of Law and her Bachelor's degree from Boston College. She has been admitted to the Bar of California in the United States District Court, Northern District of California Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Stakeholder Involvement

Our significant experience serving our community drives our approach to our parent community. In addition to educating students who come to us, we also aim to empower parents to understand their children's educational paths and choices and create a community where families feel safe, informed, and supported. Our parent events and trainings are designed to both build community and to keep parents informed of important topics. We will pair these training sessions with social events that bring the community together and include students and teachers so that people can interact in a more informal setting. Our website will provide information to families about events and resources available to them and will include links to policies, handbooks, calendars and schedules. Information will also be sent home via newsletter and text message. The following outlines the variety of ways parents may participate in formal and informal school structures to ensure their voice plays a genuine and vital role in Riversage School's governance and site level decision-making:

1. Equity and Diversity Committee (EDC): EDC promotes Sierra Sage's work to develop a school culture that fosters equity, inclusion and an appreciation of the diversity within our community. The committee will examine data on topics such as student achievement, school discipline, school climate and enrollment trends/retention; address the roots of bias; share insights and suggest possible resources or actions to Sierra Sage's leadership. Membership will include parent, student, teacher, staff, administration and Board representation. Community members may also serve on the Committee.
2. Participation in curriculum and activities: Riversage parents will participate in our Eighth Grade project, Houses of the World Project, World Nutrition Project, the Pentathlon, Medieval Games, the Track Meet, and other demonstrations of learning. We see parents as partners in the educational process in a variety of meaningful ways, and we strive to bring them into our curricular efforts whenever possible. In addition to attending demonstration of learning days, parents will participate in such events as our Harvest Festival and Sommer Festival. They may also volunteer at events and for programs, e.g, parents may chaperone field trips or support special classroom activities.
3. Parent-Teacher Organization: These meetings will occur monthly and give all interested parents an opportunity to talk through issues relevant to the school program. Parents will discuss rigorous instruction and rigorous student work, grading, and goals for the school. The Principal or designee is also able to report on school progress and gather input and feedback. The PTO is in charge of major events such as festivals and fundraising activities.
4. Parent Surveys: Parents will be surveyed yearly on their satisfaction with the school program, leadership, support staff, teaching staff, curriculum, and facilities. This information will be shared with stakeholders and reported to the Board in order to direct decisions and activities for the remainder of the year. In addition, parents will be surveyed at the beginning of the year regarding what parent programs parents would like to see presented.
5. Events: We will plan parent/community events throughout the year. A sample of these include the Festival of Courage, the Lantern Festival at the Fall Equinox, the Spiral of Light Festival at the

Winter Equinox, an Elves' Workshop near the winter holiday break, student play performances, the May Day festival, and an end of year celebration.

6. Parent Workshops: Finally, the PTO will plan workshops, led by our own staff or outside professionals to inform parents on a variety of topics in which parents may have interest, such as: Waldorf Core Principles, internet safety, human development, managing stress, nutrition, and student success strategies.
7. Other opportunities to engage stakeholders include:
 - Bi-annual Parent-Teacher conferences
 - Newsletters, letters, invitations, and social media posts
 - Apps like ParentSquare, a contact/communication platform.

Element 5 – Employee Qualifications

“The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the charter school.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(E).)

Overview

Riversage School is committed to hiring staff members who support Waldorf educational philosophy and vision. Riversage School faculty will hold appropriate California teaching certificates, permits, or other documents issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Riversage School faculty will also have or pursue a certificated training in Waldorf Teaching and receive on-the-job mentoring by their site leaders or an experienced peer as needed.

In addition, staff should display a passion for lifelong learning, strive for excellence in their chosen field, and be flexible and innovative. The Board shall define specific employee minimum qualifications that shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- Appropriate certifications as required for a specific position.
- Willingness to continue education through additional courses and training in Waldorf education, workshops, seminars and staff development.
- If not Waldorf Certificated, willing to take direction from the Principal or designee in annual, monthly, and daily lesson planning
- Willingness to commit time, energy, and effort in developing the Riversage School’s program.
- Willingness to participate in on-going study of the philosophical foundations of Waldorf Education
- Commitment to working with parents as educational partners.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Awareness of the social, emotional, and academic needs of students.
- Ability to plan cooperatively with other staff

Riversage School is an equal employment opportunity employer. Riversage School will not discriminate against any employee on the basis of actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics. Sierra Sage will adhere to state laws regarding fingerprinting, drug testing, and the Riversage School's policies pertaining to the safety and health of all employees and students. All employees of Riversage will be required to have a criminal record summary on file as described in Education Code Section 44237. An employee will not be permitted to begin work until the Department of Justice has cleared that individual.

All employees must furnish or be able to provide:

- Medical clearance including proof of medical exam and tuberculosis (TB) testing.
- Proof of fingerprinting and criminal record check for the Department of Justice.
- Full disclosure statement regarding prior criminal record, if any.
- Legal status to be employed by Riversage School.

Hiring and Selection Process of all Employees

Administrative recruitment and orientation of well-qualified, experienced, and dedicated employees ensures that Riversage School staff share a single vision for high student achievement through multiple learning opportunities and preparation for further education. To ensure that the employees are committed to furthering the school's mission and are able to work in a highly collaborative environment, Riversage School follows an extensive recruitment and hiring process.

The administrative staff at Sierra Sage will support the Riversage School to establish / revise job qualifications, announce openings. Sierra Sage will recruit applicants, require appropriate certificates or credentials, request resumes, references and records, verify previous employment, interview candidate(s) and select top candidate(s).

Employees will be recruited through communication channels such as Ed-Join; education networking websites, such as the California Charter Schools Association, Teach for America, and the Charter Schools Development Center; the school website; and Waldorf Teacher Recruitment websites, as well as career fairs, local universities, word of mouth, and other outlets. Riversage School's Principal, in cooperation with the Finance and Operations Director, monitors ongoing credential requirements and reports to the Founding Executive Director

Employee Positions and Qualifications

Sierra Sage Staff

There will be three Sierra Sage staff leaders who will serve the Riversage School - the Founding Executive Director, the Director of Operations and Finance, and the Development / Enrollment Coordinator.

The **Founding Executive Director** will have an advanced degree and experience in risk management and non-profit quality control. This person will also have experience in charter school / education leadership, demonstrated business, and financial acumen. Preference in hiring will be prior experience in public school management and / or prior experience in Waldorf School management.

Founding Executive Director qualifications include strong interpersonal communication skills, to include verbal, written, and listening. This person will also be creative and skilled at critical thinking and problem solving. This person will have the ability to make tough, and sometimes unpopular, decisions while at the same time building consensus as needed for initiatives. They will also be comfortable in an entrepreneurial environment and adept at networking. The Executive Director should have an approach to education that aligns with the Waldorf Core Principles.

Director of Finance and Operations qualifications include an advanced degree or license - MBA or CPA preferred - with experience in operations, administration and / or finance for nonprofit organizations, preferably focused on education. This person will have a sincere passion for Sierra Sage's mission and

vision. They will have strong and detailed interpersonal communication abilities including verbal, written, and listening. They will have a demonstrated ability to perform thoughtful and insightful financial and strategic analyses. Other skills include: strategy, planning, problem solving, and project management; able to take an idea from concept to completion; exceptional spreadsheet skills; able to achieve strategic goals in a well-organized fashion while still possessing high energy, creativity, imagination, and unwavering integrity; able to work independently while at the same time obtaining input and direction as needed.

Development / Enrollment Coordinator qualifications include a college degree and experience in communications and marketing. They will have strong interpersonal communication skills, to include verbal, written, and listening. Ideally they would have experience with recruitment, including planning, coordinating, and participating in outreach projects and activities, and working with local preschools, community organizations, and partners. Dual English / Spanish speaking is preferred.

Riversage School Staff

Principal

Principal qualifications include a current California teaching credential, experience in school leadership, and the ability to use commonly used technology in executing the day to day work. They will have strong interpersonal communication skills, to include verbal, written, and listening. This person will also be creative and skilled at critical thinking and problem solving. This person will be comfortable in a collaborative environment and with relationship building. This person will be knowledgeable of State of California Education Code and Charter School laws. They will insightfully analyze school achievement data and lead the staff in constantly studying, evaluating, and modifying current instructional practice to accelerate students' academic achievement. They will manage site budgets and other resources in support of instructional goals.

They will have an advanced degree in education, demonstrated ability to provide professional development to instructional and non-instructional staff, experience evaluating and nurturing teachers, experience developing and evaluating curriculum and assessments, experience with Special Education and working with English Learner Development. Preference in hiring will be given to an experienced (8+ years) Waldorf Teacher who has a record of effective teaching and mentorship. Additional preference is offered if the mentoring activities took place in a Waldorf Public School. Spanish fluency is desired but not required.

Class Teachers

All teaching educators will hold or acquire appropriate California teaching certificates, permits or documents issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, including CLAD certification, as applicable. Sierra Sage ensures that the qualifications for all teachers follow the regulatory guidelines set by the state.

Core teachers are defined as full-charge, classroom based, core subject (math, language, health, social-sciences, sciences) teachers. A class teacher is committed to long-looping with a group of students and is accountable for instruction in all academic core subject areas.

Consideration for preference in hiring will be given to candidates who have a record of success and effective teaching in a public school. Additional preference is offered to candidates who, in addition, hold a Certificate in Waldorf Teaching. We seek candidates who are bilingual, preferably in English and Spanish.

This person will demonstrate a high level of team building and collaborative working skills. Teachers, in the emerging school years, need to be energetic, able to adjust to various challenges, and creative in solution-seeking skills. Academic skills at the grade level(s) assigned are primary as is demonstrated competency in writing and communication skills. To best serve team building and collaboration, a high level of emotional maturity is strongly valued.

