



Charter Petition

Revised and Resubmitted to:
San Bernardino City Unified School District

TABLE OF CONTENTS

16 REQUIRED ELEMENTS	4
Board Petition Letter	5
Charter School Intent	6
Affirmations and Assurances	7
Founding Group and Background	9
Educational Program	10
Mission/Vision	10
Target Population	11
What it means to be an educated person in the 21st Century	11
How learning best occurs (SOAR’s Philosophy)	12
Attendance	13
Curriculum and Instruction	13
Plan for students who are academically low achieving	16
Plan for students who are academically high achieving	17
Plan for English Language Learners	17
Plan for Special Education including Students with Disabilities	18
Measurable Student Outcomes	19
Methods of Assessment and Data Uses	21
Governance Structure	23
Parent Involvement	27
Human Resources	27
School Employees	27
Professional Development	29
Recruitment	29
Retirement	36
Rights of school district employees	36
Exclusive Public Employer	37
Health and Safety	29
Racial and Ethnic Balance	31

Student Admissions, Attendance, Suspension/Expulsion Policies -----	32
Nondiscrimination Outreach	32
Student admission policies and procedures	32
Suspension/Expulsion	35
Public School Alternatives	36
Audits/Financial Management -----	34
Dispute Resolution -----	37
Closure Protocol -----	38
Impact of the Chartering Agency -----	40
Appendices	

Required by Law (Education Code 47605)¹

ELEMENT 1: Educational Program of the School.....	10
ELEMENT 2: Measurable Pupil Outcomes.....	19
ELEMENT 3: Methods of Assessment of Student Outcomes.....	21
ELEMENT 4: School Governance Structure.....	23
ELEMENT 5: Human Resources.....	27
ELEMENT 6: Health and Safety Procedures.....	29
ELEMENT 7: Racial and Ethnic Balance.....	31
ELEMENT 8: Admission Requirements.....	32
ELEMENT 9: Independent Fiscal Audit.....	34
ELEMENT 10: Suspension and Expulsion Procedures.....	35
ELEMENT 11: Retirement Benefits.....	36
ELEMENT 12: Public School Attendance Alternatives.....	36
ELEMENT 13: Employee Return Rights.....	36
ELEMENT 14: Dispute Resolution Procedures.....	37
ELEMENT 15: Exclusive Public Employer.....	37
ELEMENT 16: Charter School Closure Protocol.....	38

1 This charter is presented in the order and format recommended by the State Board of Education in its approved “Model Application.” As the Model Application presents the statutory elements outside of the order presented within the Charter Schools Act, this list is provided to allow the reader to quickly access the statutory elements.

September 28, 2007

Assistant Superintendent: Narciso Cardona

Board President: Marlin Brown
San Bernardino City Unified School District
777 N. F Street
San Bernardino, CA 92410

Dear Narciso Cardona and President Brown,

A Charter for SOAR Charter Academy is enclosed. The petition contains the signatures of parents and guardians who are meaningfully interested in having their child attend the school. They represent at least 50 percent of the number of pupils that the school anticipates enrolling during the first year of operation. We have also submitted a few letters of support from other community members.

We hereby submit the petition and request that the staff and governing board of SBCUSD review and grant the charter pursuant to the process and timelines specified in Education Code Section 47605.

We have engaged in extensive and productive discussions with the stakeholders involved and believe that we have successfully identified and resolved all relevant concerns and issues. We look forward to developing a charter school and educational program that lead to a positive and lasting partnership between the charter school and district.

Though we have a well-rounded group of individuals assisting in this effort, and many individuals have signed the enclosed petition, I have been selected by the group to act as the Lead Petitioner and will serve as the group's liaison for all communications during the review and approval process. We look forward to the hearing and approval of our charter. We understand that an initial public hearing of this charter petition will be held and that a decision to grant or deny the charter will occur 30 days after submitted to the board as required by the Charters Schools Act. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you or any other board members have any remaining questions or concerns. If at all possible, we would like to meet with you and/or any board members to discuss this proposal further and as necessary to resolve or answer any outstanding questions or concerns prior to the public hearing.

Your partner in education,
Mrs. Trisha Lancaster
Lead Petitioner/Co-founder

Cc: District Superintendent

Charter School Intent and Charter Requirements

Education Code Section 47601 provides as follows:

“It is the intent of the California Legislature, in enacting the Charter Schools Act of 1992, to

provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure, as a method to accomplish **all** of the following:

- (a) Improve pupil learning
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all pupils, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for pupils who are identified as academically low achieving.
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the the learning program at the school site.
- (e) Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available with the public school system.
- (f) Hold the schools established under this part accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes, and provide the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance based accountability systems.
- (g) Provide vigorous competition within the public school system to stimulate continual improvements in all public schools.”

The following provisions of this charter coincide with the requirements of Section 47605 of the Act and are presented in the order provided in the State Board of Education recommended model application format.

Affirmations and Assurances

As the authorized lead petitioner, I, Trisha Lancaster, hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for a California public charter school to be named SOAR Charter Academy to be located within the boundaries of the San Bernardino City Unified School District to be true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that this application does not constitute the conversion of a private school to the status of a public

charter school; and further, I understand that if awarded a charter, the Charter Academy:

- Shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of SOAR Charter Academy for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O)
- Shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Section 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. Education Code Section 476059(c)(1)
- Shall be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. Ed. Code Section 47605(d)(1)
- Shall not charge tuition. Ed. Code Section 47605(d)(1)
- Shall admit all students who wish to attend the Charter Academy, and who submit a timely application, unless the Charter Academy 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 lottery process. Ed. Code Section 47605(d)(2)(A)-(B)
- Shall not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, perceived sexual orientation, home language, or disability. Ed. Code Section 47605(d)(1)
- 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 1974, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Individuals with Disabilities 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. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1(f)(5)(c)
- Shall ensure that teachers in the Charter Academy hold a Commission of Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools are required to hold. As allowed by statute, flexibility will be given to non-core, non-college preparatory teachers. Ed. 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 Ed. Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D)
- If a pupil is expelled or leaves the Charter Academy without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the Charter Academy shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grade or a report card and health information. Ed. Code Section 47605(d)(3)
- Will follow any and all other federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to SOAR Charter Academy including but not limited to:
 - *SOAR Charter Academy shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records

available for audit and inspection.

* SOAR Charter Academy shall on a regular basis get feedback from parents and teachers regarding the Charter Academy's programs.

* SOAR Charter Academy shall comply with any jurisdiction limitations to locations of its facilities.

* SOAR Charter Academy shall comply with all applicable portions of the No Child Left Behind Act.

* SOAR Charter Academy shall comply with the Public Records Act.

* SOAR Charter Academy shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

* SOAR Charter Academy shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum of school days.

Trisha Lancaster

Date

Founding Group and Background

The founding group of SOAR Charter Academy consists of five very dedicated and ambitious educators with over 60 years of combined experience in the classroom who are looking to create an excellent alternative for our community's children. We believe San Bernardino children and parents deserve the very best we can give them and by creating a charter school, we will be able to provide an excellent well-rounded academic and character education curriculum for our students while at the same time, provide opportunities for our students to experience giving back to our school, our neighborhoods,

and our community through service learning projects.

Trisha Lancaster has taught first and second grade for the San Bernardino City Unified for 16 years. In this time, she graduated with honors with her Masters Degree in Education with an emphasis in Reading and her GATE certificate. She has been honored twice with the Arrowhead Reading Teacher of the Year Award. She received the San Bernardino Area Chamber of Commerce Education Award, along with being nominated for the Disney Teacher of the Year. She was a District Mentor/BTSA Mentor for five years in which she assisted 25-30 new teachers in our district and took part in BTSA/CFASST training and staff development. She has been on her school site's leadership team, school site council, and she coordinates a school wide writing celebration program. She has been a lead teacher for the CAPS after school program and taught our Kaleidoscope intensive instruction after school program.

Kristin Kraus has been teaching for 11 years. She started teaching in a juvenile treatment center for high school age students who were classified in special education programs. In this facility, she gave training to her peers on effective ways to complete IEP's, goal writing and their meetings. She taught there for 2 years and then moved to San Bernardino City Unified School District and has been there ever since. In that time she has taught second, third and kindergarten. She has volunteered as a coach for soccer and softball in an inter-district league for elementary schools. She currently holds a certificate of completion to administer and score the California English Language Development Test. She is on her school site's leadership team. She has been a lead teacher for the CAPS after school program.

