Cecilia A. Massetti, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

8.5

BOARD OF EDUCATION ACTION ITEM

March 13, 2018

Topic:
Consideration Approval of Madera County Independent Academy Charter Renewal

Background:
A charter may be granted pursuant to Section 47607 for a period not to exceed five years. A charter granted by a school district governing board, a county board of education or the state board, may be granted one or more subsequent renewals by that entity. Each renewal shall be for a period of five years.

Madera County Independent Academy (MCIA) is completing its fifth year. At the end of this school year, MCIA initial charter approval will expire. James Sargent will be present to explain the renewal criteria under Education Code 47607 and ask for a five-year renewal period.

Financial Impact:
No impact

Resource:
James Sargent
Chief Career Technical and
Alternative Education Services Officer

Recommendation:
Approval of Madera County Independent Academy charter renewal for a five-year period to expire June 30, 2023.

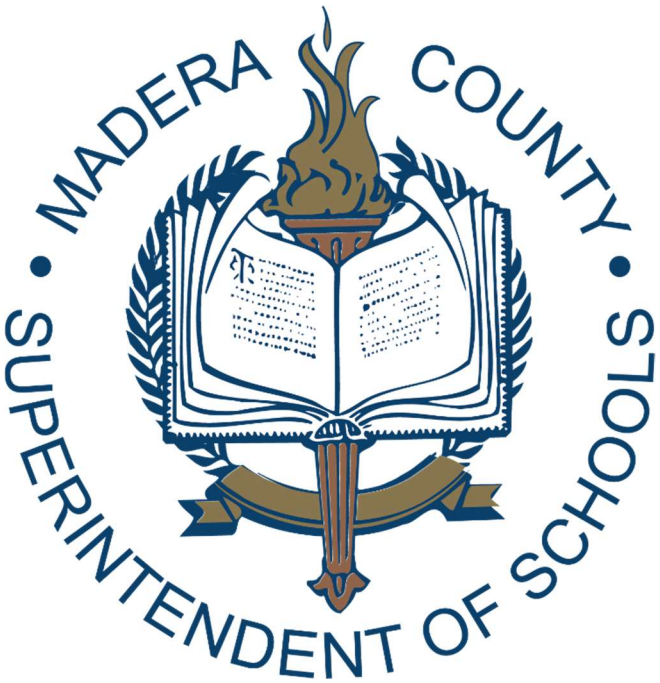
1105 South Madera Avenue - Madera, CA 93637 - (559) 673-6051 - FAX (559) 673-5569
www.maderacoe.k12.ca.us

MADERA COUNTY
INDEPENDENT ACADEMY CHARTER
RENEWAL PETITION

For a renewal term of July 1, 2018 – June 30,

2023 Charter Renewal Petition Submitted

March 13, 2018



Madera County
Superintendent of
Schools

Summary Table of Substantive Changes

Below is a list of the significant changes from the School's previous Charter Renewal Petition, including the most materially revised to include the Local Control Accountability Plan.

Item	Revision
I: Introduction	● Administration and Board members updated ● New academic courses added to support independent study program ● WASC mid-cycle review (2018) completed
II: Educational Philosophy and Program	● EL program has made changes with new ELPAC test and reclassification criteria and improved services for EL students.
III: Measurable Pupil Outcomes	● CAHSEE has been eliminated as a measure for student assessment ● STAR testing has been replaced by Smarter Balanced (SBAC) tests in ELA and Math. In High School, only grade 11 is assessed. ● CELDT test has been replaced by the ELPAC test with a new testing cycle. ● LCAP - Beginning in 2014, all schools are required to submit their goals, annual measurable outcomes and budget expenditures in a Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP).
IV: Governance Structure	● No substantive changes
V: Human Resources and Student Policies	● No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements eliminated several teacher credentialing qualifications. ● AB 1360 passed in 2017 providing new guidance for charter school admissions and suspensions. ● Counselor added to the CAES Division
VII: Reporting & Accountability	● No substantive changes

I. Introduction

Madera County Independent Charter Academy's Mission
The mission of Madera County Independent Academy (MCIA), as stated in the original charter, is to broaden the educational choices and opportunities for students and families who live in Madera County and surrounding areas. The instructional methods will emphasize the whole child and frame its academic components within an artistic, creative, and imaginative context allowing each child's full potential to unfold.

Administration and Leadership
MCIA has strong leadership from the Director/Principal, teacher leaders, counseling staff, and a school psychologist. Current Site Leadership team includes:

- *Leslie Neumeier*, Director
- *Hugo Sanchez*, Teacher on Special Assignment/EL Coordinator/Instructional Coach
- *Cheryl Clauson*, Teacher on Special Assignment/Curriculum

MCIA is governed by the Madera County Superintendent of Schools and Madera County Board of Education.

- *Grant Sturm* - Area 1
- *Sara Wilkins* - Area 2
- *Alfred Soares*, Jr. - Area 3
- *Nancy Prosperi* – Area 4
- *Cathie Bustos* – Area 5
- *Joe Vived* – Area 6
- *Bobby Thatcher* – Area 7

Accomplishments of the Current Term of the Charter, 2013-2018

State Academic Performance
Pursuant to *EC* Section 47607, the most important factor in determining whether to grant a charter renewal is the increase in pupil academic achievement for all groups of pupils served by the charter school.

Since the last charter renewal (2013), there have been changes to the State Accountability System and indicators used to measure charters for academic growth. Most importantly, on March 13, 2014 the Academic Performance Index (API) was suspended when the State Board of Education (SBE) approved not calculating the 2014 Growth and Base Academic

Performance Indexes (APIs) and the 2015 Growth API. In 2014, the California High School Exit Exam was suspended.

On May 13, 2014, the California Department of Education (CDE) provided charter schools guidance for their renewal criteria as a result of the suspension of the API. Because of the changes in the academic accountability system, the State Board of Education informed charter school authorizers that they can consider a range of options in determining increases in pupil academic achievement for charter renewals, including the option in current Education Code 47607 (b)(4)(A) that states;

> "The entity that granted the charter determines that the academic performance of the charter school is at least equal to the academic performance of the public schools that the charter school pupils would otherwise have been required to attend, as well as the academic performance of the schools in the school district in which the charter school is located, considering the composition of the pupil population that is served at the charter school."