Single Subject and Electives Teachers

Riversage School may also employ or retain instructional teaching staff for non-core classes (defined as all courses other than core classes as described under the heading “Class Teachers” above), if allowable for charter schools under applicable law, and as support staff. Riversage School will ensure that all instructional staff are appropriately credentialed for the position. Prospective staff members will have an appropriate mix of subject matter expertise, professional experience, and the demonstrated capacity to work successfully in an instructional capacity. All instructional staff possess experience and expertise appropriate for their position. Instructors in this category will teach: games and movement, cultural studies, handwork, music, Eco-Literacy, and other miscellaneous classes not defined as core subject classes and subject to any requirements for charter schools under applicable law. Should any of these classes be included as core subjects and counted as instructional minutes, the certificated grade-level class teacher will co-instruct *if* the single subject teacher does not have the required credentials.

Education Specialist Teacher

Education Specialists will hold appropriate California teaching certificates, permits or documents issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. They will have a commitment to the success of all students and to the Riversage mission, vision and Waldorf Core Principles.

Preference in hiring will be given to candidates who have a record of success and effective special education teaching in a public school. Education Specialists must excel at working collaboratively with colleagues, administrators and families.

Responsibilities

- Plan and provide for appropriate learning experiences for students with disabilities in a variety of educational settings.
- In compliance with State and Federal Laws and in accordance with policies and procedures as set forth by the SELPA, assess students, develop and implement IEP plans, and coordinate programs to support students' independence and efficacy socially, academically, and vocationally.
- Implement various instructional strategies and curricula in the following environments: core classes, small group and one-on-one student pull out.
- Participate in teacher development and evaluation process
- Manage time before, during, and after school flexibly to allow for instructional planning and case management

- Build trusting and respectful relationships with teachers and students
- Collaborate with teachers and other staff members to plan and implement strategies that meet the needs of an individual with exceptional needs.
- Consult with parents (or guardians) and members of related disciplines, including outside agencies, regarding the needs of an individual with exceptional needs.
- Collaborate with Principal in coordinating related service providers
- Attend SELPA meetings and workshops
- Perform educational assessments in accordance with California State Standards, SELPA guidelines, Riversage School policy, school programs and IEP goals

Qualifications

- CA Education Specialist Credential with an authorization in Mild to Moderate and/or Moderate to Severe and English Language Learner authorization
- Outstanding written, speaking, and organizational skills with experience interacting with a broad range of stakeholders.
- Minimum of 3 years successful classroom teaching experience and case management

Office Manager

Responsibilities

- Gathers data and prepares compliance reports for review; monitors adherence to and compliance with existing programs and policies that uphold local, State and Federal laws
- Stays up to date with current regulations and develops programs and practices to help meet guidelines
- Monitors practices and maintains records required to certify compliance
- Establishes relationships and communicates with appropriate regulatory organizations
- Produces data as needed for funding as well as any other required documents for the school district
- Maintains confidentiality in all dealings and in the handling of sensitive data as deemed appropriate
- Assists and collaborates with disciplinary procedures

Qualifications

- High school education; two years of college preferred
- Good communication skills, orally and in writing; dual English / Spanish speaking preferred
- Clerical experience in a school office
- Knowledge of basic duties required for the position
- Ability to learn assigned tasks and to acquire new skills
- Proficiency in computer skills
- Self-initiative in handling daily tasks and project management
- Ability to administer first aid as required
- Ability to recognize a problem and to seek an effective solution

Instructional Aides

Responsibilities

- Assists the educational and social development of students under the direction and guidance of the classroom teacher
- Assumes administrative duties as assigned by the classroom teacher
- Pursues professional growth
- Performs other functions and duties as assigned by the classroom teacher

Qualifications

- H.S. Diploma or equivalent
- Preferred: Associate Degree
- Communicates effectively in oral and written form; understands and carry out oral and written directions
- Demonstrates effective interpersonal relationships with others
- Demonstrates an understanding, patient and receptive attitude toward students of varied age groups, temperaments and abilities, particularly those exhibiting specialized needs
- Handles confidential information and materials with complete security
- Ability to utilize a variety of appropriate instructional materials and procedures in the enhancement of a training and educational environment
- Works effectively and maintain cooperative relationships with those contacted in the course of work

Campus Aides

Responsibilities

- Support school rules and regulations for the safety and security of students, staff and property
- Ensure a safe campus environment during students' arrival, departure, lunch, transition and after school programming times
- Communicate daily with office manager regarding the general campus environment, any unusual occurrence or situation, and any safety related issue that needs addressing
- Maintain positive relationships with students, families, staff and the community

Qualifications

- High school education
- Experience in a school setting
- Knowledge of the local community
- Ability to communicate well with students, staff and parents
- Strong student management skills

Compensation

Riversage School provides compensation to individual employees that is competitive with other schools (both public and private) for comparably qualified and experienced employees in our region. Riversage School offers compensation that assures the successful recruitment of employees that enable the school to fulfill its mission and goals. Specific salaries and stipends are identified within the individual work agreements.

Credentials

All core subject Class Teacher candidates will be required to hold a valid California teaching credential and EL authorization which will be verified through the California Commission on Teaching Credentialing, and non-core subject teachers may be required pursuant to applicable law. The teacher's credential authorization must meet state requirements to teach the subject he/she is employed to teach. The Authorizer may inspect the credentials on file for core teachers at any time. These credentials shall be maintained on file at the Riversage School.

Professional Development

Staff are provided professional development opportunities on an on-going, regular basis to ensure that they remain abreast of all relevant changes in laws, curriculum, and other operational requirements.

Professional development is essential to prepare teachers to design and deliver this multifaceted educational program. The Principal serves as the instructional leader of the school and facilitates professional development utilizing the best practices of a Professional Learning Community.

During the summer, all Class Teachers attend a week-long intensive focused on their up-coming grade-level assignment. This includes planning their instructional expeditionary blocks, identifying power goals, creating resource lists, selecting texts, meeting with mentors and collaborating with peers. At this time, those trainings are held in Colorado at the nationally accredited Gradalis Teacher Education program. This week-long intensive connects Riversage School teachers with colleagues from across the United States who will be teaching the same grade level, creating virtual grade-level teams, who can share resources, texts and instructional strategies.

In addition to the summer intensive, there are 5 full days of teacher professional development immediately before the school year starts. When the school year begins, each teacher new to Waldorf has two mentor meetings per month. Experienced Waldorf Teachers are mentored as needed and at a minimum of once monthly. At these meetings, teachers and the Principal engage in an ongoing analysis of student data and identify or revise goals, objectives, and strategies for the current and upcoming units. They also work together to identify professional development goals and concrete strategies to achieve those goals, such as observing other teachers, attending workshops, and researching content and strategies.

Hiring Committee

The hiring committee is composed of all three main constituency bodies of the school. The majority of the committee is experienced and successful Class Teachers and the Principal. The committee also includes representatives from the Parent Organization and Administration. The final decision for all school site hiring is a responsibility of the Principal.

The hiring process ensures fair and equitable treatment of all candidates. This process includes a credential check, a formal interview, and a teaching demonstration.

Teacher Evaluation Process

Teachers are regularly observed while engaged in instruction, working with colleagues, encountering parents and administrators. The Principal schedules class walk-throughs and when needed, extended classroom observation times. Reflection and goal-setting are a part of the bi-monthly mentor meeting with the Principal.

Twice yearly, the teacher is given a more formal evaluation feedback form which involves self-evaluation, and supervisor evaluation in 5 critical criteria areas. The fall evaluation sets the goals for the school year, and the mid-winter evaluation gives feedback related to these goals. If a teacher is not meeting a level of competency in any of the 5 criteria areas, a plan for improvement is implemented and a follow-up evaluatory session is scheduled. The teacher is made aware, when necessary, that contract renewal is in question.

Element 6 – Health and Safety Procedures

“The procedures that the charter school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the following:

- (i) That each employee of the charter school furnish the charter school with a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237.*
- (ii) The development of a school safety plan, which shall include the safety topics listed in subparagraphs (A) to (J), inclusive, of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 32282.*
- (iii) That the school safety plan be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year by the charter school.”*
(Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(F).)

The position that will serve as the *Custodian of Records* per California Department of Justice Requirements is: Founding Executive Director

Riversage School shall comply with all of the requirements of Education Code Sections 44237, 45125.1, and 45122.1 to ensure the safety of employees and students. Riversage School will adopt a comprehensive set of health and safety policies, which are on file at the school’s office, and are summarized below.

Comprehensive School Safety Plan

Riversage School will implement a Comprehensive School Safety Plan that adheres to the requirements of Education Code Section 32282(a)(2)(A)-(J). The plan of health, safety, and emergency response policies will be reviewed annually with stakeholders including local fire, police and other emergency preparedness agencies, who are invited to provide feedback in order to ensure a coordinated and efficient response to incidents on campus that would require first responder assistance. Parents and staff will be part of the annual review and improvement of the plan annually by March 1. This plan and its annual review are approved by the Governing Board.

Health and Wellness Policies

In addition to the School Safety Plan, the following additional policies will be adopted/implemented, in consultation with the school’s insurance provider:

1. A requirement that all enrolling students, staff and volunteers who have frequent or prolonged contact with students provide records documenting immunizations to the extent required for enrollment / employment in charter public schools. Records of student immunizations are maintained, and staff will honor requirements for periodic Tuberculosis (TB) risk assessments and examinations (if needed). A negative TB test report is required -- current within 60 days of employment start date and re-tested at least every four years.
2. Policies and procedures for response to natural disasters and emergencies, including fires and earthquakes.
3. A policy requiring that instructional and administrative staff receive training in emergency response, including appropriate “first responder” training or its equivalent.
4. Policies relating to the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines, including epinephrine auto-injectors.