Cynthia Nunez began working for the SBCUSD in 1995. She started as an instructional aide at Del Rosa Elementary where she assisted teachers in the first and second grades. She then was bumped to Hillside Elementary and assisted teachers in kindergarten and the upper grade levels. In 1998, she received her BA in Liberal Studies from CSUSB. Since then she has taught grades K-4 and has experienced all year round tracks (A-D). She has served as a union rep member for three years and on the Governance School Site Council. She has lead the after school program (CAPS) for over 8 years. She has also been awarded the "Top 100 Teachers Award" and has been nominated for the Crystal Apple Award. She is currently teaching all day kindergarten with an outstanding partner teacher.

Tammi Fort has been working with and teaching children for 20 years. She taught children ages 2-4 in a variety of private preschools as well as the San Bernardino County Head Start State Preschool Program. Tammi has taught kindergarten and second grade for the San Bernardino City Unified School District for the past 7 years. She received her Bachelors Degree in Child Development in which she was given departmental honors, followed by a Masters Degree in education with an emphasis on curriculum. She developed a comprehension and vocabulary assessment program to supplement our Houghton Mifflin language arts adoption.

Susan Dryden received her Bachelor's Degree in Liberal Studies from CSUSB and has been teaching for 14 years in San Bernardino City Unified School District. During her 14 years, she has taught both 1st and 2nd grades. The experience of teaching these two grade levels has given her a strong foundation for teaching young readers the skills needed in becoming proficient readers. Along with her clear teaching credential, Susan holds a GATE certificate and has completed the AB2913 training (CLAD equivalency). She has put in many volunteer hours within the community with Little League and her involvement with S.O.S. Read, a charity geared towards helping young mothers read to their children. She has played many important roles at her site including; member of the school's leadership team, member of school site council, reader for the school's author program, lead teacher in the after school program, and teacher for the intensive instruction Kaleidoscope program.

ELEMENT 1: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

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

Mission

SOAR Charter Academy's mission is to provide a dynamic standards-based education for every child in our diverse community using an integrated curriculum stressing academic excellence and character development. Our school believes in educating the whole child and preparing them to be outstanding citizens in our community.

Vision

SOAR's vision of providing an exemplary and well-rounded education will be accomplished by integrating the academic and social curriculum and using an innovative instructional schedule. Our program also will require that every student apply what they learn in character education in a variety of community service projects. Our emphasis on the whole child will produce students that not only excel beyond the state's academic standards but become well-rounded, creative, responsible, critical thinkers who will be prepared to make a difference in the 21st Century. SOAR's program is based on the belief that education is a shared responsibility between students, faculty, parents, and the community.

Target Population

SOAR Charter Academy shall enroll approximately 160 students in grades K-3 during its first year of operation, and will increase by one grade level a year by adding approximately 40-50 students a year until we reach grade 6. When at full capacity, SOAR expects to serve approximately 310 students in grades K-6. See Appendices for Proposed Timeline for Implementation and Estimated Enrollment.

SOAR Charter Academy will generally reflect the enrollment of San Bernardino City Unified School District. SOAR shall seek to enroll a population that is reflective of the racial and ethnic balance of the District, and shall admit all students (including in district and

surrounding districts) who wish to attend subject to capacity. SOAR will not provide transportation to or from the school but is dedicated to encouraging its parents to assist one another with transportation through the use of carpooling and volunteerism. Given that 79% of SBCUSD population is eligible for free/reduced priced meals, it is expected that SOAR will likewise serve a large number of students eligible for a lunch program. SBCUSD has a significant English Language Learner population. 43% have another language, other than English, as their primary language. As such, SOAR Charter Academy will address the linguistic needs of English Language Learners by using strategies that are proven to increase student's English language development. (Refer to the Plan for English Language Learners on page 17)

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

Founders of SOAR Charter Academy believe students must possess two kinds of literacy in the 21st century; academic and social. These two kinds of literacy will enable students to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners. We also recognize that it has become important to learn how to live in a dynamically changing world. Our information-rich global society requires our students to be exposed to and comfortable with technology as a powerful tool in communication, learning, and 21st century careers.

Students not only need a strong academic foundation in reading, writing, math, science, social studies, technology, and the arts, but also solid skills in critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, communication, leadership, and cooperation. It is crucial to understand who they are in light of others and develop character traits that will lead them, as well as others in bettering our diverse community. They will need critical thinking skills to search for solutions to a wide variety of problems. They will need to be risk-takers and effective communicators to connect with and contribute to their community and society.

Educated people in the 21st century need to be mentally and physically well-rounded, with a knowledge of their individual worth, as well as, the worth of others. They need to understand the value of participating in the community around them in order for it to improve. 21st century students will need to be leaders who demonstrate patriotism, responsibility, honesty, courage, integrity, respect, kindness, and persistence. They need to realize their life affects the lives of others around them. SOAR will prepare students to excel in this challenging world by not only providing an exemplary education that goes beyond a typical academic program but a well-rounded education that focuses on patriotism, self-esteem, character building, and leadership. Teachers will be dedicated to teaching and having students participate in all subjects areas. Students will also be empowered by the use of technology as a powerful tool in their education and future lives.

How Learning Best Occurs (SOAR's Philosophy)

SOAR Charter Academy staff believes that learning to be a self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learner best occurs when these 12 elements are in place:

1. The school instills a love of learning in every child.
2. Students are assured a safe, peaceful, and respectful learning environment with a low teacher to student ratio that enables every student's needs to be met by their

- teachers, parents, and school community.
3. The expectation is that **every** learner will reach their highest potential. Students will be aware of the expectations, the standards, and what the steps are to ensure they reach their potential.
 4. Learning is differentiated for individual students based on their needs.
 5. Students are expected to apply their academic and social learning to meaningful real-life activities and situations.
 6. Students are given opportunities in science, social studies, technology, and the arts to show independence, critical thinking, collaboration, reflection, and creativity.
 7. Students are actively engaged in a rigorous and challenging standards-based curriculum that is research based.
 8. Teachers are dedicated to use assessment and program evaluation data to collaboratively plan and improve all aspects of educating students.
 9. There is a strong, consistent discipline plan and structure in place which is used by all staff.
 10. Teachers, parents, students, and staff value character development.
 11. Children are surrounded by nurturing people and receive encouragement daily from teachers, peers, and family members that all students can and will learn.
 12. Parents and community are involved in educating children through both direct and indirect methods.

We believe the combination of small learning communities, a safe environment, high academic and social expectations, a rigorous well-rounded curriculum, real life applications, teacher dedication, character education, and strong family involvement, will create an environment of success in which the struggling, as well as proficient learner will exceed expectations.

Attendance

Anticipated Opening Enrollment Per Grade Level: *The number of classes for each grade level are what we are anticipating. It is possible to add 20% based on demand for entrance into our Academy.*

Grade	Proposed Class Size	# of classes	Annual Instructional Minutes	# of School Days
Kindergarten	20	2	23,700/ 51,390	180
1st Grade	20	2	58,714	180
2nd Grade	20	2	58,714	180
3rd Grade	20	2	58,714	180

Soar’s academic calendar shall commence before September 30 in accordance with Education Code 47652 and includes no less than 175 instructional days. School hours will be 8:00am-2:45pm. We will be working on a 5/4 school week, in which there will be no school every other Monday. One of these Mondays a month will be used for staff development/planning. SOAR’s parents are responsible for sending their children to school and providing an explanation for absences. Our Calendar and Three Year Staff Development Plan are listed in the appendices for further review.