This determination is based on:

- Documented and clear and convincing data
- Pupil achievement data from assessments for demographically similar pupil populations in the comparison schools
- Information submitted by the charter school

Over the past three years, MCIA students completed the Smarter Balanced (SBAC) test in English Language Arts and Math. While MCIA is an alternative school that does not qualify for a score on the California State Dashboard, MCIA did use the results of the Smarter Balanced Test to track progress and compare results to schools of similar composition and pupil population demographics in the Central Valley. These scores were reported to the Madera County Superintendent of Schools (MCSOS) and the Madera County Board of Education (MCBE) on December 12, 2017. During the past three years, MCIA has increased performance on both the English Language Arts and Math assessments.

In English Language Arts, MCIA students increased performance at level 2 (Nearly Met Standards) from 32 percent to 42 percent. In Math, MCIA students increased performance at level 2 from 7 percent to 12 percent. Both scores compare favorably to the scores of other alternative schools in the Madera, Fresno and Merced Counties as reported to MCSOS and the MCBE. During that period, English Learners have increased in English Language Arts from only 4 percent at level 2 in 2015 to 9 percent in 2017. Economically disadvantaged students increased from 31 percent on level 2 in 2015 to 42 percent in 2017 in English Language Arts and from 8 percent in 2015 to 11 percent in 2017 in Math.

In English Language Arts, MCIA also saw an increase in student performance at the more difficult task of reaching level 3 (Met Standards). In English Language Arts, MCIA student scores increased from 8 percent at level 3 in 2015 to 11 percent in 2017.

Academic Program Changes

Over the past five years, MCIA has added additional seat time elective classes to improve the academic program and local measures of academic performance. These classes are held once per week in a classroom setting with a teacher and require students to do additional independent work. These classes are taught by various teachers and have been added to assist students with additional elective options, specific course content, and to meet the needs of some California state requirements.

MCIA added a class for English learners that is designed to support the needs of students and to be in compliance with state mandates. This is a class for students who are new to the English language (or have not yet been reclassified as proficient) where they receive instruction that focuses on developing students' English language skills, and will assist them in being successful in school, as well as in the work world.

There are currently Math and Geometry Labs offered to any student that needs additional academic math support. Although the enrollment for these classes has started off low, they have been beneficial for students who are able to attend the class for the weeks they need guidance or for the entire semester. Since this class was started within the current school year, it will take time to measure its effectiveness.

Additional seat-time options for high school students are now offered Advanced Studio Art, Photography A and B, Advanced Leadership, and Financial Literacy A and B. The Financial Literacy course was developed in part to assist students who need to complete their math graduation requirements but wanted an alternative to Geometry, and has become extremely popular with students. Financial Literacy focuses on the knowledge and skills needed to make effective and informed money management decisions. Due to the success of the existing Leadership class, Advanced Leadership was developed. Students hear speakers from a variety of vocational areas, have field trips to various colleges and other local agencies and participate in fundraiser drives for Valley
Children's Hospital and Angels of Grace Foster Family Agency.

In addition to added seat-time courses, new independent study courses are now available to high school students. Some of these courses are Criminal Justice, Ag Science, and Environmental Science.

Most students prefer to complete their work in the traditional manner through textbooks and additional resources, however, for those students who want to transition back to a comprehensive high school, MCIA is offering online courses through Odysseyware. The courses are A-G approved through the California university system. This online academic program has proven to be a very useful tool for students for credit recovery and earning credits for high school graduation.

MCIA has added several resources for Special Education Services. Special Education students that attend MCIA are now able to participate in a Workability Program that can

lead to employment. A career exploration component is included to assist students in finding a career they are interested in obtaining. The Special Education teacher provides assistance to students in preparing for an interview and transportation to the job interview. Since the last WASC visit, MCIA, in conjunction with Career Alternative Education Services counselors, have improved the process to identify students who qualify for Special Education services and provide additional supports.

The new courses are providing students with additional options to gain a well-rounded educational experience. It is extremely important for MCIA to include courses such as these to enhance elective options and support students with course content that they may be struggling with to achieve academic success. The MCIA staff does an effective job of identifying student needs and meeting those needs for the benefit of students.

Graduates

MCIA continues to be a strong option for students to recover credits to graduate from high school. Currently three quarters of the school's population (78%) are juniors or seniors in high school. While MCIA offers the traditional 30 credits per semester for all high school students, many of the students make up credits in order to graduate. MCIA allows credit deficient students to take additional credits per each semester upon teacher recommendation and administration approval.

Over the past four years MCIA has had a strong and consistent graduation cohort of students.

Graduates:	
2016-2017	94
2015-2016	105
2014-2015	79
2013-2014	100

School Climate

MCIA has maintained a positive school climate during the charter period. Based on student surveys in Fall of 2017, 97 percent of students expressed that they feel safe at school and 97 percent of students expressed that they feel respected by staff and teachers.

Fiscal Health

MCIA is financially healthy with strong future prospects for continued growth and stability. Cash reserve ending balance: MCIA has been financially healthy and stable since opening, with positive fund balances and a reserve far in excess of the state minimum.

Audited financials: MCIA has received clean audits each of the five years of the charter

authorization.

WASC: MCIA has received accreditation from the Accrediting Commission for Schools, Western Association of Schools and College. MCIA is currently completing a mid-cycle (3-year) review in March 2018 and will complete the next full review in 2021.

Charter Renewal

Based on these findings, the Madera Independent Study Academy has met the charter renewal standards of Education Code Section 47607(b) to be granted a five-year charter renewal term pursuant to Charter Renewal Standards of Education Code Section 47607(a)(1) and 47607(b) and the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 11966.5(b)(1).

In accordance with California Charter School Law, Madera County Independent Academy petitions the Madera County Superintendent of Schools and the Madera County Board of Education to grant renewal of its K-12 charter for a five-year period from July 1, 2018 until June 30, 2023, and eligible for subsequent renewals.