5. A policy that the school will be housed in facilities that have received state Fire Marshal approval and that have been evaluated by a qualified structural engineer who has determined that the facilities present no substantial seismic safety hazard. Periodic inspections will be undertaken, as necessary; to ensure such safety standards are met.
6. Student health screenings shall be conducted in conformance with state law, including state mandated hearing screenings pursuant to EDC § 49452 and 17 CCR § 2951(c).
7. A policy establishing that the school functions as a drug, alcohol, and tobacco free workplace.
8. A requirement that each employee of the school and applicable contractors submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary as required by California Education Code section 44237. Volunteers who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee.
9. A policy for reporting child abuse, acts of violence, and other improprieties as mandated by federal, state, and local agencies.
10. Compliance with all health and safety laws and regulations that apply to non-charter public schools, including those regarding auxiliary services (food services, transportation, custodial services, hazardous materials, pest management, etc.) and those required by CAL/OSHA, the California Health and Safety Code, EPA and the McKinney-Vento Act with regard to homeless students.
11. All structures secured for staff and students meet or exceed the requirements set forth in the following codes or acts: Federal Uniform Building Codes (UBC), Fire and Emergency Exit Codes, Health and Safety Codes, Local Building Codes, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). Code. Riversage School agrees to test sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms annually at its facilities to ensure that they are maintained in an operable condition at all times. Riversage School shall conduct fire drills as required under Education Code Section 32001.
12. A policy on student suicide prevention in accordance with Education Code Section 215.
13. An infectious control plan for dealing with blood borne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the workplace.
14. Riversage School will stock at least 50% of its restrooms with feminine hygiene products, and shall not charge students for these products, pursuant to Education Code Section 35292.6.
15. Riversage School shall comply with the California Universal Meals Program by providing two nutritionally adequate meals free of charge (breakfast and lunch) during each school day to students requesting a meal, regardless of their free or reduced-price meal eligibility.
16. Riversage School shall teach sexual health education and human immunodeficiency virus (“HIV”) prevention education to students at least once in grades middle school, pursuant to the California Healthy Youth Act (Education Code Section 51930, et seq.).

17. Riversage School is committed to providing a school that is free from discrimination and sexual harassment, as well as any harassment based upon the actual or perceived characteristics of race, religion, creed, color, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, national origin, ancestry, ethnic group identification, genetic information, age, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, sex and pregnancy, physical or mental disability, childbirth or related medical conditions, military and veteran status, denial of family and medical care leave, or on the basis of a person's association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics, or any other basis protected by federal, state, local law, ordinance or regulation. Riversage School shall develop a comprehensive policy to prevent and immediately remediate any concerns about discrimination or harassment at Riversage 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 Riversage School's anti-discrimination and harassment policies. The full policy will be found in the Parent Student Handbook.
18. Riversage School shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Safe Place to Learn Act (Education Code Section 234 et seq.), including by maintaining and implementing policies that reduce discrimination, harassment, violence, and intimidation, such as policies discussed above, and by maintaining policies and practices that reduce incidents of bullying.
19. Riversage School will provide an information sheet regarding type 2 diabetes to the parent or guardian of incoming 7th grade students, pursuant to Education Code Section 49452.7. The information sheet shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following:
 1. A description of type 2 diabetes.
 2. A description of the risk factors and warning signs associated with type 2 diabetes.
 3. A recommendation that students displaying or possibly suffering from risk factors or warning signs associated with type 2 diabetes should be screened for type 2 diabetes.
 4. A description of treatments and prevention methods of type 2 diabetes.
 5. A description of the different types of diabetes screening tests available.
20. Riversage School will adhere to Education Code Section 49423 regarding administration of medication in school.

Emergency Situations

Riversage School maintains an emergency plan that details procedures for emergency situations. The plan is updated annually and reviewed with all staff before each school year. Substitute teachers receive a summary of their responsibilities during an emergency each time they report for work.

All students and all staff will participate in quarterly earthquake drills, fire drills in accordance with Education Code Section 32001, and at least one lock-down/ALICE drill annually.

Child Abuse Reporting

Riversage School adheres to the requirements of California Penal Code Section 11164 and 11166 regarding child abuse reporting. Riversage School staff must report to the proper authorities if they suspect the following is occurring to a student:

- Sexual assault
- Neglect
- Willful cruelty or unjustifiable punishment
- Cruel or inhuman corporal punishment or injury
- Abuse in out-of-home care

The reporting person need only “reasonably suspect” that abuse or neglect has occurred. The reporting person does not have to prove abuse. The Principal works with all faculty and staff members to make sure all appropriate steps are taken if a child abuse situation is suspected. All staff members are notified that, under California law, failure to report an incident of known or reasonably suspected child abuse or neglect is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by up to six months confinement in a county jail or by a fine of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or by both. Staff will not be made to investigate any incident, but will be required to report the incident to the Principal and proper authorities.

All suspected cases of child abuse will be brought to the attention of the Principal or his/her designee. Riversage School staff will complete a written report of the situation and will notify the Department of Children and Family Services within the legally required timeframe. If the minor is believed to be in immediate danger, local law enforcement will be informed of the situation as well. The reporting person will be responsible for providing all the necessary information and child abuse reports since he/she will be most knowledgeable of the situation.

Should it be necessary to remove the child from school, Riversage School staff will obtain the contact information of the agency removing the child. This information will be placed in the student’s record and be available to the parent /guardian. Riversage School shall require and provide mandated reporter training to all employees annually in accordance with Education Code Section 44691.

Element 7 – Means to Achieve Racial and Ethnic Balance as well as a Balance of Special Education Students & English Learners

“The means by which the charter school will achieve a balance of racial and ethnic pupils, special education pupils, and English learner pupils, including redesignated fluent English proficient pupils, as defined by the evaluation rubrics in Section 52064.5, that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(G).)

Riversage School values diversity and makes every effort to recruit students of various racial and ethnic groups as well as English Learners and Special Education Students to achieve a balance that is both reflective of the general population residing within the neighborhood surrounding the school and the TTUSD population. We will carefully monitor enrollment and when we see a shift in enrollment demographics that doesn't align with our surrounding communities, we will make adjustments to our outreach plans and collaborate with our families and community partners to ensure we achieve a racial and ethnic balance, as well as a balance of Special Education students and English Learners, including redesignated fluent English proficient pupils.

Table: Neighborhood Demographic Comparisons

K-12 Enrollment Regional Demographics										
Name	Total	African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Filipino	Hispanic or Latino	Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races	Not Reported
Tahoe-Truckee Unified	4,165	0.1%	0.1%	0.5%	0.1%	35.1%	0.1%	58.8%	3.8%	1.4%
El Dorado County	30,367	0.9%	0.8%	4.3%	1.4%	20.4%	0.2%	65.6%	5.4%	1.0%
Nevada County	10,745	1.1%	0.9%	0.9%	0.3%	20.8%	0.1%	63.7%	5.9%	6.2%
Placer County	74,446	2.0%	0.5%	7.2%	3.1%	22.0%	0.4%	56.2%	7.3%	1.3%

**CDE Dataquest (report accessed May 23, 2022 and Sep 3, 2022) “2021-2022 Enrollment by ethnicity”*

Student groups	El Dorado County	Nevada County	Placer County	Tahoe- Truckee Unified
English Learners	6.2%	2.2%	7.6%	14.2%
Foster Youth	0.4%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%
Homeless Youth	1.9%	1.9%	1.1%	0.3%
Migrant Education	0	0	0	0
Students with Disabilities	13.0%	12.8%	11.6%	13.1%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	29.0%	46.6%	26.2%	31.4%
* CDE Dataquest (report accessed May 23, 2022 and Sep 3, 2022) "2021-22 Enrollment by Subgroup"				

Annual Efforts to Achieve / Maintain Racial and Ethnic Balance and Balance of Special Education and English Learner Population

In order to provide school information to a diverse population, Riversage School will target outreach to families in areas that are located within a 15 mile radius of the school. Riversage School will maintain an accurate accounting of the ethnic and racial balance of the school as well as the balance of the percentage of the population of students who enroll in the school who qualify for Special Education or are English Learners, along with documentation of efforts that the school has made to recruit a student population with demographics that are similar to the local school racial, ethnic, and SPED / EL make-up.

Outreach includes flyers distributed at local businesses and community organizations, youth organizations, social service providers, faith-based organizations, grocery stores, and public libraries. Our parents will hand out flyers at their places of work or at younger children’s preschools. School information / outreach sessions will be conducted in English and Spanish and will be held at different venues throughout the community.

Each year, Riversage School will conduct the outreach and recruitment efforts described above, and also engage in the following additional outreach, recruitment and retention efforts:

- Work to provide a team of bilingual staff members who can communicate with parents
- Develop and deliver curriculum and community events that honor our diverse school community
- Utilize the Compassionate Campus program to ensure that our campus is a welcoming place for all and that our students are taught skills that support their ability to successfully navigate cultural differences
- Perform an annual community satisfaction survey
- Include an optional question on the application asking applicant how they first heard of Riversage School to help us improve our outreach efforts

Beginning in the fall, outreach and recruitment efforts will include:

- Evening meetings in Spanish and English (and other languages as necessary) at the school site and in other locations
- Tours of the campus in English and Spanish for prospective parents
- Engaging community partners/local businesses to place flyers and posters in their establishments (churches, laundromats, ethnic markets, recreation centers, martial arts & dance studios, etc.)
- Activating our Equity and Diversity Committee members to assist with outreach and the distribution of brochures and flyers

Riversage School will continue to build relationships with community partners to increase our visibility and outreach to our community.

Outreach should be a reflective process where the “results”—demographics of the applicant pool, newly enrolled students and retention of enrolled students—inform future outreach. Each year, Riversage School staff will review our enrollment information to determine if our demographics closely mirror that of our neighboring schools and, if they do not, we will participate in targeted outreach to any underrepresented communities. We will also review our community satisfaction survey and data collected from our application and enrollment process to evaluate the effectiveness of our outreach methods and to determine any areas of weakness that might be undermining student retention or discouraging underrepresented communities from applying. The demographic enrollment data of the district schools our students would otherwise attend becomes the benchmark we seek to meet in our own enrollment data.