Curriculum and Instruction

SOAR is a site based K-3 charter school intending to grow one grade level a year until we enroll K-6 students. Students in kindergarten through grade 6 will receive well-rounded instruction that encourages the development of academic, social, and creative skills with a focus on character development. All subject areas will be taught in all grade levels. Children have a natural curiosity that will be fostered in a supportive, positive environment which permits interaction and exploration, as well as, receiving direct, structured lessons to help each student reach their potential. Each grade will build on the existing interests, skills, and motivations of the learner until the understanding and mastery of academic standards are achieved. Students will use technology on a regular basis. Regular goal setting, shared decision-making, and assessment by all three participating groups; teacher, parents, and child, will ensure that learning is relevant, ongoing, and maximized. Teachers will do ongoing assessments and use the data to plan collaboratively. By using the same structure and academic language from grade to grade, students will make connections from content to content and year to year. Students and parents will know what to expect because routines will be the same school wide.

Both kindergarten classes will begin the school year on a half day schedule dismissing at 11:30am. A lunch time will be given from 11:30-12:00pm for kindergarten. As the year progresses, students will be assessed and one of the classes will become a full day program based on a readiness and social development rubric. The full day program in kindergarten allows the teacher to focus on the needs of the students that are ready to move. In order for students in kindergarten to take part in the full day program parents and teachers will sign a contract that states extra support will be given at home to ensure that the child is still enjoying school and the student’s all around development is maturing at the same rate as their academic development.

The founders of SOAR are all teachers that recognize that the traditional approach to instruction and even tightening up on the traditional approach is not working for **all** children. We believe that the combination of a **strong academic curriculum, social curriculum, and innovative instructional schedule** in a small learning community will be a more effective approach in reaching all learners. Our approach to teaching is based on a variety of research based approaches as described below.

Academic Curriculum

All core curriculum will be California standards-based. Students will be expected to meet or exceed grade level standards in reading, writing, speaking, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology. Technology will be a focus for teachers, parents, and students in all facets of teaching and learning. Our interactive web site is family and community friendly and will be updated regularly. The following chart outlines each content area and the curriculum that may be used to meet the standards.

subject	curriculum/design	publisher / textbook /materials
language arts/ character education	Voices	Zaner-Bloser California Framework/Standards
writing	standards based/ rubric scored	teacher-made to go along with curriculum/theme California Framework/Standards
speaking	oral presentations/ community service projects	California Framework/Standards
math	Progress in Mathematics	Sadlier-Oxford California Framework/Standards
science	units of study planned according to standards	California Framework/Standards Various publishers
social studies	units of study planned according to standards	California Framework/Standards Various publishers
visual and performing arts	Arts Attack class and school performances	California Framework/Standards
technology		
physical education		California Framework/Standards

Our school's belief that all students can and will learn is also assumed by Constructive education theorists and the Integrated Thematic Instructional (ITI) approach developed by Susan Kovalik. Constructive education is based on the belief that learning occurs as learners are involved in a process of making meaning, rather than passively receiving information. Based on this theory, project-based hands-on learning will occur in all grade levels to encourage students to think for themselves and express and follow-through with their ideas. ITI combines current brain research, effective teaching strategies, and integrated curriculum development. The main tenet of ITI is that learning best occurs when

eight elements are present:

1. absence of threat
2. meaningful content
3. choices
4. adequate time
5. enriched environment
6. collaboration
7. immediate feedback
8. mastery

ITI research shows that by making connections across subject areas and grade levels using integrated instruction, teachers are able to teach more and students learn more effectively because the brain naturally searches for patterns and interconnections. This is evidence that using character development themes to make connections across the curriculum and grade levels will be a successful way to meet our academic and social goals. At SOAR we are committed to combining the best practices described in current and past research, with what we know from our combined experience as educators, to ensure our children are learning and meeting or exceeding our federal, state, and school expectations.

Integrated Social Curriculum

Using a comprehensive character education program as a means to integrate our curriculum has two positive effects. First it creates natural patterns and interconnections that children search for when learning new information. Second, it creates lifelong learners that will be equipped with two kinds of literacy necessary in the 21st century- the ability to read, write, speak, and calculate with clarity and precision and the character and ability to participate passionately and responsibly in the life of the community. Dedication to both areas of literacy will create people that will ultimately change our community, something that everyone agrees is an important goal for San Bernardino. A social curriculum that links academic success, behavior, and character development has been scientifically proven to improve academic progress and behavior. We have budgeted for a literacy program by Zaner-Bloser that has been written using character development traits as units. Character education is integrated into every aspect of language arts and other curricular areas. These traits will create a school-wide, character education theme that will pull together the Academy as a community of learners. Every 4-6 weeks, an important concept of character development will be studied. Grade level standards will be taught while students also practice and apply skills in real life situations through community service projects (see appendix for list of possible community projects).

Life skills are an empowering part of the Integrated Thematic Instructional approach as well. By focusing on character education across all grade levels, our students will have a common ground within our school culture to learn, discuss, and apply trustworthiness, integrity, patriotism, honesty, self-discipline, responsibility, respect, and kindness. We will aim to teach children that these traits are life skills and social skills that they will need to have at every age.

Innovative Instructional Schedule

Our teachers also know and understand that all children learn differently and at different paces. In his research, Larry Lezotte discusses restructuring typical classroom setting into “**achievement-centered groups.**” SOAR will use a creative schedule that will allow the students to move up and down the levels of standards in math and language arts depending on assessments and the students’ individual needs. We will put this into practice around a common schedule in which both classes in every grade level will teach the same core subject at the same time. As a result, students will be able to move to a higher or lower standard level depending on achievement and pacing needed by the learner. These groupings will be flexible and students will not be required to spend an entire school year at one level before moving to a higher standard level. This allows for a deeper understanding of concepts being taught and student can advance at a more rapid pace. This also creates a fluid atmosphere in which students can receive more instruction in an area of need and then move on. This differentiation will allow students’ needs to be met. Lezotte states, “If a school was to organize itself to take those students who didn’t learn the lesson the first go-around and get them back through for one loop of reteaching, they could anticipate about a 25 percent bump up in student achievement.” (1999)

Plan for students who are academically low achieving

Students who do not meet state standards for their age/grade level as identified by the teacher or referred by the parent due to low assessment results will be entered into our Success Team Achieving Results (STAR) process. This school wide process involves identifying low-performing students, meeting with parents and teachers, implementing various research-based interventions, and monitoring the response to interventions and the progress to overcome the student’s academic or social concerns. As one possible intervention, students will be able to move down a level in our achievement level groups to meet a specific need. Students will be referred to a District school psychologist for academic testing through the school district if the STAR process determines that various interventions have not been successful. Below is a list of possible interventions that may be recommended:

- after-school intervention/tutoring classes
- cross-age tutoring
- parent volunteers for one to one support
- parent nights to train parents in how to help their struggling student
- small group and one-on-one instruction from the teacher
- intensive mini-lessons
- instructional software
- parent workshops
- list of resources for tutoring services and local tutors in the community
- change in achievement-level group (Students will move up or down depending on ability and area of concern.)

SOAR believes that all children can learn and we will continually seek out additional solutions for students who are academically low-achieving, including instructional technology, home-to-school connections, tutoring, differentiated instruction, special

education, and other strategies.

Plan for students who are academically high achieving

High achieving students will be challenged through differentiation in their individual gifted area/s. A student does not have to be designated GATE to work above his/her standard level. Due to the achievement-level groups, high achievers will be able to work at higher standards with more in depth instruction. A student's instructional level in a content area will be based on, and accelerated to a higher standard level as his/her assignments and assessments demonstrate mastery of current standards. A rich well-rounded project-based curriculum will encourage all students to express what they've learned in a variety of means. Two founders have their GATE certificate and have been well-trained in differentiation of curriculum. All students at SOAR Charter Academy will be treated as high achievers.

Plan for English Language Learners

SOAR will meet all applicable State and Federal requirements for English Learners as it pertains to language survey cards, annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, teacher qualifications, English Language Development instruction, reclassification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing requirements. Our program is designed to provide EL students with the instruction and support necessary to break down language barriers, and master the English language and academic curriculum, thus assuring equal opportunities and access for them to succeed academically and socially. Voices reading program by Zaner-Bloser addresses English Language learners through a scope and sequence of ELL skills, a Language Support Teacher Edition with scaffolded activities, and Language Support Readers for every leveled reader for differentiated instruction. Vocabulary is highly stressed throughout this program and EL support has even more tips on how to support these learners. All our teachers will be trained in English Language Development standards, SDAIE strategies, instruction to accommodate all modalities, and other effective research based techniques that address English Learners needs during our staff development. These strategies and techniques will be used daily to meet the needs of all our students through the instructional schedule used for differentiation.