II. Educational Philosophy and Program

Charter School's Goals

The goal of the Madera County Independent Academy is for all students to be self-motivated, competent, life-long learners, to improve the employability of youth by high school completion, and to encourage post-secondary education. The MCIA staff has worked to make MCIA a place where this goal can be reached.

Target Population – Whom the School is Attempting to Educate

While open to all students, the target population for MCIA continues to be educationally disadvantaged students of grade kindergarten through grade twelve. These students typically have not performed well on other school campuses.

Students are referred to MCIA from surrounding districts for a variety of reasons including but not limited to: behind on credits, need to work full-time, not expected to graduate with class, not functioning well on more traditional campus, and seeking a non-traditional school setting.

MCIA has some students who are court ordered and others that are attending MCIA for their own safety. While this growth is positive, it has resulted in a large number of students who come to MCIA as seniors, yet are a year or more behind in credits. Throughout the 2016-17 school year, 203 seniors were enrolled. Of those seniors, 101 were a year or more behind in credits. These seniors made up 49.7% of our students in the 2016-2017 school year.

Based on the data in the School Accountability Report Card for 2016-17, the MCIA served the following students:

- 379 students were enrolled during the year.

- 89% of the students were high school students, including 78% in grades 11 and 12.
- 94.2% of the students were socioeconomically disadvantaged.
- 21.9% of the students were English Learners
- 3.7% were students with disabilities
- 1.8% of the students were foster youth
- 85% of the students were Hispanic
- 10% of the students were White
- 2.1% of the students were African-American

Student Enrollment

Most of the students that currently enroll at MCIA arrive behind in credits with a plan to recover credits and return to their district of residence. However, when a student meets the criteria to return to their district of residence, many choose to stay at MCIA. Many feel MCIA is a better fit for them personally, academically, and socially. Students seldom go back to their previous school, due to the connections they make with staff, and advantages of the smaller school environment.

MCIA does have a growing number of K-8 grade students, increasing from 21 K-8 grade students to 39 students in the past three years. This increase in students is due to their parents' desire to have their children attend an independent study school, where students are capable of learning while at home and are supervised by the parents. Most of the K-8 grade students' parents are very hands-on and come in with their child so they demonstrate what their child is being taught and receive school work that needs to be completed throughout the week. In addition, the parents are able to communicate directly with the teacher if they have specific questions or concerns about their child's education.

Over the past five years there has been an overall decrease in the enrollment at MCIA. This is due to the fact that there have been other schools that have recently opened in the City of Madera. Furthermore, existing schools have expanded or made changes to their schools to give high school aged students more school options.

Enrollment:	
2016-17	316
2015-16	475
2014-15	408
2013-14	453
2012-13	429

Education Philosophy/How Learning Best Occurs

MCIA was established on the idea that students have a variety of learning styles and that an effective academic program must respond to these differences.

The key elements of the education program at MCIA are designed to meet the needs of all

students, however, the Madera County Independent Academy provides the following systems to ensure that each individual student receives the support needed to be successful:

Support for Underperforming Students

- ELD Class (seat-time class one time a week with direct instruction)
- Algebra Lab (seat-time class one time a week with direct instruction)
- Geometry Lab (seat-time class one time a week with direct instruction)
- Designated area for students to work independently on days other than their assigned day/time with their teacher
- Designated area for students to work independently and/or with an available teacher in content areas that they need additional assistance (tutoring)
- Scheduled student and teacher meetings with administration
- Scheduled student, parent, and teacher meetings with administration

Support for English Learners

MCIA meets all applicable legal requirements for English Learners (EL), including, annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, English Language Development (ELD) and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and on-going training, and reclassification of fluent English proficient students (RFEP). In order to identify and effectively support our EL students, the following steps are in place:

Home Language Survey

MCIA counseling department administers the home language survey upon a student's initial enrollment into MCIA, as part of the enrollment process. Although the majority of students enrolling at MCIA come from Madera Unified School District, the school counselors ensure that all EL students are identified and communicate with home district as needed to verify EL status.

CELDT Testing

All students who indicate that their home language is other than English and have not been reclassified have been given the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) annually until this school year, 2017-2018. As per new requirements, the CELDT will only be given this year as an initial assessment, as the State transitions to the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC). After this school year, the ELPAC will be used as the assessment for EL students and the CELDT will no longer be used.

Reclassification Procedures

The process for reclassifying EL students at MCIA includes multiple criteria to determine the status of a student. Until this year, the CELDT test was an integral component of the reclassification process, but with the start of the ELPAC, the process will be modified to ensure new mandates are followed in the use of ELPAC scores and their meaning. In addition to the ELPAC scores, the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CASPP), English Language Arts

grades, teacher feedback, and parent notification, along with the EL team recommendation will be used for student reclassification.

Strategies for English Learner Instruction and Intervention
Teachers receive professional development in integrating ELD standards in their content areas as a necessary support for EL students, and effective research based strategies are shared as ongoing staff development to ensure that EL students access content. A designated ELD class to provide needed support to students is offered.

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

Services for Students under the IDEIA
Madera County Independent Academy receives Special Education services under the MCSOS SELPA. As such it complies with all state and federal laws related to the provision of special education instruction and related services, and all SELPA policies and procedures, and utilizes appropriate SELPA forms. MCIA does not discriminate against any pupil with a disability in the admissions process or any other aspect of operation. The following services are provided:

a. Prior to enrollment at MCIA, it is determined through the individual education plan (IEP) process that independent study is an appropriate instructional method for each student as delineated in EC Section 51745(c). The appropriateness of a student remaining in the independent study program is reviewed regularly. Students with an IEP are expected to meet regularly with their special education teacher in order to remain enrolled at MCIA.
b. General education teachers are kept apprised of each student's IEP accommodations, modifications and goals to ensure that the appropriate supportsare provided to each student
c. A 504 Plan is developed for each student who qualifies. The plan is reviewed regularly. Each general education is notified their student's 504 Plan so that the expectations outlined in each plan are implemented.

The facilities utilized by MCIA are accessible for all students with disabilities.