Where weaknesses are uncovered, Riversage School will conduct targeted outreach to ensure our racial and ethnic balance as well as our balance of SPED and EL students. Examples of targeted outreach might include:

- Distributing translated brochures to community based organizations serving the underrepresented population
- Placing advertisements in newspapers serving the underrepresented population
- Appearing at local events
- Participating in, and when appropriate, presenting at events sponsored by community based organizations serving the underrepresented population such as the Sierra Community House
- Continuing to have parents disseminate information to their informal and formal networks
- Analyzing retention data and exit interview responses to identify any patterns
- Consulting with enrolled families who are members of underrepresented groups to identify factors that might be resulting in lower retention rates or lower application rates from these groups and then using this information to inform our outreach and retention efforts
- Developing partnerships with ELD and Special Ed teachers and coordinators at neighboring district schools who would be best positioned to know if a student might benefit from our program.

Each year, Riversage School’s administration and faculty will examine our enrollment data and the demographic make up of our applicant pool, and reflect upon the effectiveness of outreach efforts and

develop new strategies as needed. Enrollment data that doesn't mirror district schools our students would otherwise attend will trigger additional outreach efforts and the development of new strategies.

Federal Compliance

To the extent that Riversage School is a recipient of federal funds, including federal Title V funds, Riversage School has agreed to meet all of the programmatic, fiscal and other regulatory requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act and other applicable federal programs. Riversage School agrees that it will keep and make available to its charter authorizer any documentation necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act and other applicable federal programs, including, but not limited to, documentation related to required parental notifications, appropriate credentialing of teaching and paraprofessional staff, the implementation of Public School Choice and Supplemental Educational Services, where applicable, or any other mandated federal program requirement.

Riversage School also understands that as part of its oversight of the school, its charter authorizer may conduct program review of federal and state compliance issues.

Element 8 – Admission Requirements

“Admission policies and procedures, consistent with subdivision (e) of Education Code section 47605.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(H).)

Admissions Requirements

Application Process

The Riversage School is committed to offering parents an alternative public school choice. As such, we aim to help parents make an informed decision about whether the Riversage School program fits the needs of their child and family.

Riversage School will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and all other operations, shall not charge tuition, and shall not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of characteristics, whether actual or perceived, as listed in Education Code section 220, including, but not necessarily limited to the following: actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, immigration status, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics.

Riversage School will adhere to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths. Riversage School shall provide specific information in its outreach materials, websites, at community meetings, open forums, and regional center meetings that notifies parents that the school is open to enrollment and provides services for all students, and provides a standard contact number for access to additional information regarding enrollment.

Students will not be excluded on the basis of services needed. Riversage shall not request or require submission of a student’s IEP, 504 Plan, or any other record or related information prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process. Upon enrollment by a student who has qualified for services pursuant to the IDEA and has an IEP in place, Riversage School shall provide the student with a program that is comparable to the student's last agreed upon and implemented IEP for the first 30 days at the school. After the first 30 days, Riversage School shall either continue to provide the comparable program, or make a different offer of placement and services. Students must be enrolled for 30 days before the school can make a determination about whether it is able to provide for the student’s needs.

Riversage School shall adhere to Education Code Section 47605(e)(4) which states:

(A) A charter school shall not discourage a pupil from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the charter school for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in clause (iii) of subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2).

(B) A charter school shall not request a pupil’s records or require a parent, guardian, or pupil to submit the pupil’s records to the charter school before enrollment.

(C) A charter school shall not encourage a pupil currently attending the charter school to disenroll from the charter school or transfer to another school for any reason, including, but not limited to academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in clause (iii) of subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2) including pupils with disabilities, academically low-achieving pupils, English learners, neglected or delinquent pupils, homeless pupils, or pupils who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by eligibility for any free or reduced-price meal program, foster youth, or pupils based on nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. This subparagraph shall not apply to actions taken by a charter school pursuant to the procedures described in subparagraph (J) of paragraph (5) of subdivision (b), procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled from the charter school for disciplinary reasons. If a person suspects that the charter school is in violation of the enrollment practices described above, a complaint can be filed with the chartering authority. This notice is available to any current or prospective parent or guardian at any time, including:

- (i) when a parent, guardian, or pupil inquires about enrollment
- (ii) before conducting an enrollment lottery
- (iii) before disenrollment of a pupil.

Riversage School's student application deadline will be determined by the Founding Executive Director and / or Principal in collaboration with the calendar approval by the Board. The process and procedures, as well as timeline, will be made available to all families and community members on Riversage School's website and in hard copy at the school's offices. Riversage School will adhere to all procedures related to confidentiality and privacy of records. In the event that a student enters the school upon transfer from another school, the student's records (i.e., IEP, cumulative, bilingual) will be requested from that school. Upon exit from Riversage School, the student's records will be forwarded to the student's school of enrollment upon written request. In accordance with FERPA, parents will annually be given a form providing the opportunity to withhold the release of information.

Student Recruitment

All prospective parents are invited to attend a school tour and/or informational meeting, but attendance is not required for application or enrollment. Tour information will be posted on the Riversage's School website. Dates for Informational Meetings will be posted on the Riversage School's website and featured in flyers which are distributed to parents, local businesses, churches and other areas where families gather.

Riversage School uses non-discriminatory processes and actively recruits a diverse student population from the communities it serves. Riversage School will monitor enrollment to ensure that, to the fullest extent possible, students enrolled reflect the diversity of the community. Riversage School will employ a targeted publicity campaign so our enrollment mirrors the community at the local schools where our students would otherwise attend.

As detailed in Element 7, recruitment materials will be bilingual English/Spanish to communicate the mission and educational program of Riversage School. Marketing materials will be delivered to homes, businesses and service organizations in the targeted community that include school information, including the school website and phone number for additional information. Information sessions at local community centers and after school programs ensure parents residing in the targeted neighborhood are informed

about the opening of Riversage School and how the school is designed to meet this community's students' needs.

Our outreach efforts attempt to attain a racial and ethnic balance that is reflective of the District by concentrating our efforts in Riversage School's surrounding neighborhood.

More information about recruitment can be found in Element 7.

Admissions Preferences

Admissions preferences in the case of a public random drawing shall be given to the following students in the following order in accordance with the Lottery Policy adopted by the Board on file in Riversage School's office:

1. Pupils currently attending the school
2. Children of the school's teachers, staff, and founding families. Founding families are those that have provided at least 50 hours of volunteer time with regard to this petition, and are listed in the Appendix.
3. Siblings of students admitted to or attending Riversage School

The number of students given preference under #2 will not exceed 10% of total offers of enrollment.

Interest Period

All interest forms (applications to enroll) submitted during the interest period (open enrollment period) will be collected and recorded in Riversage School's enrollment system, School Mint or a similar system. A copy of all interest form information will be maintained in the system. Interest forms seek minimal student information and parent contact information and are made available both in paper form and online. The dates of the interest period will be made public on Riversage School's website prior to the opening of the interest period. If the number of interest forms received exceeds the capacity of a grade level, a date will be set to hold a lottery to assure all applicants an equal chance of gaining admission in accordance with the preferences listed above. The date of the lottery is also made public on the Riversage School's website.

Lottery Proceedings

The date and time of the lottery is established each year and will be clearly printed on the lottery form and on our school website. Riversage School will seek a location either in or near the location of the school facility and in a space large enough to ensure all interested parties may observe the lottery. Families who submit interest forms will receive information about the date, time, and location of the lottery from the Riversage School in advance. The lottery will be conducted using an automated online system to ensure that the process is fair and equitable for all participants. Qualifying interest forms will receive preference in School Mint or similar automated lottery system, per the preferences outlined above.

Post-Lottery

All families who submitted an interest form, including both those who did and did not attend the lottery event, will be notified through the automated online system by email (or by postal mail if no email is on file) about the results of the lottery by Riversage School within one week of the lottery. The notification will indicate whether the child was admitted or waitlisted, and, if waitlisted, the number the child is on the waiting list. For students who were admitted to Riversage School, the notification will include steps the family must take and a timeline to return paperwork to enroll the child in Riversage School. If there is no response to the notification within 5 business days, Riversage Schools will follow up with a phone call. If the offer is not accepted, or there is no response by the specified date indicated on the offer notification, the child or the child(ren) will forfeit enrollment for that school year. Riversage School will maintain records documenting the fair execution of the lottery including the names placed into the lottery, the name of the automated online system used to conduct the lottery, the names of admitted students, and the names and order of those placed on the waiting list. The information will be maintained according to state and county document retention requirements as applicable.

Next Steps and Procedures

Waitlist Procedures

If a lottery is required, a numbered waiting list will be created at the time of the lottery and will be randomized accounting for the preferences listed above, by the automated lottery system. After the lottery, the waiting list will change to accommodate the sibling preference, meaning if a family has two students on the waiting list and one is called off the waitlist and enrolls in Riversage School, the sibling's wait list number may move up as a result of the sibling now being a current student. Further, children of employees may displace an applicant within any other enrollment priority category at any time. Interest forms submitted after the close of the interest period, or after capacity is reached (if no lottery is required), will be held in abeyance for a subsequent lottery, should the original waitlist be exhausted. Should a vacancy occur, admission will be offered to the next applicant at the top of the waiting list through a phone call or an email notification (or by postal mail if no email is on file).

When an offer is made, Riversage School typically will request that applicants notify Riversage School within two days to indicate whether or not they will accept; if offers are declined or applicants do not respond, the vacancy is then offered to the next applicant on the waitlist. If the applicant accepts the offer and the student has unexcused absences for the first three consecutive days of their enrollment and the parent does not contact Riversage School or respond to our efforts to contact them, the student will be disenrolled.

All admitted students will receive an Enrollment Form, which includes a list of required documents. At this time, families will be required to submit verification documentation for all admission preferences indicated on their application. The Enrollment Form must be returned to Riversage School by the specified date or the child(ren) will forfeit enrollment for that school year. All required documents must be received by the established deadline(s) or the student will no longer be enrolled for the school year and Riversage School will admit and enroll the next student(s) on the waiting list.

The waiting list expires annually the day before the lottery for the upcoming year.