- Language Survey Cards- SOAR will administer the home language survey upon a student's official enrollment into the Charter Academy.
- CELDT Testing- All students who indicate that their home language is other than English will be CELDT tested by a trained teacher within thirty days of initial enrollment and at least annually thereafter between July 1 and October 31 until redesignated as fluent English proficient. The CELDT shall be used to fulfill the requirements under No Child Left Behind Act for annual English proficiency testing.
- ELD Instruction- Teachers will be trained or have been trained in Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) techniques to meet the needs of English language learners. These strategies emphasize comprehensible input, including the use of visuals, realia, and hands on learning, which will help make concepts accessible to English learners. EL students at lower proficiency levels

who have a harder time accessing the core curriculum will receive it through the preview/review method during daily differentiation. Our teachers will provide EL students with the instruction and support necessary to break down language barriers, and master the English language and academic curriculum, thus assuring equal opportunities to succeed academically. See Appendix for list of SDAIE Strategies to be Implemented

Plan for Special Education Including Children with Disabilities

SOAR Charter Academy shall not deny nor discourage any student from enrollment due to a disability or due to the school's concerns about its ability to provide appropriate services. SOAR will comply with all provisions of federal law and implementing regulations related to the rights of disabled students and their parents (IDEIA). We will not present any physical barriers that would limit an eligible student's full participation in the educational program offered by our school. SOAR Charter Academy shall remain, by default, a public school of SBCUSD for purposes of Special Education purposes pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b). We are requesting our Special Education program to be included in the District's SELPA and our students would receive the same level of support provided to other District students. An annual meeting between SOAR and SBCUSD to review special education policies, procedures, protocols, and forms of SBCUSD and the SELPA, will ensure that SOAR and SBCUSD have an ongoing mutual understanding of SBCUSD protocol and will facilitate ongoing compliance. As long as SOAR functions as a public school of SBCUSD solely for purposes of providing special education services, then we would anticipate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would be developed between SOAR and SBCUSD which spells out in detail the responsibilities for provision of special education services and the manner in which special education funding will flow to the students of SOAR. We envision an ideal relationship for special education to follow the language and intent of Education Code Section 47646 and 20 U.S.C. 1413 as follows:

- SBCUSD retains the special education funds for the students of SOAR;
- SBCUSD provides services to the students of SOAR in the same manner as other students of SBCUSD;
- SOAR pays SBCUSD, a pro-rata share of the overall SBCUSD encroachment for special education.

ELEMENT 2: MEASURABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

Governing Law: "The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. "Pupil outcomes," for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school's educational program." California Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(B)

SOAR shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessment required, pursuant to Education Code Section 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools.

Students will be held responsible for producing quality work with personal integrity and will be able to cooperate and collaborate with others to solve problems. The goals and objectives of the school will reflect the California State Standards and the State Frameworks. We will participate in the STAR testing programs and strive to meet the API growth targets outlined by the state. SOAR will also meet the Adequate Yearly Progress as defined by No Child Left Behind. We understand as a charter public school, if we take Title One funds, the school is required by the federal government to meet the AYP criteria. As represented in the table on page 20, the school will have academic as well as social goals to achieve. The curriculum of SOAR will meet state content standards. These are the measurable standards to which our students will be held accountable as defined in The Charter Schools Act (Education code Section 47605 (b)(5)(B)). SOAR acknowledges that exit outcomes and performance goals may need to be modified over time. The following chart outlines the outcomes and the assessments which will be used as the guide for the evaluation of student learning.

Measurable Outcomes	Assessments/Measure	Timeline
Aim to move 5 percent of the students up one level each year on their CSTs in math and reading	STAR testing teacher/program assessments	STAR testing administered in the spring to all 2 nd -6 th grade students.
Achieve our API and AYP (first year baseline).	STAR assessments NCLB	Spring testing.
To have 100 percent of the school staff and students implement at least one community service project.	Public presentation of project.	Projects completed throughout the school year.
To reduce the number of suspensions and referrals by 10 percent each year.	Discipline records.	End of the school year. Performance Report.
Students will improve their leadership skills.	Leadership/Character Education program student council school discipline records teacher observations parent evaluations	ongoing
97 percent average daily attendance.	School attendance reports	ongoing
To accelerate 10 percent of the student population by working above their current grade level in language arts and/or math.	Enrollment records Teacher and program assessments Student work Level of placement in achievement level groups	ongoing
To improve 100% our EL students CELDT scores one level each year	CELDT	Within 30 days of enrollment or by October 31 each year.
To increase parent involvement in their child's school.	Parent/Volunteer Sign In Parent Surveys Involvement in PTO, school board, and school activities,	ongoing
To show parent satisfaction with school programs.	Parent Surveys	2 times a year

SOAR Charter Academy has also determined the following school wide goals:

1. Create parental involvement in which the majority of the parents attend parent meetings and conferences.
2. Retain highly qualified staff members who demonstrate exemplary professional practice and maintain a low staff turn over rate.
3. Manage the financial revenue in an efficient and capable manner.

4. Engage in positive public relations resulting in businesses partnering with the school for fiscal and moral support. See Letters of Support in Appendices
5. Develop an intervention and enrichment program based on student needs.
6. Maintain accurate attendance records and a high attendance percentage.
7. Develop and maintain a school wide reading incentive program.
8. School service will be supported, as parents and students will be motivated to contribute their time, energies, and talents to improve the quality of life at SOAR Charter Academy and our surrounding communities.
9. Community service projects will involve students, teachers, and parents. See Appendices
10. Parent satisfaction surveys will be given, collected, and analyzed twice a school year. See Appendices

ELEMENT 3: METHODS OF ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT OUTCOMES

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

SOAR recognizes that assessment is a critical element for student success and teacher planning. Assessment data will provide the necessary information to create strategic instructional programs to meet student needs; therefore, student assessment will concentrate on the STAR testing administered in the spring, and various formative and summative assessments done at least 3 times during the year. We will also use authentic assessments to measure standards' mastery and social development. We recognize the importance of both formative assessments which will allow for adjustment to educational strategies, as well as, summative to evaluate effectiveness of our programs. The following list provides some formative and summative assessments that will be used.

- Student work samples.
- Collaborative/Cooperative group opportunities will allow students and teachers to monitor and evaluate their progress, set priorities and goals, create options, and enable students to take responsibility for pursuing their goals.
- Assessments given regularly to determine placement and mastery of standards in math, language and reading.
- State mandated standardized tests.
- Frequent teacher and publisher developed assessments to guide instruction.
- Anecdotal records such as running records to track student reading performance. These notes will highlight particular qualities and strengths that students show during school instruction and activities. Many of these records will be placed in the student's portfolio.
- Student conduct records in the student data base.
- Parent surveys collected each fall and spring.
- CELDT given to all English Learners at the beginning of each school year.
- Official reports, such as progress reports and report cards, will document students' learning progress.

Use and Reporting of Data

- Data will be used for continued improvement. Teachers will use the collection of data for analysis of student achievement on a continuous basis. Reports will help determine which students need more aggressive support, acceleration, intervention, remediation, and possible referral to the STAR (Success Team Achieving Results) process (See Plan for students who are academically low achieving). Assessment and data will drive our instruction.
- Data will be used for reporting pupil achievement. In addition to formal assessments, teachers will use classroom-based observations and assessments as part of the grading process. Students will receive a standards-based report card at three intervals throughout the school year during parent conferences. The report will also include character education progress grades and attendance data. Parents will receive progress reports twice during each reporting period. SOAR is currently researching and budgeting for a web-based Student Information System and online reporting device.
- Data will be used for the School Accountability Report Card (SARC). The final use of the data will be to create a School Accountability Report Card in order to report school performance to the community. The SARC will be produced on a yearly basis.
- Data will be used to create an annual performance report for the charter school authorizer that will include:
 1. summary data showing student and school-wide progress toward goals
 2. summary of major decisions and policies set forth by SOAR's Board of Directors during the year
 3. data on the parental involvement in School's Governance and other facets of the school
 4. data regarding the number of staff working at the school and their qualifications
 5. a copy of the school's health and safety policies and any major changes to those policies during the year
 6. a comprehensive view of SOAR's admission practices during the year. This will include the number of students enrolled, students on the waiting list, and the suspensions and expulsions.
 7. a parent/teacher satisfaction survey
 8. any other information regarding the educational program, the administrative, legal, and governance operations of SOAR relative to compliance with the terms of the charter.