III. Measurable Pupil Outcomes and Methods to Measure Pupil Progress Toward Meeting Outcomes

Student Outcomes

Local Assessments - As indicated in Section II, Madera County Independent Academy operates an independent study program and admits many students with a variety of educational needs, and students from diverse educational backgrounds. To meet the needs of the students, the independent study program begins with an assignment to a Personalized Learning Teacher and the creation of a Personal Learning Plan that is based on an assessment of the student's individual strengths and weaknesses. Then during the year, every student is then assessed weekly by the teachers from written class work, tests, portfolios and oral contributions to measure learning and earn academic credits.

State Assessments - MCIA students are required to meet the same testing and academic performance standards established by the regulations for all public school students in California. Over the past five years, however, there have been changes to the testing requirements. The STAR test has been replaced by the Smarter Balanced (SBAC) computer based test of skills in English Language Arts, Math and Science. The test is given to all students grades 3-8, but only to high school students in grade 11. The test to assess English Learner progress has been changed from the CELDT test to the ELPAC but is still given annually to all English Learners. MCIA will use the ELPAC beginning in 2018-19 school year, as required by law to assess and monitor progress of EL students. In 2014, the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) was suspended, and in 2017 officially ended by the California legislature. MCIA students no longer take the CAHSEE, and it is no longer a requirement for graduation.

As described in Section II, MCIA assures that students with disabilities either under the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act or Section 504 are included in State standardized assessment programs with appropriate accommodations and modifications when necessary and appropriate.

LCAP/Dashboard Accountability - Beginning in 2014, with the adoption of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), all schools are required to identify their goals, actions, and measurable performance outcomes in a Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). Outcomes, required by the State in eight priority areas, are reported annually on the California School Dashboard. MCIA has adopted annual LCAP plans and had them adopted by the Board. MCIA has also submitted required local accountability measures to the Board in Fall of 2017 and they have been posted on the California School Dashboard. As an alternative school, the academic SBAC results are not reported on the Dashboard at this time, but school administration and teachers have reviewed the results and have included comparison of the performance of the MCIA students to similar schools in the region.

Student Accountability Report Cards - Additionally, MCIA publishes student results annually through the School Accountability Report Card (SARC). The report includes pertinent facts

and data about the school and is made available to the public as required by law.

The Principal, collaborating with teachers, uses the assessment results to create annual and targeted plans for increased achievement. The entire School takes ownership for implementing the school LCAP, site plans, professional development, measuring progress and ultimately improving student learning. MCIA is currently undergoing a mid-cycle WASC accreditation visit.

Charter School Outcomes That Align with the Eight State Priorities

LCAP Goals aligned to State Priorities Grid

MCIA's Goals address the Eight State Priorities in the following ways:

LCAP Goals 2017-18	Priority 1: Basic Conditions of Learning	Priority 2: Implementation of State Priority	3: Parental involvemen Priority 4:	Pupil achievement	Priority 5: Pupil engagement	Priority 6: School climate	Priority 7: Course access	Priority 8: Other pupil
1. Students will achieve higher levels of learning to prepare them to be college and career ready.	X	X		X			X	
2. MCIA will provide resources and services to improve the social and emotional well-being of each student and provide a safe learningenvironment.	X				X	X		X
3. MCIA will encourage greater stakeholder participation and input by developing meaningfulrelationships with parents andfamilies.			X		X			

Goal 1: Students will achieve higher levels of learning to prepare them to be college and career ready.

Actions:
To ensure that students have the resources and support they need, and teachers are fully prepared deliver the program, MCIA will:

- Provide opportunities for students to complete credits if they are credit deficient
- Provide opportunities for students to explore Career Technical Education (CTE) course through on-line learning platform
- Provide support for EL students

- Ensure collaboration time for teachers in professional development
- Encourage teachers to participate in a range of professional growth opportunities
- Use curriculum that promotes higher levels of learning
- Ensure all students are provided with technology resources
- Provide supports that include counseling services, tutoring, credit recovery and summer school programs
- Recruit and retain appropriate credentialed teachers

Pupil Outcomes:

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Percent of students achieving level 2 or higher on ELA SBAC	32%	35%	41%
Percent of students achieving level 2 or higher on Math SBAC	7%	7%	12%

Goal 2: MCIA will provide resources and services to improve the social and emotional well-being of each student and provide a safe learning environment.

Actions:
To ensure that students have the resources and support they need, and teachers are fully prepared deliver the program, MCIA will:

- Extend learning opportunities for students, including field trips
- Provide students tickets for local transportation
- Offer supplemental support services for pregnant, parenting, homeless and foster youth students
- Coordinate services with behavioral health; drug and alcohol counseling and school psychologist to assure that proper referrals are being made for students in need of additional support.
- Hold two school events to build school pride and belonging
- Provide and maintain a safe learning facility

Pupil Outcomes:

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Suspension Rate	0%	0%	0%
Chronic Absentee Rate	---	---	71%

The Madera County Independent Academy has a positive school culture based on a school climate survey administered in Fall 2017. The survey captured a valid measure of student perception of school safety and connectedness. There were 227 students who completed the survey.

Based on the survey 97 percent of the students surveyed reported feeling safe at school or they do not feel unsafe. In addition, 97 percent of students reported feeling respected by staff and teachers at school. Of students surveyed, 56 percent stated feeling comfortable participating in school events, while 80 percent of students felt their school takes their individual needs into consideration. Seventy-eight percent of students felt teachers set high standards for them, and 91 percent expressed that teachers provided sufficient feedback on their achievement. Specific terms of relevance to school safety and connectedness included factors outside of the school setting, which include emotional needs, substance and alcohol abuse, gang involvement, transportation, and challenging family environments.

Analysis of the data demonstrates that students will continue to benefit from counseling and mentoring services from MCIA and collaborative agencies. Areas of student need include programs for that address substance and alcohol abuse; gang involvement; participation in acts of violence and criminal activity; truancy from school; and emotional wellness concerns. MCIA will continue to partner with collaborative agencies and utilize appropriate staff to address areas of need. In addition, the lack of parent involvement/participation is comparable to the perception students have of their parent's lack of involvement in their schooling. MCIA plans to continue to collaborate and focus on increasing parent participation through outreach services and other efforts to facilitate increased involvement.