The above process will also be followed to fill vacant seats for all grades as seats become available each year due to student attrition at the discretion of the Principal.

Refinement of Policies

Notwithstanding the aforementioned, Riversage School may refine lottery policies and procedures during the charter term in accordance with a written policy adopted by the Board. This revision shall be designed to meet the lottery's purpose of ensuring Riversage School's demographics reflect the community.

Element 9 – Annual Financial Audits

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

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604.33, Riversage School will provide all necessary financial statements to its charter authorizer, including the following:

- Preliminary Budget: by July 1 of each fiscal year;
- First Interim Report: by December 15, reflecting changes through October 31;
- Annual Audit: by December 15, reflecting the prior fiscal year ending June 30;
- Second Interim Report: by March 15, reflecting changes through January 31;
- LCAP and Annual Update by July 1 of each fiscal year;
- Final Unaudited Report: by September 15, reflecting the entire fiscal year through June 30; and
- Other reports as requested by the charter authorizer.

Each fiscal year an independent auditor will conduct an audit of the financial affairs of Riversage School as a distinct LEA to verify the accuracy of the school’s financial statements, attendance, and enrollment accounting practices, and to review the school’s internal controls as required by Education Code Sections 47605.6(c)(5)(I) and 47605.6(m). Riversage School will retain auditors selected from the California State Controller’s list of auditors approved to conduct charter school audits, which will employ generally accepted auditing principles and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Controller General of the United States. The audit shall be conducted in accordance with applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller's K-12 Audit Guide. All auditors will report directly to the Board.

To the extent required under applicable federal laws for audits of the major federal programs, the audit scope will expand to be in compliance with the requirements described in the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133, audits of states, local governments, and nonprofit organizations. Should OMB Circular A-133 be rescinded, audits of the major federal programs will be conducted in compliance with standards and provisions approved by OMB.

The Board will oversee the selection of an independent auditor and the completion of an annual audit. The auditor shall be on the State Controller’s list of educational auditors. The audits will assure that the school’s student attendance accounting and money is being handled responsibly and that financial statements conform to the California Guidelines for Auditing K-12 Public Schools and Government Auditing Standards.

The Founding Executive Director, Director of Finance and Operations and Riversage School’s back office service provider will ensure the annual audit is completed and forwarded to the district, County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and to the CDE or other agency as the State Board of Education may direct, by the 15th of December of each year. The Founding Executive Director, Director of Finance and Operations and the Finance committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Board with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Board will submit a report to

its charter authorizer describing how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved to the satisfaction of the charter authorizer along with an anticipated timeline for the same. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel (“EAAP”) in accordance with applicable law.

Note: Audit exceptions and or findings generally will be resolved within two weeks, and the finding as well as its resolution will be presented to the Finance Committee and the Governing Board at the next regularly scheduled meetings. At the latest, audit findings / exceptions will be resolved within 60 days if extenuating circumstances prevent earlier resolution.

Element 10 – Suspension and Expulsion Procedures

“The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled from the charter school for disciplinary reasons or otherwise involuntarily removed from the charter school for any reason. These procedures, at a minimum, shall include an explanation of how the charter school will comply with federal and state constitutional procedural and substantive due process requirements that is consistent with all of the following:

(i) For suspensions of fewer than 10 days, provide oral or written notice of the charges against the pupil and, if the pupil denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence that supports the charges and an opportunity for the pupil to present the pupil’s side of the story.

(ii) For suspensions of 10 days or more and all other expulsions for disciplinary reasons, both of the following:

(I) Provide timely, written notice of the charges against the pupil and an explanation of the pupil’s basic rights.

(II) Provide a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer within a reasonable number of days at which the pupil has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the pupil has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate.

(iii) Contain a clear statement that no pupil shall be involuntarily removed by the charter school for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the pupil has been provided written notice of intent to remove the pupil no less than five schooldays before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the pupil or the pupil’s parent or guardian or, if the pupil is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the pupil’s educational rights holder, and shall inform the pupil, the pupil’s parent or guardian, or the pupil’s educational rights holder of the right to initiate the procedures specified in clause (ii) before the effective date of the action. If the pupil’s parent, guardian, or educational rights holder initiates the procedures specified in clause (ii), the pupil shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the charter school issues a final decision. For purposes of this clause, “involuntarily removed” includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions specified in clauses (i) and (ii).” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(J).)

A. Student Discipline

Student discipline at Riversage School is grounded in a positive and dialogue-based approach with the ultimate goal of self-discipline. The goal is to create conditions that foster student self-discipline in a warm, supportive school climate that is conducive to maximum learning for all students. Riversage School offers a general guide for behavior, not a mechanism for rigid control. Students are expected to behave in a respectful way toward their teachers, any adults, their classmates, and toward the property of others. Students will be approached in a respectful manner and asked to comply with the standards of behavior. The individual personalities of students or extenuating circumstances will be considered before corrective measures are prescribed. Riversage School is committed to creating a safe and nurturing environment for every child. All staff are committed to helping students grow into healthy, happy, responsible adults; the ultimate goal is that every student possesses a clear understanding of how the student’s actions affect others.

When a child acts in thoughtless or harmful ways, the entire community suffers. Discipline is used to discourage misbehavior and to encourage students to make better choices in the future. All staff, parents, and volunteers work diligently to create a school culture that encourages students to take charge of their lives and manage their own learning. Everyone in the learning community will be equipped with conflict resolution techniques and problem-solving skills to help facilitate successful interactions with others. Students will be empowered to establish clear behavioral expectations and appropriate consequences within the community. These skills are taught and practiced within the Compassionate Campus program, which incorporates restorative justice techniques.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy

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

When the Policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. This policy shall serve as Riversage School's policy and procedures for student suspension and expulsion and it may be amended from time to time without the need to amend the charter so long as the amendments comport with legal requirements. Riversage School staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. This Policy and its Procedures will be printed and distributed as part of the Student Handbook and will clearly describe discipline expectations. Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of the Policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's reasonable use of restraining efforts and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons, or to prevent damage to school property.

Riversage School administration shall ensure students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures. The notice is provided to all enrolled students and families via the Riversage School Parent Student Handbook disseminated annually.

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

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom Riversage School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEA") or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to general education students except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. Riversage School will follow all applicable federal and state laws, including but not limited to the California Education Code, when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom Riversage School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in affording due process to such students.

No student shall be involuntarily removed by Riversage School for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the student has been provided written notice of intent to remove the student no less than five schooldays before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian or, if the student is a foster child or youth or a homeless child

or youth, the student's educational rights holder, and shall inform him or her of the right to initiate the procedures specified below for suspensions, before the effective date of the action. If the student's parent, guardian, or educational rights holder initiates the procedures specified below for suspensions, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until Riversage School issues a final decision. As used herein, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions or expulsions pursuant to the suspension and expulsion procedures described below.

A. Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at any time including but not limited to: a) while on school grounds; b) while going to or coming from school; c) during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; d) during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

B. Enumerated Offenses

1. Discretionary Suspension Offenses. Students may be suspended for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:
 - a. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person or willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
 - b. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
 - c. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
 - d. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
 - e. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
 - f. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
 - g. Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of the student's own prescription products by a pupil.
 - h. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
 - i. Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 11014.5.
 - j. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to electronic files and databases.
 - k. Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
 - l. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code Sections 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code Section 243.4.

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

which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of the student's age, or for a person of the student's age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
 2. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.
 3. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with the student's academic performance.
 4. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by Riversage School.
- ii. "Electronic Act" means the transmission by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
1. A message, text, sound, or image.
 2. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
 - a. Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above.
 - b. Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
 - c. Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
- iii. Notwithstanding subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.
- u. A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant

- to subdivision (1).
- v. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any knife unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Director or designee's concurrence.
2. Non-Discretionary Suspension Offenses: Students must be suspended and recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:
- a. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Director or designee's concurrence.
3. Discretionary Expellable Offenses: Students may be recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:
- a. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person or willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
 - b. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
 - c. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
 - d. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
 - e. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
 - f. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
 - g. Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of the student's own prescription products by a pupil.
 - h. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
 - i. Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 11014.5.
 - j. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property, which includes but is not limited to electronic files and databases.
 - k. Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
 - l. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code Sections 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code Section 243.4.
 - m. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
 - n. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.

- o. Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, “hazing” means a method of initiation or pre-initiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, “hazing” does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
- p. Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property. For purposes of this section, “terroristic threat” shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for the student’s own safety or for the student’s immediate family’s safety, or for the protection of school property, or the personal property of the person threatened or the student’s immediate family.
- q. Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual’s academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- r. Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- s. Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- t. Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act.
 - i. “Bullying” means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including acts one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:
 - 1. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of the student’s age, or for a

- person of the student's age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
2. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.
 3. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with the student's academic performance.
 4. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by Riversage School
- ii. "Electronic Act" means the transmission by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
1. A message, text, sound, or image.
 2. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
 - a. Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above.
 - b. Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
 - c. Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
 3. Notwithstanding subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.
- u. A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (1).
- v. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any knife unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Director or designee's concurrence.
4. Non-Discretionary Expellable Offenses: Students must be recommended for expulsion for any of

the following acts when it is determined pursuant to the procedures below that the pupil:

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

If it is determined by the Board that a student has brought a firearm or destructive device, as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, onto campus or to have possessed a firearm or dangerous device on campus, the student shall be expelled for one year, pursuant to the Federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994. In such instances, the pupil shall be provided due process rights of notice and a hearing as required in this policy.

The term "firearm" means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm. The term "destructive device" means (A) any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, including but not limited to: (i) bomb, (ii) grenade, (iii) rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, (iv) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, (v) mine, or (vi) device similar to any of the devices described in the preceding clauses.