SOAR and SBCUSD Board of Education will jointly develop any additional content, evaluation criteria, timelines and process for the annual performance report. SOAR agrees to and submits to the right of the District to make random visits and inspections in order to carry out its statutorily required oversight pursuant to Education Code Section 47607. Also pursuant to Education Code Section 47604.3 SOAR shall promptly respond to all reasonable inquiries including, but not limited to inquiries regarding its financial records

from SBCUSD, the County Office of Education, and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

SOAR will use the data in the performance report to assess and improve upon its educational programs as deemed necessary. This performance report shall be made available to the public.

ELEMENT 4: SCHOOL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

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

Legal Status

SOAR has constituted itself as a California non-profit public benefit corporation pursuant to California law. The School shall be governed pursuant to its Corporate By-laws adopted by the Board of Directors, as subsequently amended from time to time, which shall be maintained to be consistent with this charter. The Articles of Incorporation and Corporate By-laws are provided in the Appendix.

The School shall operate autonomously from the District, with the exception of the contracted services as negotiated between the District and the School. Pursuant to the Educational Code Section 47604 (c), the District shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of the School, operation as a California non-profit benefit corporation, or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the charter school as long as the district has complied with all oversight responsibilities by law.

SOAR Board of Directors

The Charter School will be governed by a corporate Board of Directors (“Board” or “Board of Directors”) in accordance with its adopted corporate by-laws, which shall be consistent with the terms of this charter. Parent and community members will be involved in the decision making process. The initial board members will be appointed by the Founding Board and will be provided trained in effective board practices.

Board Member-title	Expertise	Representing Group
		parent
		parent
Michael-Ann Barner	Operation Phoenix Fundraising/Grantwriting MBA	community member
		community member
Trisha Lancaster	Teacher-curriculum and instruction Master's degree in Education	Executive Director/ employee founding board member
Susan Dryden	Teaching/education	Teacher/employee District/granting agency

Initial Board as of 9/28/07

Election of Parent Board Members

Parent Board members must be a current parent of a student enrolled in SOAR and will be elected by a simple majority vote of all parents/ guardians of the current students of the Charter School. The parent members of the Board cannot be an employee of the Charter School.

Election of Community Members

SOAR shall seek community members with expertise in areas critical to school success including but not limited to education, school finance, fundraising, facilities, government, business, and legal. Community members may be nominated by SOAR Board members, parents, or employees, and shall be elected by a simple majority vote of all parents/guardians of the current students of the Charter School and employees of the Charter School.

Board Member Terms and Elections

Board members shall serve a term of two years and until his or her successor is elected and qualifies. No board member may serve more than three consecutive terms. After serving three consecutive terms, an individual must take one year off before running for election again. Board elections will be held in March to fill vacant seats. Special elections will be called whenever necessary to fill a mid-term vacancy. The terms of office shall be staggered, such that, each year, approximately half of the Directors shall remain on the Board from the previous year.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors for the Charter School will meet regularly, at least once a month

and in accordance with the Brown Act. The Board of Directors is fully responsible for the operation of the School including but not limited to the following:

- Upholding the mission and vision of the school.
- Overseeing the implementation of the charter.
- Providing notice and holding meetings in compliance with the Brown Act.
- Creating external or subcommittees as needed, including but not limited to a nominating committee and an audit committee.
- Ensuring compliance with applicable law.
- Approving and monitoring the implementation of all operational policies.
- Approving and monitoring the SOAR annual budget and budget revisions.
- Monitoring the school's fiscal practices.
- Act as a fiscal agent, including receipt of funds for the operation of the School, solicitation, and receipt of grants and donations.
- Approving and monitoring service contracts with outside service providers, such as EdTec which will be a contracted for fiscal services.
- Actively pursue fundraising on an ongoing basis, with the objective of raising operating and capital funds.
- Solicit and receive grants and donations consistent with the Mission of SOAR Charter Academy.
- Approving and monitoring the instructional programs and materials.
- Approving personnel policies, and overseeing and approving all hiring, promotion, discipline and dismissal of school personnel upon recommendation of the Executive Director.
- Hiring, supervising, evaluating, disciplining, and dismissing of the Executive Director.
- Approving and monitoring management of school liabilities, insurance, health, safety, and risk related matters.
- Approving all expenditures over 1% of the total school budget.
- Contract with an external independent auditor to produce an annual financial audit according to generally accepted accounting practices.
- Regularly measure progress of both student and staff performance based on reports and evaluations.
- Involve parents and the community in school related programs.
- Execute all applicable responsibilities provided for in the California Corporations Code.
- Strategic planning.
- Approve the school calendar and schedule of Board meetings.
- Meet as such times and places as required by these Bylaws.
- Review requests for out of state or overnight field trips.
- Participate in the dispute resolution procedure and complaint procedures when necessary.
- Approve charter amendments as necessary and submit material revisions as necessary for District consideration.
- Approve annual fiscal audit and performance report.
- Shall conduct an annual meeting at the end of each fiscal year.

- Appoint an administrative panel or act as a hearing body and take action on recommended student expulsions.
- Adopt an independent study policy for students that will miss school for an extended period of time.
- The ethnic and cultural diversity of the communities served by SOAR Charter Academy shall be reflected and honored in all the activities of the Board and its committees.

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

All SOAR Board meetings shall comply with the Brown Act.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Executive Director

The Executive Director shall have general authority over the day-to-day management and operation of the Academy. The Executive Director will ensure that the curriculum is implemented in order to maximize student-learning experiences. The Executive Director must report directly to the Charter School Board of Directors, and s/he is responsible for the orderly operation of the school, the implementation of SOAR Board adopted policy, and the supervision of all the employees in the school.

With exception of personnel matters, the Executive Director may delegate or contract as approved by the Board of Directors to a co-director or other employee, or to an appropriate third party contractor as allowed by law.

School Site Leadership Team

This team will consist of parent and faculty representatives, and the Executive Director. The SSLT operating size is a minimum of three and maximum of seven. The SSLT will have equal representation from family and faculty members. In accordance with SOAR bylaws, representatives will be elected. The School Director will be seated on the SSLT without election. The roles and responsibilities of this team are as followed:

- Development of curriculum
- Monitor progress of students
- Develop annual budget proposals in alignment with board guidelines
- Develop and present school plan to the board
- Assist the board in maintaining focus and momentum
- Develops a list of priorities for future consideration, informed by family and faculty perspectives
- Identify and author new policy proposals
- Design and participate in the personnel interviewing and selection process
- Write grants and plan fundraising events
- Communicate new policy to faculty and families

Parent Teacher Organization

Parents will be encouraged and facilitated to form a Parent Teacher Association to be responsible for parent involvement in school activities, fund raising, and communicating to the SOAR Board of Directors on any and all matters related to the strengthening of the Charter Academy community. PTO will be active in coordinating the parent volunteer program.

Parent Involvement

Including the role of parents on the SOAR Board of Directors, School Site Leadership Team, and PTO, parents will be strongly encouraged to contribute a minimum of 10 hours per family, per academic year to the Charter Academy. The Executive Director shall maintain a comprehensive list of volunteer opportunities including but not limited to the following: volunteering in the classroom/school, tutoring, attending parent-teacher conferences; participating in our community service projects; attendance at meetings of the following school bodies: the Charter School Board of Directors (as member or observer), or any applicable parent group functions; participation in the planning of, or attendance at, fund raising or academic/art events; or, other activities. Recruiting for school volunteers, support, and donations will also count as involvement hours.

See Appendix for Organizational Chart of Governance Responsibilities and Volunteer Opportunity list

ELEMENT 5: HUMAN RESOURCES

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

SOAR is dedicated to hiring the most dedicated and knowledgeable staff. SOAR will seek to hire teachers with different areas of expertise. The Charter Academy shall be nonsectarian in its employment practices and all other operations. The Charter Academy shall not discriminate on the basis of gender, sex, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or disability. All employees shall be fingerprinted and receive a background clearance in the accordance with Education Code Section 44237 prior to commencing employment with the Charter Academy.