Goal 3: MCIA will encourage greater stakeholder participation and input by developing meaningful relationships with parents and families.

Actions:

To ensure that students have the resources and support they need, and teachers are fully Prepared to deliver the program, the MCIA will:

- Provide effective communication with parents with phone calls, home visits, regular progress reports and updated website.
- Parent education and engagement will be accomplished through seminars, open house, and family events.
- MCIA will provide opportunities for parent input through surveys and participation in informal and formal advisory committees.

Outcomes:

MCIA has procedures designed to engage parents/guardians, stakeholders and advocates in

advisory committees. These include holding separate elections for parent/guardian, stakeholder and advocate members for School Site Councils.

Due to the transient nature of the student population, MCIA frequently notifies parent/guardian, stakeholder and advocate groups regarding participation in meetings of advisory committees. Notifications include information shared through Blackboard Connect, letters, personal phone calls, parent meetings, and other school activities. In addition, the MCIA mails parent notification packets with advisory committee information to students' homes on an annual basis, in addition to regular meeting notifications throughout the school year. Furthermore, a parent survey was distributed to all parents in English and Spanish with the option of completing it online or on paper. Arrangements were made for parents to utilize technology when necessary at the individual school sites.

School sites have access to interpretation and translation services to allow parents/guardians to participate fully in educational programs and individual meetings with school staff related to their child's education. This includes full translation of all informational and other notices and documents, in addition to in-person interpretation services provided by classified staff at meetings.

School sites provide trainings or workshops for parents/guardians, stakeholders and advocates that are linked to student learning and/or social-emotional development and growth. The Madera County Superintendent of Schools Career and Alternative Education Services Counseling Division provides informational meetings on varied topics related to students' academic needs and post-secondary plans.

These measures were selected because they accurately demonstrate input from parents/guardians/ stakeholders in decision-making and promotes parental participation in programs in an ongoing basis. The continual nature of the MCIA's measures to promote parent involvement is based upon the transient nature of the student population.

Providing Parents Information about their Child's Progress

MCIA students are informed about their assessment results by the teacher and via report cards at the end of each marking period individually and by class. Students look at their own performance data, set goals, examine outcomes, and develop action plans in response to the data.

Students and parents discuss individual student achievement, progress towards graduation, and performance on state assessments under the direction of the classroom teacher during Conferences. At this time, they also develop, modify, or review their child's Personalized Learning Plan and find out about the progress of their student in all areas – academic, social, and emotional. They also receive tri-annual standards-based report cards, mailed home.

Parents of English Learners also receive mandated communications on reclassification per Title III through annual CELDT testing results. Parents of students with IEPs receive reports according to the plan specified in each IEP.

IV. Governance Structure

Board of Directors

Madera County Independent Academy is governed by the Madera County Board of Education and the Madera County Superintendent of Schools. The Board of Education consists of seven members elected from one of seven areas. The term of office is four years. Except as allowed by the Brown Act, board actions take place in public session to give interested and concerned citizens and groups opportunities to be heard. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 3:30 p.m. in Conference Center Room 5 of the offices of the Madera County Superintendent of Schools, 1105 South Madera Avenue in Madera. General information is available by calling the Madera County Superintendent of Schools at (559) 662-6274.

V. Human Resources and Student Policies

Madera County Independent Academy employs professional, effective, and qualified personnel to serve in administrative, instructional, instructional support, and non-instructional support capacities. MCIA is part of the Madera County Superintendent of Schools and all personnel services and policies are provided and administered by the Human Resources Division of MCSOS.

Staffing

MCIA employs eleven teachers in independent study assignments. In 2017-18, all eleven teachers have a full credential and there are no teachers teaching outside of their subject area of competence. In addition, there were no teacher misassignments and no vacant positions. There are currently 305 students at MCIA with a teacher to student ratio of 28:1.

Professional Development & Support

MCIA is committed to the professional development of all of its team members. Staff meetings at MCIA are held once a week to address identified areas of need and growth. Site team members are provided periodic formal and topical training sessions in a variety of areas. In addition, all team members are encouraged to pursue external professional development opportunities in the form of workshops or additional certifications.

Health and Safety Procedures

MCIA, as part of the Madera County Superintendent of Schools, implements appropriate and comprehensive health and safety procedures and risk management policies (such as immunizations and safety plans) as are required. Currently at MCIA, all students have access to a school counselor, a school psychologist, and nursing services. All foster and homeless youth are supported by a designated counselor and Madera County Foster Youth liaison is housed at MCIA.

Student Admissions Policies and Procedure

MCIA is open to all students. MCIA policies have immediate admission policies for foster youth and homeless youth and all other students are placed on a waiting list on first come first serve basis. These policies comply with AB 1360, passed in 2017, including the fact that preferences do not result in limiting enrollment for pupils with disabilities or disadvantages, and do not require mandatory parental involvement as a condition of acceptance or continued enrollment at the school.

Suspensions and Expulsions

MCIA follows the California Education Code Section 48900, which describes the list of offenses and procedures for suspensions and expulsions. Given the nature of the independent study format, MCIA has not had issues with student behavior that required discipline. During the current term of the charter, for the school years 2012-13 through 2016-17, there were no suspensions or expulsions at MCIA.

Attendance

Attendance at MCIA is based on a weekly meeting with the designated teacher. If a student misses the session, efforts are made to reschedule the meeting. Beginning 2016-17, the State began using Chronic Absenteeism as its indicator on the State Dashboard. A chronic absent student is one that misses more than 10% of the school year. In 2016-17, 71% of MCIA students were designated as chronically absent. With this information MCIA will need to commit to making all efforts to reduce the number of students who are chronically absent.

VI. Reporting and Accountability

Budgets and Cash Flow

Madera County Independent Academy has been financially healthy and stable since opening, with positive fund balances and a reserve far in excess of the state minimum.

Sources of Funds

Nearly 93 percent of all revenues for MCIA come from the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) based on Average Daily Attendance (ADA). MCIA also receives other state and federal funds special populations and specific programs comprising 7 percent of funding.