C. Suspension Procedure Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

1. Conference: Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the Principal or Principal's designee with the student and the student's parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or Riversage School employee who referred the student to the Principal or designee. The conference may be omitted if the Principal or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety, or health of students or Riversage School personnel; or if the Principal or designee determines the situation would be best served (for either the student, other students, or the crew) by an immediate in-school suspension. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of the student's right to return to school for the purpose of a conference. At the conference, the pupil shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against the student and shall be given the opportunity to present the student's version and evidence in the student's defense. This conference shall be held within two school days, unless the pupil waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason including, but not limited to, incarceration or hospitalization. No penalties may be imposed on a pupil for failure of the pupil's parent or guardian to attend a conference with Riversage School officials. Reinstatement of the suspended pupil shall not be contingent upon attendance by the pupil's parent or guardian at the conference.
2. Notice to Parents/Guardians: At the time of the suspension, an administrator or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension and the date of return following suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the

student. If the student denies the charges, Riversage School will provide an explanation of the evidence that supports the charges and an opportunity for the student to present the student's side of the story. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time when the student may return to school. If Riversage School officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

3. **Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Placement / Expulsion:** Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension. Upon a recommendation of Expulsion by the Principal or the Principal's designee, the pupil and the pupil's guardian or representative will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the pupil should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. In such instances when Riversage School has determined a suspension period shall be extended, such extension shall be made only after a conference is held with the pupil or the pupil's parents, unless the pupil and the pupil's parents fail to attend the conference. This determination will be made by the Principal or designee upon either of the following: 1) the pupil's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the pupil poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the pupil's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.
4. **Homework During Suspensions:** In accordance with Education Code Section 47606.2(a), upon the request of a parent, a legal guardian or other person holding the right to make education decisions for the student, or the affected student, a teacher shall provide to a student in any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive who has been suspended from school for two or more schooldays, the homework that the student would otherwise have been assigned. In accordance with Education Code Section 47606.2(b), if a homework assignment that is requested pursuant to Section 47606.2(a) and turned into the teacher by the student either upon the student's return to school from suspension or within the timeframe originally prescribed by the teacher, whichever is later, is not graded before the end of the academic term, that assignment shall not be included in the calculation of the student's overall grade in the class.

D. Authority to Expel As required by Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(J)(ii), students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing adjudicated by a neutral officer to determine whether the student should be expelled. The procedures herein provide for such a hearing and the notice of said hearing, as required by law.

A student may be expelled by the neutral and impartial Riversage School Board following a hearing before it or an Administrative Panel to be assigned by the Board as needed. The Administrative Panel should consist of at least three members who are neither a teacher of the pupil nor a Board member. The Administrative Panel may recommend expulsion of any student found to have committed an expellable offense.

E. Expulsion Procedures Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. Unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the Principal or designee determines that the Pupil has committed an expellable offense. In the event an Administrative Panel hears the case, it will make a recommendation to

the Board for a final decision whether to expel. The hearing shall be held in a confidential setting (complying with all pupil confidentiality rules under FERPA). Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the pupil.

The notice shall include:

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

F. Special Procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Sexual Assault or Battery Offenses Riversage School may, upon a finding of good cause, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of the witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of sworn declarations that shall be examined only by Riversage School or the Administrative Panel. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the pupil.

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

hearing is confidential. Nothing in the law precludes the person presiding over the hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The entity conducting the hearing may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany him or her to the witness stand.

7. If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, Riversage School must present evidence that the witness' presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to Riversage School. The person presiding over the hearing shall permit the witness to stay unless it is established that there is a substantial risk that the testimony of the complaining witness would be influenced by the support person, in which case the presiding official shall admonish the support person or persons not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way. Nothing shall preclude the presiding officer from exercising their discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom he or she believes is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.
8. The testimony of the support person shall be presented before the testimony of the complaining witness and the complaining witness shall be excluded from the hearing during that testimony.
9. Especially for charges involving sexual assault or battery, the complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a confidential setting when testifying otherwise would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are no alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing room by means of closed-circuit television.
10. Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness' prior sexual conduct is presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the person conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstance can be made, the witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.

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

H. Presentation of Evidence While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A recommendation by the Administrative Panel to expel must be supported by substantial evidence that the student committed an expellable offense. Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay. Sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses.

The decision of the Administrative Panel shall be in the form of written findings of fact and a written recommendation to the Board who will make a final determination regarding the expulsion. The final decision by the Board shall be made within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing. The Decision of the Board is final. If the Administrative Panel or Board decides not to recommend

expulsion, the pupil shall immediately be returned to his/her educational program.

I. *Written Notice to Expel* The Founding Executive Director or designee, following a decision of the Board to expel, shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Board's adopted findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian. This notice shall also include the following: (a) Notice of the specific offense committed by the student; and (b) Notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with Riversage School.

The Founding Executive Director or designee shall send a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the authorizer. This notice shall include the following: (a) The student's name; and (b) The specific expellable offense committed by the student.

J. *Disciplinary Records* Riversage School shall maintain records of all student suspensions and expulsions at the Riversage School office. Such records shall be made available to the authorizer upon request.

K. *Appeal* A student and the student's parent(s) may appeal an expulsion decision by the Administrative Panel to the Board that will make the final determination. Such appeals must be submitted in writing within five (5) school days of the Administrative Panel's written decision. The Board shall hear the appeal at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting or a special meeting. Student and parent(s)/guardian(s) may but are not required to appear during the Board's appeal meeting. The Board may consider and take action on the appeal. The Board shall issue a written decision on the appeal within three (3) school days of the appeal meeting. The Board's decision shall be final. If student and the student's parent(s) do not appeal in writing within five (5) school days of the Administrative Panel's written decision, that decision becomes final.

If the Board conducts the expulsion hearing in lieu of the Administrative Panel, the Board's decision shall be final and there is no right of appeal.

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

M. *Rehabilitation Plans* Students who are expelled from Riversage School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Board at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may re-apply to Riversage School for readmission pursuant to the lottery.

N. *Readmission* The decision to readmit a pupil or to admit a previously expelled pupil from another school district or charter school shall be in the sole discretion of the Board following a meeting with the Executive Director or designee and the pupil and guardian or representative to determine whether the

pupil has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and to determine whether the pupil poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The Founding Executive Director or designee shall make a recommendation to the Board following the meeting regarding the Founding Executive Director's determination. The pupil's readmission is also contingent upon Riversage School's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission.

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

1. Notification of SELPA: Sierra Sage shall immediately notify the SELPA and coordinate the procedures in this policy with the SELPA of the discipline of any student with a disability or a student whom Riversage School or the SELPA would deem to have knowledge that the student had a disability.
2. Services During Suspension: Students suspended for more than ten (10) school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP/504 Plan; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment or functional analysis, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting where the student has committed an offense involving a weapon, drugs or serious bodily harm as defined in 20 U.S.C. §§ 1415(k)(1)(G), 1415(k)(2), and 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(g).
3. Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation: Determination Within ten (10) school days of a recommendation for expulsion or any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, Riversage School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP/504 Plan, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine: a. If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or b. If the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP/504 Plan.

If Riversage School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team determine that either of the above is applicable for the child, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability. If Riversage School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP/504 Team shall: a. Conduct a functional behavioral assessment or a functional analysis assessment, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that Riversage School had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement; b. If a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and c. Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and Riversage School agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

If Riversage School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team determine that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability and that the conduct in question was not a result of the

failure to implement the IEP/504 Plan, then Riversage School may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to students without disabilities.

4. Due Process Appeals: The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or Riversage School believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, may request an expedited administrative hearing through the Special Education Unit of the Office of Administrative Hearings or by utilizing the dispute provisions of the 504 Policy and Procedures. When an appeal relating to the placement of the student or the manifestation determination has been requested by either the parent or Riversage School, the student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the forty-five (45) day time period provided for in an interim alternative educational setting, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and Riversage School agree otherwise.

5. Special Circumstances: Riversage School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct. The Executive Director or designee may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability in cases where a student: a. Carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 USC 930, to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function; b. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or c. Has inflicted serious bodily injury, as defined by 20 USC 1415(k)(7)(D), upon a person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

6. Interim Alternative Educational Setting: The student's interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the student's IEP/504 Team.

7. Procedures for Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education Services: A student who has not been identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to IDEA and who has violated Riversage School's disciplinary procedures may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if Riversage School had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred. Riversage School shall be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if one of the following conditions exists: a. The parent/guardian has expressed concern in writing, or orally if the parent/guardian does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement, to Riversage School supervisory or administrative personnel, or to one of the child's teachers, that the student is in need of special education or related services. b. The parent has requested an evaluation of the child. c. The child's teacher, or other Riversage School personnel, has expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child, directly to the School Director or to other Riversage School supervisory personnel. If Riversage School knew or should have known the student had a disability under any of the three (3) circumstances described above, the student may assert any of the protections available to IDEA-eligible children with disabilities, including the right to stay-put. If Riversage School had no basis for knowledge of the student's disability, it shall proceed with the

proposed discipline. Riversage School shall conduct an expedited evaluation if requested by the parents; however the student shall remain in the educational placement determined by Riversage School pending the results of the evaluation. Riversage School shall not be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if the parent has not allowed an evaluation, refused services, or if the student has been evaluated and determined to not be eligible.

Element 11 – Employee Retirement Systems

“The manner by which staff members of the charter schools will be covered by the State Teachers’ Retirement System, the Public Employees’ Retirement System, or federal social security.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(K).)

All full-time certificated employees who are eligible will participate in the California State Teachers Retirement System (CalSTRS) in accordance with CalSTRS guidelines and Education Code 47611. All salaried teachers and administrators will contribute the percentage required by CalSTRS at the time that contributions are made. Riversage School will contribute the employer’s portion as required by CalSTRS. All withholdings from employees and the charter school will be forwarded to the CalSTRS Fund as required. Employees will accumulate service credit years in the same manner as all other members of CalSTRS.

Riversage School will submit retirement data through the county office of education or through any agency qualified to receive retirement data and will comply with all policies and procedures for payroll reporting. Federal Social Security payments will be contributed for all classified, non-STRS employees in accordance with Federal and State laws. All employees will pay the required percentage of Medicare.