SOAR will require, and its first year budget is based upon, 8 full time teachers (K-3 the first year) (Four of which will also be Co-Directors), one Executive Director, one secretary or clerk, and a cleaning service. Our budget may include part time PE and Art teachers, based on available funds.

The following are a list of key personnel to be employed by the Academy along with corresponding qualifications:

Teacher Qualifications

The most important characteristic of teachers at SOAR will be their care for students,

enthusiasm, willingness to work hard and responsibility for student learning.

Specific qualifications include:

1. The Charter Academy shall comply with Education Code Section 47605 (l), which states in pertinent part:

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

All teacher will be required to hold a CLAD certification or an equivalent recognized by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

2. NCLB highly qualified for elementary school.

Accordingly, a teacher of core academic subjects must have:

- (1) a bachelor’s degree;
- (2) a State credential or have an Intern Certificate/Credential for no more than three years while actively working toward completion of their State credential,
- (3) and demonstrated core academic subject matter competence.

SOAR will verify annually the validity of teaching credentials through the Commission’s Online Verification System along with a hard copy of a credentialing certificate from the commission. Employees will be notified in writing 8 months before the credential’s expiration that their credential needs renewal. Credentials are renewed online. To renew their credential, the holder needs to submit an application form and fee to the Commission within six months prior to the expiration date. The renewal period is five years.

Executive Director Qualifications

The Executive Director shall be able to supervise students, the campus teachers, and non-instructional staff. The Executive Director shall act as the instructional leader at the school and shall be responsible for helping the students achieve outcomes as outlined in the Educational Program. The Director is also responsible for the management of the budget revenues and expenditures in coordination with the contracted charter fiscal management organization.

Trisha Lancaster has been chosen as the Executive Director of SOAR and will be given a 3 year term in order to start the school and implement the instructional program. She will be working toward her Chief Business Officer (CBO) certificate and/or taking educational administration classes.

Non-Certificated Staff

The Charter Academy shall seek non-certificated candidates that embrace the mission and vision of SOAR and are flexible and able to work collaboratively with administrators, students, faculty, staff, and parents. Non-certificated candidates must possess adequate

professional training and/or experience.

Professional Development/ Leadership Model

Staff development will take place one Monday a month. Teachers will also meet on a weekly basis to develop their skills and expertise in focused areas. The first focus for staff development will be the implementation of the character education curriculum followed by staff training on the STAR process modeled after the RTI practices encouraged state wide. A proposed three year staff development plan is located in the Appendix.

SOAR will also use a leadership model with teachers at the school. Teachers with greater experience will be used as mentors for the teachers with less experience. Mentors will be required to do peer observations, as well as coaching in terms of best practices and instructional methods. Every grade level will have one veteran teacher matched with one newer teacher to create a stronger staff. See Appendices Three Year Staff Development Plan

Recruitment

SOAR's recruitment plan involves the creation of a web-based employment application, attendance at the California State University, San Bernardino's teacher employment fair, and job postings in the media.

When a vacancy occurs, the Director shall establish an ad hoc Hiring Committee, which shall:

- Announce openings;
- Recruit applications; request resumes; and
- Interview and select candidates

Employment Handbook

Although not a legally required provision of a charter, SOAR has included the initial draft of its employment handbook in the Appendix to this charter. The employment handbook shall be finalized and adopted at least 90 days prior to operation and distributed and signed by all employees.

ELEMENT 6: HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

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

In order to provide safety for all students and staff, the Charter Academy will adopt and implement full health and safety procedures and risk management policies at our school site in consultation with its insurance carriers. A full draft will be provided for review at least 30 days prior to operation.

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

Procedures for Background Checks

Employees and contractors of SOAR Charter Academy will be required to submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Sections 44237 and 45125.1. New employees not possessing a valid California Teaching Credential must submit two sets of fingerprints prepared for submittal by the employer to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. The Director of the school shall monitor compliance with this policy and report to the Charter School Board of Directors on a quarterly basis. The Board President shall monitor the fingerprinting and background clearance of the Executive Director. Volunteers who will volunteer outside of the direct supervision of a credentialed employee shall be fingerprinted and receive background clearance prior to volunteering without direct supervision of a credentialed employee. Conditions that preclude working at SOAR include conviction on charges of serious or violent misdemeanors or felonies, particularly those committed against minors or involving abuse or molestation. Additionally, should an employee subsequent to their employment with SOAR be convicted of serious or violent misdemeanors or felonies, it is expected that the employee will report such to the Director of SOAR.

SOAR will submit an annual affidavit to the District verifying that all employees are cleared.

Role of Staff as Mandated Child Abuse Reporters

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

TB Testing

Faculty, staff, and volunteers will be tested for tuberculosis prior to commencing employment and working with students as required by Education Code Section 49406. All staff will need to renew their TB test every 4 years. Employees will be notified in writing 90 days in advance of when renewal of their TB test is due. Any entity providing student services to SOAR will be contractually required to ensure that all contract workers have had TB testing that shows them to be free of active TB prior to conducting work with SOAR students. Documentation of employee and volunteer compliance with TB exams will be kept on file in the office.

Immunizations

All staff and students enrolled will be required to provide records documenting immunizations as is required at public schools pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 120325-120375, and Title 17, California code of Regulations Section 6000-6075.

Administration of Medication

Students will not be given any medications at school unless an *Authorization for Medication Form* is completed and signed by the child's doctor and submitted to the school office. Prescription medication must be brought to school in the original prescription bottle labeled

with the child's name. Students should never bring medication in their backpacks, lunch pails or pockets under any circumstances. This includes cough drops, Tylenol, Tums, etc.

Emergency Preparedness

The Charter Academy shall adhere to an Emergency Preparedness Handbook drafted specifically to the needs of the school site in conjunction with law enforcement and the Fire Marshall. This handbook shall include, but not limited to the following responses: fire, flood, earthquake, terrorist threats, and hostage situations. The SOAR Board will develop procedures and policies prior to operation. All SOAR staff will be trained accordingly.

Drug Free/Alcohol Free/Smoke Free Environment

The Charter Academy shall function as a drug, alcohol and tobacco free workplace.

Facility Safety

The Charter Academy shall comply with Education Code Section 47610 by utilizing facilities that are compliant with the State Building Code.

Comprehensive Sexual Harassment Policies and Procedures

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

Cal/OSHA General Industry Safety Orders

SOAR will comply with all Cal/OSHA safety orders and California Code of Regulations; Title 8, section 3203. Posters will be posted to inform employees of these compliance requirements.

ELEMENT 7: RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE

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

SOAR will be nonsectarian in its programs, will not charge tuition and will not discriminate against any student based on ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, or disability. The founders have developed an Outreach plan/Brochure in English and Spanish, attached in the Appendix to address the dissemination of information to students of all backgrounds with the goal of achieving a school population reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the District. We will strategically place brochures and

flyers throughout San Bernardino. Our website is operational which is available to the public. We will also advertise in the local newspapers and circulars.

This Outreach plan shall be evaluated by SOAR on an annual basis to consider the level of success of each outreach method toward reaching the ethnic balance goal. As necessary the Outreach plan shall be updated to focus on the methods of outreach which have been most successful. As stated above, the evaluation of the SOAR Outreach plan shall be reported by SOAR to SBCUSD as part of the annual performance report.

ELEMENT 8: ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

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

SOAR Charter Academy will offer admission to all students who wish to attend on a nondiscriminatory basis, regardless of their ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into the Academy.