Use of Funds

Personnel costs including salaries and benefits for classified and certificated employees account for 61 percent of the total expenditures by MCIA. Books and classroom supplies make up just 3 percent of the total cost. Services are 19 percent, which is primarily the cost for accounting and Human Resource services contracted with Madera County Superintendent of Schools and rent. Capital investments, utilities, and maintenance are 17 percent of the total costs.

Financial Reporting

MCIA contracts for accounting services with the Madera County Superintendent of School's Business Services Division. The Assistant Business Manager works with the charter school director to build a draft budget that supports the Local Control Accountability Plan and submits it for approval to the Madera County Board of Education by June 30th each year. This includes enrollment and ADA projections. MCIA does comply with all other financial reports required by Education Code Section 47604.33, and shall provide additional fiscal reports as requested by the County:

1. By July 1, a preliminary budget for the current fiscal year.
2. By July 1, an annual update (LCAP) required pursuant to Education Code Section 47606.5.
3. By December 15, an interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through October 31. MCIA's independent financial audit is completed as part of Madera County Superintendent of Schools annual audit for the preceding year. The report shall be delivered to the State Controller, California Department of Education and County Superintendent of Schools by December 15th of each year.
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 reportsubmitted to the County shall include an annual statement of all the CharterSchool's receipts and expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.

MCIA contracts with the Madera County Superintendent of Schools for business, technology, and human resource services. Madera County Superintendent of Schools will maintain sufficient staff and systems including technology, required to ensure timely reporting necessary to comply with the law and to meet all reasonable inquiries from the County and other authorized reporting agencies.

Insurance

As a legal arm of the Madera County Superintendent of Schools, general liability insurance, worker's compensation, and other necessary insurance for MCIA is part of the annual insurance policy purchased by MCSOS and the cost allocated back to MCIA.

Administrative Services

Financial Services including state reporting and compliance are contracted with the Madera County Superintendent of Schools. All accounting services are provided for by MCSOS.

Facilities

MCIA complies with Education Code Section 47610 by either utilizing facilities that are

compliant with the Field Act or that are compliant with the State Building Code. The facilities shall be approved by the local or state fire marshal for the intended use. MCIA agrees to continue to test sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms at its facilities to ensure that they are maintained in an operable condition at all times.

Independent Fiscal Audit

MCIA's annual audit is completed at the same time as Madera County Superintendent of Schools and reported in the same annual report. The financials have been clean: each year, auditors have rendered an unqualified opinion stating that the financial statements present a fair and accurate picture of MCIA and comply with generally accepted accounting principles. The annual audits of the books and records of MCIA is conducted as required under the Charter Schools Act, Education Code Sections 47605.6(b)(5)(I) and 47605.6(m). The books and records of the MCIA are kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and as required by applicable law, and the audit employs generally accepted accounting procedures. The audits have been and will continue to be conducted in accordance with applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controllers Guide.

The Chief Business & Administrative Services Officer leads the Madera County Board of Education in selecting an independent auditor and overseeing the independent audit for all programs under the Madera County Superintendent of Schools. MCSOS has used and will continue to use an auditor with a CPA and educational institution audit experience, who is approved by the State Controller on its published list as an educational audit provider. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope shall be expanded to include items and processes specified in applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars.

The annual audits are completed within six months of the close of the fiscal year. A copy of the auditor's findings is forwarded to MCSOS, the State Controller, and to the CDE by the 15th of December of each year. If any audit exceptions or deficiencies are identified, the Madera County Superintendent of Schools will review the exception and/or deficiencies, develop a plan to resolve them, and submit a report to California Department of Education proposing how and by when the exceptions and/or deficiencies have been or will be resolved to the satisfaction of CDE. The independent fiscal audit of MCIA is a public record to be provided to the public upon request.

Indirect Funding

As a legal arm of the Madera County Superintendent of Schools, MCIA is considered an indirect charter school. Any funds due MCIA will flow through Madera County Superintendent of Schools and shall be forwarded to the charter school in a timely fashion.

Fee for Oversight

The County may charge for the actual costs of supervisorial oversight of the Charter School not to exceed 1 percent of the charter school's revenue, or the County may charge for the actual costs of supervisorial oversight of the Charter School not to exceed 3 percent if the

Charter School is able to obtain substantially rent free facilities from the County.

VII. Term of Charter Renewal Petition

Madera County Independent Academy's renewal charter shall begin on July 1, 2018 and expire five years thereafter on June 30, 2023. Any material revisions to Charter School's charter shall be made by the mutual agreement of the governing board of the Charter School and the County in accordance with Education Code Section 47607. MCIA may present a petition to renew or materially revise the Charter; the County agrees to respond to such petitions pursuant to the process, criteria and timelines specified in Education Code Section 47605 and applicable provisions of the California Code of Regulations.

VIII. Conclusion

By approving this charter renewal, the County is fulfilling the intent of the Charter Schools Act of 1992 to improve pupil learning; create new professional opportunities for teachers; and provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in education and following the directive of law to encourage the creation of charter schools.

Attachment 1: CAASPP Scores-Comparison to Alternative Schools in Local Area

The academic performance of MCIA was compared to schools in our region that are alternative schools and generally serve students from demographically similar populations. The specific admission requirements and mission of each school are unique from one another but each school is targeted to provide alternative education for many students who have struggled at traditional high schools. The comparison group consists of the following schools.

Madera County Independent Academy (Madera County Superintendent of Schools)
Pioneer Technical Center (Madera County Superintendent of Schools)
Mountain Vista Educational Center (Madera Unified School District)
Furman High Independent Study Program (Madera Unified School District)
Ripperdan Community Day School (Madera Unified School District)
J. E. Young Academic Center-Independent Study (Fresno Unified)
Violet Heinz Educational Academy (Fresno County Superintendent of Schools)
Valley Merced Community School (Merced County Office of Education)
Valley Atwater Community School (Merced County Office of Education)
Valley Los Banos Community School (Merced County Office of Education)
Yosemite High School (Merced Union High School District)

A comparison of scores was done based on three years of data to track growth. Below are the latest 2017 ELA and Math scores for a comparison of current performance. Specific student groups were too small to be reported in many of the schools, but MCIA did track the growth of their student groups over the three-year period. Given the struggles many students have in these alternative programs the study was done to consider both the level 2 (Nearly Met Standards) and the level 3 (Met Standards) cut points. In Math, however, the level 3 (met standards) scores were very low at all schools-and given the fact that very few students met standards the scores did not merit a valid group for comparison.