Riversage School’s Finance and Operations Director will ensure that appropriate arrangements for each employee’s retirement coverage are made.

Riversage School will participate in OASDI for non-eligible STRS and part-time employees. The Board retains the option to consider any other public or private retirement plans and to coordinate such participation with existing programs as it deems appropriate.

Element 12 – Public School Attendance Alternatives

“The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(L).)

Riversage School is a school of choice. No student is required to attend. Pupils may attend any of the existing public schools that service their address of residence in accordance with the admission and attendance requirements of any such school and school district.

Parents and guardians of each student enrolled in Riversage School will be informed on admissions forms that the students have no right to admission in a particular school of a local education agency as a consequence of enrollment in Riversage School, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the local education agency.

Element 13 – Rights of District Employees

“The rights of an employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(M).)

No public school district employee shall be required to work at Riversage School. When an employee leaves a school district to work at Riversage School and subsequently chooses to return to that school district, the specific leave rights, return rights, and any other rights afforded the employee will be governed by the policy of that school district, including, but not limited to, whether the employee may carry over any unused sick/personal leave and/or earn service credit (tenure) in the school district for the time worked at Riversage School.

Element 14 – Mandatory Dispute Resolution

“The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the chartering authority to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter.” (Ed. Code § 47605(c)(5)(N).)

A. Overview of Dispute Resolution Process

The staff and board members of Riversage School and the charter authorizer agree to attempt to resolve all disputes regarding this charter pursuant to the terms of this section. Both will refrain from public commentary regarding any disputes until the matter has progressed through the dispute resolution process.

The intent of these dispute resolution processes are to:

- Minimize the oversight burden on the Authorizer.
- Ensure a fair and timely resolution to disputes.
- Resolve disputes within Riversage School pursuant to the school’s policies.
- Provide a uniform complaint process to address all complaints that allege that Riversage School has violated federal or state laws or regulations governing educational programs.

B. Disputes between Sierra Sage Board or Riversage School and its Authorizer

In the event of a dispute between Riversage School and its Authorizer, the staff and governing board members of Riversage School and the Authorizer agree to handle such dispute through the informal process described below:

(1) Any controversy or claim arising out of or relating to the charter agreement, except any controversy or claim that in any way is related to revocation of this charter, must be put in writing (“Written Notification”). The Written Notification must identify the nature of the dispute and any supporting facts. The Written Notification may be tendered by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Notification shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 PM or otherwise on the business day following personal deliver; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. mail. All written notices shall be addressed as follows.

To: The Riversage School
Attention: Founding Executive Director and Board President of
Sierra Sage
12640 Union Mills
Truckee, CA 96161

To: Superintendent
Tahoe Truckee Unified School District
11603 Donner Pass Road,
Truckee, CA 96161

(2) A written response (“Written Response”) shall be tendered to the other party within (20) business days from the date of receipt of the Written Notification. The parties agree to schedule a conference between the Superintendent or his/her designee and Member(s) of the Board to meet and confer in a good faith attempt to resolve the controversy, claim, or dispute at issue (“Issue Conference”). The Issue Conference shall take place within (15) business days from the date the Written Response is received by the other party. The Written Response may be tendered by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the

address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 p. m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or if by mail, four (4) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.

(3) If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the Superintendent and the Founding Executive Director and/or President of the Board shall meet to jointly identify a neutral third party mediator to engage the Parties in a mediation session designed to facilitate resolution of the dispute. The format of the mediation session shall be developed jointly by the Superintendent and the Founding Executive Director. Mediation shall be held within 60 business days of receipt of the dispute statement. The costs of the mediator shall be split equally between the Authorizer and Riversage School. All timelines and procedures in this section may be revised upon mutual written agreement by the Authorizer and Riversage School.

(4) If the controversy, claim, or dispute cannot be resolved by mediation, then either party may request that the matter be resolved by arbitration. Arbitration proceedings shall commence within 60 days from the date of the Mediation. The parties shall mutually agree upon the selection of an arbitrator to resolve the controversy or claim at dispute. The arbitrator must be an active member of the California State Bar or a retired judge of the state or federal judiciary of California. Both parties will make their best efforts to limit the arbitration to one to three days. For days one through three, the arbitrator's fees shall be paid by the losing party as determined by the arbitrator. If the arbitration continues beyond a third day, the arbitrator's fees for each day beyond the third day shall be paid by Riversage School. Beyond the arbitrator's fees each party shall bear its own costs and expenses associated with the arbitration including each party's own attorneys' fees.

Notwithstanding any statements to the contrary in this Element 14 or any other sections of this charter, the Authorizer is not required to follow this or any dispute resolution process to revoke Riversage School's charter for any of the reasons specified under the law.

C. Disputes Arising Within Riversage School

Disputes arising from within Riversage School, including all disputes among and between students, staff, parents, volunteers, advisors, partner organizations, and board members of the school, will be resolved by the Board, the Founding Executive Director and/or another designated school director. The Authorizer may investigate if a complaint is made and there is a statutory obligation for the Superintendent to investigate. Otherwise, the Authorizer will not intervene in any such internal disputes without the consent of the Board and will refer any complaints or reports regarding such internal disputes to the Board or administrative staff of Riversage School for resolution. The Authorizer agrees not to intervene or become involved in the internal dispute unless the internal dispute has given the Authorizer reasonable cause to believe that a violation of this charter or related laws or agreements have occurred, or unless Riversage School has requested the Authorizer to intervene in the internal dispute.

In the event that the Authorizer receives a complaint directly regarding the school's operations, the Authorizer agrees to refer said complaint to the Founding Executive Director for resolution in accordance with the steps outlined above, unless otherwise prohibited by law (e.g., child abuse reporting).

Riversage School's internal dispute resolution process is for disputes between Riversage School and its stakeholders. The purpose of the internal dispute resolution process is twofold: 1) to resolve disputes quickly and with clarity and, 2) to have all members of the school resolve conflicts within the structures of the school. Riversage School will implement the dispute resolution process and will provide all members of the school community with a copy of the same. Everyone in the school community will sign

a statement acknowledging their intent to use the dispute resolution process in resolving conflicts. Parents will also be advised of the school's Uniform Complaint Policy.

B. Timeline for Final Appeal to the Governing Board

The party initiating the appeal must submit a written request for Board review to the board chair within (5) five business days of the Founding Executive Director's final decision. The Board will hear the appeal at the next scheduled regular meeting, unless the Board President determines that the urgency of the issues necessitates that a special meeting be called to hear the appeal.

Element 15 – Charter School Closure Procedures

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

A. Revocation

The Authorizer may revoke the charter of Riversage School if the School commits a breach of any terms of its charter or commits a breach of any provisions set forth in the Charter Schools Act of 1992.

Furthermore the Authorizer may revoke the charter of Riversage School on any of the following grounds:

- Riversage School committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter.
- Riversage School failed to meet or pursue any of the pupil outcomes identified in the charter.
- Riversage School failed to meet generally accepted accounting principles, or engaged in fiscal mismanagement.
- Riversage School violated any provisions of law.

Prior to revocation, and in accordance with CA Ed. Code Section 47607(f), the Authorizer will notify Riversage School in writing of the specific violation, and give Riversage school a reasonable opportunity to cure the violation, unless the Authorizer determines, in writing, that the violation constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of the students. Notwithstanding the immediately preceding language, revocation proceedings are not subject to the dispute resolution clause set forth in this charter.

B. Amendments and Severability

Any amendments to this charter will be made by the mutual agreement of the governing boards of Riversage School and the Authorizer. Material revisions and amendments will be made pursuant to the standards, criteria, and timelines in California Education Code section 47605.

The terms of this charter contract are severable. In the event that any of the provisions are determined to be unenforceable or invalid for any reason, the remainder of the charter will remain in effect, unless mutually agreed otherwise by the Authorizer and Riversage School. The Authorizer and Riversage School agree to meet to discuss and resolve any issues or differences relating to invalidated provisions in a timely, good faith fashion.

C. Closing Procedures

Riversage School shall follow the school closure provisions specified in Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(O) and Title 5, California Code of Regulations Section 11962, as well as those outlined in the State Board of Education school closure provisions in the event of school closure. The following additional provisions relating to school closure shall apply.

- A. Administration: The Board will be the responsible entity for oversight of the school closure procedures and the Founding Executive Director, or other individual identified by the Board, shall be primarily charged with implementing school closure procedures mandated by law. The Principal may be employed after the closing of the school for a period of time adequate to facilitate school closure, disposition of assets, and the transfer of all student records, and in such

instances will work at the direction of the Founding Executive Director. A list of pupils in each grade level and the classes they have completed, together with information on the pupils' district of residence, will be provided to the Founding Executive Director.

- B. Disposition of Assets: All goods and materials purchased by Riversage School with funds received by the LEA are owned by Sierra Sage as the nonprofit corporation authorized to operate the Riversage School and will remain so notwithstanding any closure of Riversage school. In the event that Riversage School closes and Sierra Sage seeks to dissolve, the remaining assets of the school, after the liabilities have been satisfied, will be disposed of by the governing board to another charter school, non-profit organization, or other appropriate entity in accordance with the asset disposition provisions of the school's articles of incorporation and all related laws and regulations. Notwithstanding the above, all unspent restricted funds shall be returned to their respective sources and any required reports submitted. More specifically, any grant funds will be disposed of in accordance with the terms of the grant, including but not limited to the return of any grant funds and any restricted categorical funds will similarly be disposed of in accordance with state and federal law as appropriate and any required final reports for such respected funds completed. Additionally, a full list of equipment, furniture, and instructional supplies must be documented prior to assets being distributed. Any donated materials and property with conditions established when the donation was accepted will be disposed of in accordance with those conditions. The Founding Executive Director will attend to enumerating and disposing of the assets and liabilities as directed in the articles of incorporation, and the board treasurer shall ensure that a final audit of the school's assets and liabilities is performed. A final audit will be completed and provided to the Authorizer within 6 months of school closure. Riversage School's reserves will be utilized to pay for this final audit. Education Code 47605(c)(5)(O).
- C. Notification: Riversage School will promptly notify parents and students of Riversage School, the Authorizer and / or County Office of Education, Riversage School's SELPA, the retirement systems in which Riversage School's employees participate (e.g., State Teachers' Retirement System and federal social security), and the California Department of Education of the closure as well as the effective date of the closure. This notice will also include the name(s) of and contact information for the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure; the pupils' school districts of residence; and the manner in which parents/guardians may obtain copies of pupil records, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements.