The application process is comprised of the following:

1. Parent attendance at a school orientation meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure parent/guardian understanding of and commitment to the School’s vision and policies. All families seeking admission will receive extensive information about the SOAR philosophy and educational program, including information regarding the Parent Compact, attached in the Appendix.
2. Completion of an pre-enrollment form
3. Proof of minimum age requirement, e.g. birth certificate

Pre-enrollment forms will be accepted during a publicly advertised open application period each late winter/early spring for enrollment the following school year. A pre-enrollment form will need to be filled out for every potential student stating siblings that are enrolled or are looking to be enrolled at SOAR. Following the enrollment period each year, pre-enrollment forms shall be counted to determine whether any grade level has received more applications than availability. In the event that this happens, the Academy will hold a public random drawing to determine enrollment for the impacted grade levels, with the exception of existing students (2nd year forward) who are guaranteed enrollment the following school year. As stated in the Charter School Program Non Regulatory Guidance, Title V Part B,

“Specifically, the following categories of applicants may be exempted from the lottery on this basis: (a) students who are enrolled in a public school at the time it is converted into a public charter school; (b) siblings of students already admitted to or attending the same charter school; (c) children of a charter school's founders (so long as the total number of students allowed under this exemption constitutes only a small percentage of the school's total enrollment); and (d) children of employees in a work-site charter school (so long as the total number of students allowed under this exemption constitutes only a small percentage of the school's total

enrollment). When recruiting students, charter schools should target all segments of the parent community. The charter school must recruit in a manner that does not discriminate against students of a particular race, color, national origin, religion, or sex, or against students with disabilities; but the charter school may target additional recruitment efforts toward groups that might otherwise have limited opportunities to participate in the charter school's programs.”

Our admission policies and procedures, will not discriminate against protected classes, and consistent with federal law, founding families’ children and SOAR employee’s children will only receive preference to the extent that in so doing, no groups are discriminated against. Preference for founding members’ children and SOAR employees’ children will not exceed 10% of student population. That would be no more than 16 students the first year. We project it will be more like 5-7 students.

Preferences in the public random drawing will be given in the following order of priority in accordance with Education Code Section 47605 (d)(2):

Category 1: Children of the original founding members’ families.

Category 2: Children of employees of SOAR.

Category 3: Siblings of currently enrolled students who are SBCUSD residents.

Category 4: Siblings of currently enrolled students who are not SBCUSD residents.

Category 5: All other SBCUSD residents.

Category 6: Non- SBCUSD residents.

The random drawing will be conducted by grade level starting with 3rd grade. Pre-enrollment forms will be pulled and all siblings on the form will be immediately placed regardless of grade level. As grade levels are filled to capacity, siblings will be placed at the top of the waiting list. Parents will be notified of admission in a timely fashion following the public random drawing. The parents whose children are selected by public random drawing to attend SOAR Charter Academy will be required to provide registration information which includes the following:

- Parent Compact and Registration Forms
- Proof of Immunizations
- Home Language Survey
- Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form

No student will be denied admission, disenrolled, or otherwise harmed due to their parent/guardian’s failure to sign the Parent Compact or to volunteer in accordance with the Parent Compact.

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, a waiting list will be established to be used for future openings throughout the school year. The wait list shall expire at the end of the school year for which created. SOAR shall develop and adopt a comprehensive enrollment policy and procedure to implement the provisions herein.

ELEMENT 9: INDEPENDENT FISCAL AUDIT AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

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

The SOAR Charter Academy Board will form an audit committee each fiscal year to contract and oversee the preparation and completion of an annual, independent audit of the school's financial affairs. SOAR will choose an audit firm that is on the State Controller's list of recommended auditors. These financial audits will be conducted by a qualified Certified Public Accountant familiar with school finances and operations who is on the State Approved Auditor list. Prior to April 1, 2009, SOAR will submit the name of the state approved auditor to the District. The audit will be conducted in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applicable to the school and will conform with the California School Audit Guide as it applies to charter schools. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope will be expanded to include items and processes specified in any applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars. The auditor will verify the accuracy of the school's financial statements, accounting practices, revenue-related data collection and reporting practices and will review the school's internal controls. The audit will include a review of ADA as reported by SOAR Charter Academy. Moreover, the audits will assure that the school's money is being handled responsibly and that its financial statements conform to generally accepted accounting principles. The Director, along with the audit committee, will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Charter School Board of Directors with recommendations on exceptions and deficiencies that have been or will be resolved with an anticipated timeline for the same. Audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved in conference with the auditor to the satisfaction of the auditing agency and the District. SOAR Charter Academy agrees to resolve outstanding issues from the audit prior to the completion of the auditor's final report. The audit will be completed and submitted to the District, the California Department of Education, State Controller and the State Board of Education. A copy of this audit will be submitted to the District according to their reporting deadlines. The independent fiscal audit of the Charter Academy is a public record to be provided to the public upon request.

SOAR Charter Academy will receive funding pursuant to California Education Code Sections 47630-47635 and all applicable education codes. SOAR Charter Academy will provide interim financial data required by the district to fulfill its obligation to the county and state. The Executive Director, with the assistance of a business manager or consultant, will be responsible for providing SBCUSD with all reports and data necessary to meet County and State financial requirements. SOAR will meet District reporting deadlines to ensure the District meets the state's deadlines.

According to Ed Code 47604.33 (a), we will annually prepare and submit in standard CDE SACS format, to the District, County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and the CDE the following documents;

- Preliminary budget (on or before July1)
- Interim financial report (on or before December 15) reflecting budget changes through October 31
- Second interim financial report (on or before March 15) reflecting budget changes through January 15
- Final unaudited report for the full prior year (on or before September 15)

The Board of Directors will hire/contract with companies who can provide expertise in areas in which they may be unfamiliar (attorneys, accountants, etc.). The founding group has contracted with EdTec Business and Development Specialists for California Charter Schools, to handle all “back office” duties (payroll, accounts payable and receivable, budget projections, etc.) If the contracted services change the District will be notified. SOAR will be using a state compliant student attendance system that is compatible with EdTec and the District. We are looking at possibly using PowerSchool, We will be using EdTec to handle many of our financial and back office management duties, including but not limited to sound financial management, human resources, payroll, attendance accounting, and charter board reporting. EdTec is a professional services firm that brings high-level expertise to solving the business problems of California's charter schools. The EdTec team has extensive expertise in business management (public and private), school finance, negotiation, grant writing, IT management, accounting, and student information systems. They have managed charter school budgets and finance operations for a variety of charter schools in California. Some of the California charter schools that EdTec serves are listed in the appendix. EdTec has never failed an audit. They will be working closely with the Director to ensure that the finances are fiscally sound.

ELEMENT 10: SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION PROCEDURES

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

SOAR has adopted suspension and expulsion procedures in accordance with California Education Code Section 48900 and 48911 which are attached in the Appendix. SOAR will develop and maintain a comprehensive set of student discipline policies. The policies will be printed and distributed as part of the school’s student/parent handbook and clearly describe the school’s expectations regarding attendance, mutual respect, substance abuse, violence, safety, and work habits. Any student who engages in repeated violations of the school’s behavioral or academic expectations will be required to attend a meeting with the school’s staff and the student’s parent or guardian. SOAR will prepare a specific, written remediation agreement outlining future student conduct expectations, timelines, and consequences for failure to meet the expectations which may include, but are not limited to, suspension or expulsion. See appendix for Suspension and Expulsion Procedures.

ELEMENT 11: RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Governing Law: The manner by which staff members of the Charter School will be covered by the State Teachers’ Retirement System, the Public Employee’s Retirement System, or federal social security-California

Education Code Section 47605 (b)(5)(K)

All members of SOAR who qualify for membership in STRS shall be covered. Employees will contribute at the rate established by the STRS systems. All employees who do not qualify as members must make contributions to the social security system. Employees that are not members of STRS will have a 403b plan established for retirement.

SOAR will also make contributions for workers' compensation insurance, unemployment insurance, and any other payroll obligations of an employer.

ELEMENT 12: PUBLIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES

No student may be required to attend the Charter Academy. Students who reside within the District who choose not to attend the Charter Academy may attend school within the District according to District policy or at another school district or school within the District through the District's intra and inter-district policies.

ELEMENT 13: EMPLOYEE RETURN RIGHTS

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

Any SBCUSD employee who becomes an employee of SOAR Charter Academy shall have no automatic rights to return to District employment or accrue seniority except as allowed by the District in accordance with District policy and applicable provisions of applicable collective bargaining agreement. According to Education Code 44931, teachers who leave SBCUSD employment to work at the charter school shall adhere to the following, "Whenever any certificated employee of any school district who, at the time of his or her resignation, was classified as permanent, is reemployed within 39 months after his or her last day of paid service, the governing board of the district shall, disregarding the break in service, classify him or her as, and restore him or her all rights, benefits and burdens of, a permanent employee, except as otherwise provided in this code."