2017 CAASPP

ELA
Level 2-Nearly Met Standards

Mountain Vista (Madera Unified)	72%
Furman (Madera Unified)	56%
Madera County Independent Academy (MCSOS)	**42%**
J.E. Young (Fresno Unified)	41%
Pioneer Technical Center (MCSOS)	39%
Yosemite (Merced Union High School District)	35%
Valley Merced (Merced County Office of Education)	24%
Valley Los Banos (Merced County Office of Education)	23%
Valley Atwater (Merced County Office of Education)	20%
Violet Heinz (Fresno County Office of Education)	10%
Ripperdan (Madera Unified)	5%

Math
Level 2-Nearly Met Standards

Furman (Madera Unified)	18%
Mountain Vista (Madera Unified)	14%
Madera County Independent Academy (MCSOS)	**12%**
Pioneer Technical Center (MCSOS)	6%
Ripperdan (Madera Unified)	6%
Violet Heinz (Fresno County Office of Education)	3%
J. E. Young (Fresno Unified)	2%
Yosemite (Merced Union High School District)	1%
Valley (Merced County Office of Education)	1%
Valley Atwater (Merced County Office of Education)	0%
Valley Los Banos (Merced County Office of Education)	0%

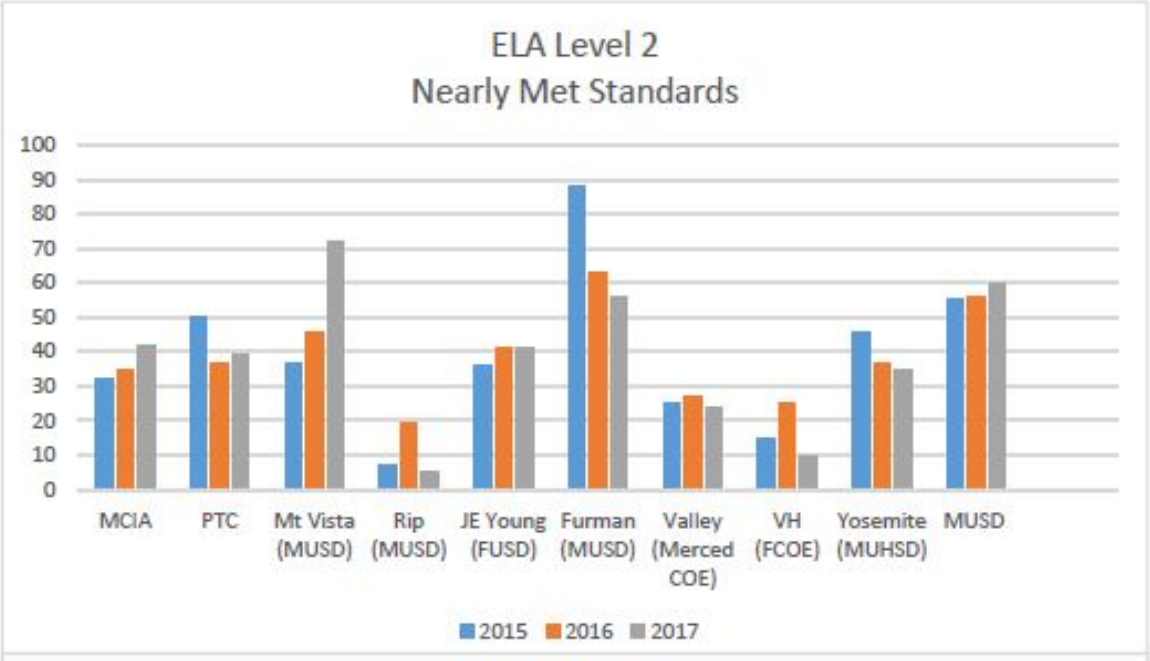
ELA
Level 3- Met
Standards

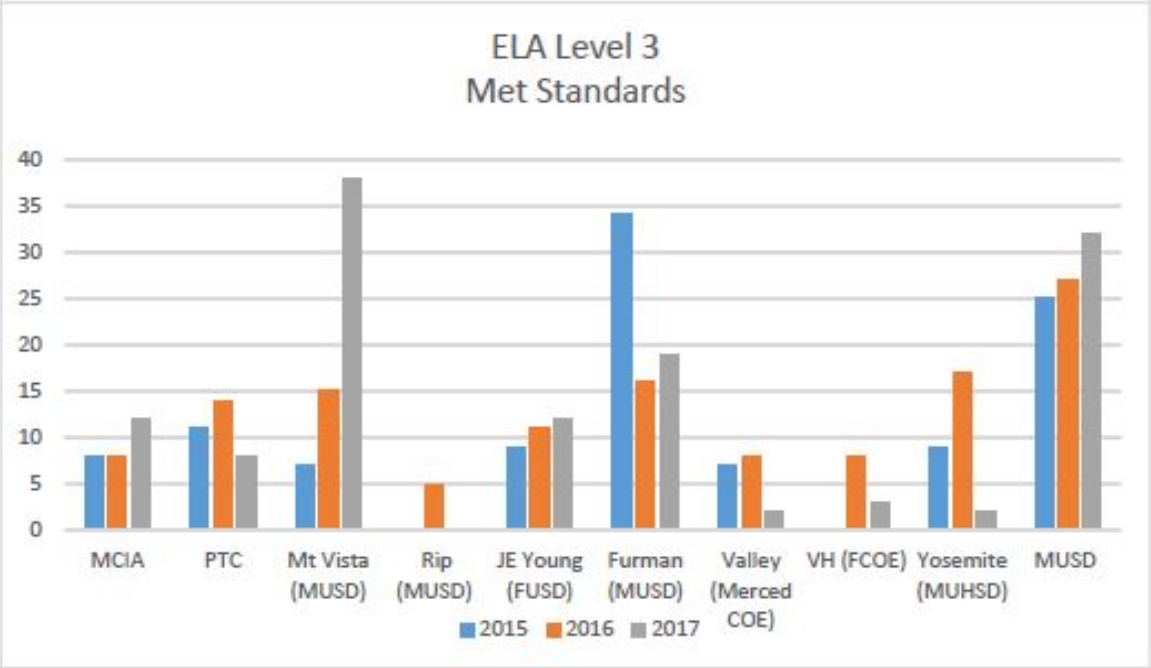
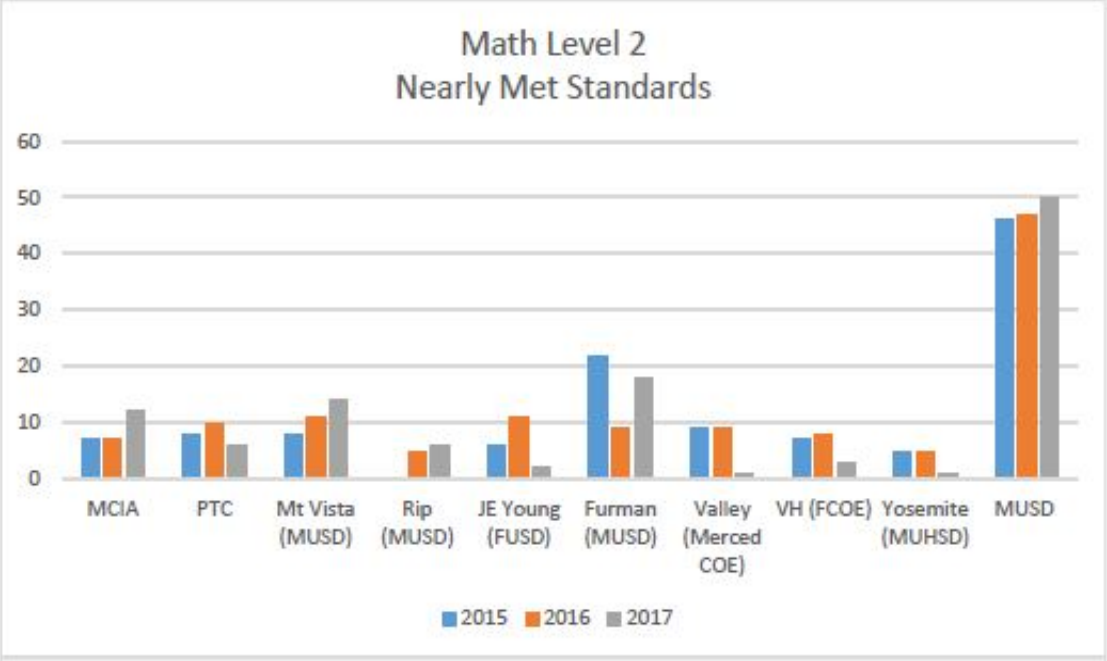
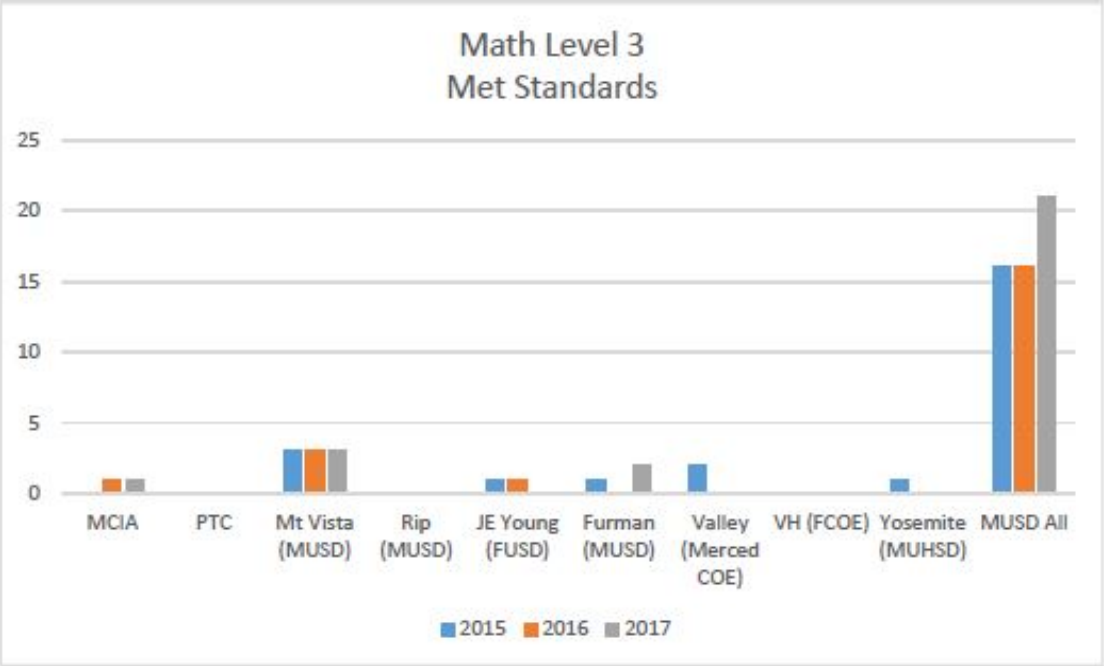
Mountain Vista (Madera Unified)	38%
Furman (Madera Unified)	19%
Madera County Independent Academy (MCSOS)	**12%**
J. E. Young (Fresno Unified)	12%
Pioneer Technical Center (MCSOS)	8%
Valley Atwater (Merced County Office of Education)	4%
Violet Heinz (Fresno County Office of Education)	3%
Valley (Merced County Office of Education)	2%
Yosemite (Merced Union High School District)	2%
Ripperdan (Madera Unified)	0%
Valley Los Banos (Merced County Office of Education)	0%

Attachment 2: CAASPP Scores 2015-2017 Regional Comparison

ELA Scores Comparison

2015-2017





Math Scores Comparison 2015-2017