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

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

- D. Transfer of Records: The Board will ensure the transfer of official student records, assessment results and special education records to the students' new schools upon receiving records requests. Any unclaimed student will go to the Charter Authorizer upon school closure. Special Ed records will go to the SELPA or be transferred as directed by the SELPA. Parents will also be provided with copies of appropriate records and the Riversage School will otherwise assist students in transferring to their next school. All transfers of student records will be made in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") 20 U.S.C. § 1232g.

Personnel records will be transferred to and maintained by the entity responsible for closure-related activities in accordance with applicable law.

- E. **Audit:** As soon as reasonably possible, Riversage School will prepare final financial records. Riversage School will also have an independent audit completed within six months after closure. Riversage School will pay for the final audit. The audit will be prepared by a qualified Certified Public Accountant selected by the Board and will be provided to the Authorizer promptly upon its completion. The final audit will include an accounting of all financial assets, including cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value, an accounting of the liabilities, including accounts payable and any reduction in apportionments as a result of audit findings or other investigations, loans, and unpaid staff compensation, and an assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to Riversage School.
- F. **Annual Reports:** Riversage School will complete and file annual reports required pursuant to Education Code section 47604.33.
- G. **Cost of Closure:** The Board shall cover the cost of closure of Riversage School out of Riversage School's reserves and will reserve at least \$20,000 to cover them.

In the event of school closure, the Founding Executive Director and, if applicable, the Principal, will serve as the school's closure agents.

Miscellaneous Provisions

A. Business and Operations Management

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

Riversage School anticipates providing its own administrative services or contracting with third parties as necessary. As set forth in Section 47613(a) of the Education Code, the Charter Authorizer may charge for the actual costs of oversight for Riversage school, not to exceed 1% of the revenue of Riversage School as defined in Education Code Section 47613(f). If the District provides substantially rent-free facilities, in accordance with Education Code Section 47613(b), it may charge for the actual cost of oversight, not to exceed 3% of the Riversage School's revenue.

B. Inquiries and Notifications

Riversage School shall promptly respond to all inquiries, including but not limited to inquiries regarding financial records, from its Authorizer and shall consult with its Authorizer regarding inquiries.

Notification is to be made to the Authorizer of any notices of workplace hazards, investigations by outside regulatory agencies, lawsuits, or other formal complaints, within one week of receipt of such notice by the school. Depending on severity of the hazard, immediate notification may be needed.

C. Charter Term

This petition to establish Riversage School is for a term of five years. The requested five-year term would begin on July 1, 2023 and expire June 30, 2028. The charter may be renewed for subsequent terms by the Authorizer. Riversage School must meet the minimum renewal criteria contained in the Education Code Section 47605 to be considered for renewal by its Authorizer.

D. Charter School Revolving Loan Fund

Notwithstanding other provisions of law, a loan may be made directly to a charter school only in the case of a charter school that is incorporated. Riversage School will apply for funding from the Charter School Revolving Loan, in accordance with applicable law. Riversage School understands that loans may be made from money in the Charter School Revolving Loan Fund to a charter school that qualifies to receive funding pursuant to California Education Code Chapter 6 (commencing with section 47630) upon application of a charter school and approval by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. A loan is for use by Riversage school during the period from the date the charter is granted pursuant to California Education Code section 47605 to the end of the fiscal year in which Riversage school first enrolls pupils. Money loaned to a charter school pursuant to this section will be used only to meet the purposes of the charter granted pursuant to California Education Code section 47605.

Riversage School accepts and understands obligations to comply with the California Education Code section 41365 regarding the Charter School Revolving Loan Fund. Commencing with the first fiscal year

following the fiscal year the Riversage School first enrolls pupils, the Controller will deduct from apportionments made to Riversage School, as appropriate, an amount equal to the annual repayment of the amount loaned to Riversage School. Repayment of the full amount will be deducted by the Controller in equal annual amounts over a number of years agreed upon between the loan recipient and the State Department of Education, not to exceed five years for any loan.

E. Food Service Program

Riversage School will offer breakfasts and lunches to all students as per California Education Code (EC) 49501.5. Riversage School will provide meals in accordance with state and federal guidelines for food services. The food program is annually re-evaluated by Riversage School.

F. Financial Plan

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

Please find the following documents in Appendix G:

- A. Five year budget
- B. Budget assumptions
- C. Financial projections for five years of operation

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

Riversage School shall provide reports to the Authorizer as follows, and may provide additional fiscal reports as requested by the Authorizer:

1. By July 1, a preliminary budget for the current fiscal year.
2. By July 1, an annual update required pursuant to Education Code Section 47606.5.
3. By December 15, an interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through October 31. Additionally, on December 15, a copy of the school's annual, independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year shall be delivered to the District, State Controller, State Department of Education and County Superintendent of Schools.
4. By March 15, a second interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through January 31.
5. By September 15, a final unaudited report for the full prior year. The report submitted to the District shall include an annual statement of all the school's receipts and expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.

The Finance and Ops Director and Board Treasurer are responsible for producing monthly financial reports in collaboration with the contracted back office services provider. Implementation of internal controls to ensure fiscal responsibility is the responsibility of the Board. Financial records will be regularly maintained and a financial report prepared for every regular Board meeting. Riversage School

will develop a Local Control Accountability Plan and will adjust budget accounts to match the changes set forth in the LCFF. Riversage School will continue to monitor state and federal funding changes and will adjust budgetary calculations to remain in alignment with these changes.

Riversage School has established strict policies governing internal controls. These policies ensure that the internal control mechanisms address legal compliance, conflicts of interest, signature authorities, government access to records, accounting procedures, cash management, and budget development, financial reporting, property management and procurement. Copies of all financial policies are maintained at the school office.

Attendance Accounting

The school maintains contemporaneous documentation of attendance in a format acceptable to the State. Required reports regarding daily attendance will be completed and submitted to the requesting agencies.

Budget Allocation and Vendor Selection

The Board is responsible for approving annual budgets, with substantial input from the Director of Finance and Operations. The Director of Finance and Operations and Board Treasurer develop the budget proposals.

Potential Users of Financial Information

Financial statements such as a Balance Sheet, Income Statement, and Statement of Cash Flow are prepared regularly for the Governing Board. The financial statements are also available for review as desired by any of the school's stakeholders who want to assess the school's financial condition. Finally, Riversage School submits its annual audited financial statement to the appropriate authorities within the California Department of Education, State Controller's Office, County Superintendent of Schools, and Authorizer as described above.

Insurance

Riversage School shall acquire and finance general liability, workers compensation, and other necessary insurance of the types and in the amounts required for an enterprise of similar purpose and circumstance. Coverage amounts will be based on recommendations provided by the Authorizer and Riversage School's insurer. The Authorizer shall be named as an additional insured on all policies of Riversage School.

G. Facilities

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

Riversage School intends to be located at 12640 Union Mills, Truckee CA 96161 or other permissible location within the District. The Union Mills property includes classrooms, school office space, a playground, and a parking lot. The property was purchased by Friends of Tahoe Truckee Waldorf, a supporting 501(c)(3), in 2019. The process to increase the operating capacity of the CUP is underway, and a team is working on securing an incubation site in case the CUP amendment process for the final site is not completed by the start of the school year 2023.

Once complete, the 40 acre shared campus will include classrooms, small group classrooms and office space. In addition to the classrooms, there are several spaces on campus that allow teachers to extend learning beyond the classroom walls. These include a playground and a variety of gardens.

H. Civil Liability Impact

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

Riversage School is operated as a California nonprofit public benefit corporation. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 23701(d).

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(d), an entity that grants a charter to a charter school operated by or as a non-profit public benefit corporation shall not be liable for the debts or obligations of Riversage School or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors or omissions by Riversage School if the authority has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law. Riversage School shall work diligently to assist the Authorizer in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including monthly meetings, reporting, or other Authorizer -requested protocol to ensure the Authorizer shall not be liable for the operation of Riversage School. Further, Riversage School and the Authorizer shall enter into a memorandum of understanding, wherein Riversage School shall indemnify the Authorizer for the actions of Riversage School under this charter.

Riversage School shall provide for indemnification of its Board, officers, agents, and employees, and the Board will purchase general liability insurance, Board Members and Officers insurance, and fidelity bonding to secure against financial risks.

As stated above, insurance amounts will be determined by recommendation of the Authorizer and Riversage School's insurance company for schools of similar size, location, and student population.

The Authorizer shall be named an additional insured on the general liability insurance of Riversage School. The Riversage School Board will institute appropriate risk management practices as discussed herein, including screening of employees, establishing codes of conduct for students, and dispute resolution.

Hold Harmless / Indemnification Provision

To the fullest extent permitted by law, Riversage School does hereby agree, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend and hold harmless TTUSD, the TTUSD Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses including but not limited to attorney's fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever, arising out of, or relating to acts or omission of acts committed by Sierra Sage and its operation of the Riversage School, and including the acts or omissions of their officers, directors, employees or volunteers. Moreover, Riversage School agrees to indemnify and hold harmless TTUSD for

any contractual liability resulting from third party contracts with the vendors, contractors, partners or sponsors of Sierra Sage and / or Riversage School.

Force Majeure

Neither party shall be liable if the performance of any part or all of this charter petition is prevented, delayed, hindered or otherwise made impracticable or impossible by reason of any strike, flood, riot, fire, explosion, earthquake, act of terror, act of God, sabotage, accident or any other casualty beyond either party's control, and which cannot be overcome by reasonable diligence and without unusual expense