ELEMENT 15: EXCLUSIVE PUBLIC EMPLOYER

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

SOAR Charter Academy will be an independent charter school. SOAR will be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for the purposes of the Educational Employee Relations Act. Certificated employees and other employees have the right to select a bargaining agent.

ELEMENT 14: DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

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

SOAR Charter Academy will adopt and abide by the California School Boards Association Uniform complaint policies and procedures with the intents to;

- Resolve disputes within the school pursuant to the Academy’s polices set forth in the SOAR Employment Handbook.
- Minimize the oversight burden on the District.
- Ensure a fair and timely solution to disputes.
- Frame a charter oversight and renewal process and timeline so as to avoid disputes regarding oversight and renewal matters.

In the event of a dispute between SOAR and SBCUSD, SOAR staff, employees, and Board members of SOAR and SBCUSD agree to first frame the issue in written format (“dispute statement”) and refer the issue to the “district’s designee” and Director of SOAR. In the event that the SBCUSD Board of Education believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter in accordance with the Education Code Section 47607, this shall be noted in the written dispute statement. However, participation in the dispute resolution procedures outlined in this section shall not be interpreted to impede or as a prerequisite to SBCUSD’s ability to proceed with revocation in accordance with Education Code Section 47607.

The Director and “district’s designee” shall informally meet and confer in a timely fashion to attempt to resolve the dispute, not later than 5 business days from receipt of the dispute statement. In the event that this informal meeting fails to resolve the dispute, both parties will jointly meet with a “superintendent’s designee” and another SOAR Board member and attempt to resolve the dispute within 15 business days from receipt of the dispute statement. If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the “district’s designee” and the Director 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. Mediation shall be held within thirty business days of receipt of the dispute statement. If both parties are in agreement of mediation, the costs of the mediator shall be split equally between SBCUSD and SOAR Charter Academy. If mediation does not resolve the dispute either party may pursue any other remedy available under the law. All time lines in this section may be revised upon mutual written agreement of SBCUSD and SOAR Charter Academy.

ELEMENT 16: CHARTER SCHOOL CLOSURE PROTOCOL

Governing Law: A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes.- California Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(P)

The following procedures shall apply in the event SOAR Charter Academy closes. The following procedures apply regardless of the reason for closure.

Closure of SOAR will be documented by official action of the SOAR Board. The action will

identify the reason for closure. The SOAR Board will promptly notify SBCUSD of the closure and of the effective date of the closure. The SOAR Board shall appoint a “point-person” who will remain as an ongoing contact for SOAR during the close-out process. The Board of SOAR will ensure notification to the parents and students of the Academy of the closure and to provide information to assist parents and students in locating suitable alternative programs. This notice will be provided promptly following the Board’s decision to close SOAR.

As applicable, SOAR will provide parents, students, and SBCUSD with copies of all appropriate student records and will otherwise assist students in transferring to their next school. All transfers of student records will be made in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. SOAR will ask SBCUSD to store original records of Charter Academy students. All records of SOAR shall be transferred to SBCUSD upon school closure.

As soon as reasonably practical, SOAR will prepare final financial records. SOAR will also have an independent audit completed as soon as reasonably practical, which period is generally no more than six months after closure. The audit will be prepared by a qualified Accountant selected by SOAR and will be provided to SBCUSD promptly upon its completion.

On closure of SOAR, all assets of SOAR, including but not limited to all leaseholds, personal property, intellectual property and all ADA apportionments and other revenues generated by students attending SOAR, remain sole property of SOAR and shall be distributed in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation upon the dissolution of the nonprofit public benefit corporation to another public educational entity. On closure, SOAR shall remain solely responsible for all liabilities arising from the operation of the Academy.

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

CONCLUSION

By approving this charter, SBCUSD will be fulfilling the intent of the Charter Schools Act of 1992: to improve student learning; increase learning opportunities for all students especially those who are identified as academically low achieving; create new professional opportunities for teachers; and provide parents and students with expanded choices in education, and to follow the directive of the law to encourage the creation of Charter Schools. Our founders are fully aware of their expertise and the areas in which there is still need. To fulfill one of our needs, we will be contracting with and have budgeted for a charter school management firm for fiscal services including but not limited to finance, accounting, and business services. San Bernardino will benefit by having another opportunity to help our city by educating students in a smaller learning community in which character education is a focus. The Petitioners are eager to work independently, yet

cooperatively with the District to raise the bar for what a charter school can and should be. To this end, the Petitioners pledge to work cooperatively with the District to answer any concerns over this document and to present the District with the strongest possible proposal requesting a five year term to begin August 2008.

District Impact Statement

SOAR Charter Academy and San Bernardino City Unified School District

Intent

This statement is intended to fulfill the terms of Education Code Section 47605 (g) and provides information regarding the proposed operation and potential effects of SOAR Charter Academy on the San Bernardino City Unified School District. This document is intended for informational purposes only and to assist the district in understanding how the proposed school may affect the district. This is an informational document, does not constitute a legally binding contract or agreement, is not intended to govern the relationship of the school and district, and is not a part of the Charter of SOAR Charter Academy or any related agreements or memoranda of understanding.

Administrative Services

SOAR Charter Academy will be constituted as a California Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation and will be governed by a Board of Directors as described in the Charter petition. An Executive Director will enjoy lead responsibility for leading the school under policies adopted by the school's governing board. SOAR will contract out to a third-party administrator with experience providing back-office services to California charter schools. The Executive Director will oversee the work of the business services company, which handles all back-office business functions, including: accounts payable/receivable, general accounting, payroll, and insurance and benefits administration. The company will ensure that all reporting is submitted accurately and in a timely way, including all government financial reporting, attendance reporting, and payroll/benefits reporting. The company will also assist SOAR Charter Academy staff and board on business issues that arise during the year, such as MOU negotiations, financial modeling of programs, strategic planning, transportation, and others. The company will help the Director and the SOAR Charter Academy Board create and monitor the annual budget and will provide monthly financials, cash flow projections and analyses. SOAR plans to contract out to EdTec. The school does anticipate purchasing some services from the school district. We intend to purchase IEP mandated services from the district. The specific terms and cost for these services will be the subject of an annual memorandum of understanding. SOAR Charter Academy shall retain the right to separately purchase additional administrative or other services. Any administrative services to be purchased from the district shall be mutually agreed upon and outlined in a separate Memorandum of Understanding. In addition, the district will be required to provide oversight and performance monitoring services, including monitoring school and student performance data, reviewing the school's financial statements and audit reports, performing annual site visits, engaging in the dispute resolution process, and considering charter amendment and renewal requests.

Facilities

SOAR Charter Academy plans to initially locate in school-ready facilities at 1605 N. Sierra Way in San Bernardino. This facility was previously known as "Valley Christian School". These facilities will be leased by the school. We believe that the facilities impact on the district will be minimal in that site inspection would focus on this being a facility built to existing city and other codes. The specific terms of the school's use of these facilities will be governed by the terms of the charter and a signed lease.

Civil Liability

SOAR Charter Academy plans to be operated by a non-profit public benefit corporation. As such, the school's founders presume that San Bernardino City Unified School District will not be liable for the debts or obligations of the charter school pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(c). The school intends to purchase liability, property, and errors and omissions insurance to protect the school's assets, staff, and governing board of members.

APPENDICES

We are providing the following documents to help further explain our Charter. Some documents are in rough draft form as explained in the Petition.

List of EdTec Clients

Below is a partial list of schools and organizations that EdTec has worked with:

- Achieve Charter School (Paradise)
- [Aveson Charter School](#) (Pasadena)
- [Bay Area School of Enterprise](#) (Alameda)
- [Bayshore Prep](#) (San Marcos)
- [Biggs Public Charter School](#) (Biggs)
- [Bullis Charter School](#) (Los Altos)
- [Chico Country Day School](#) (Chico)
- Coalition of Essential Schools (California)
- [Crossroads Charter Academy](#) (Armona)
- [Discovery Charter School](#) (San Jose)
- [Dolores Huerta Learning Academy](#) (Oakland)
- [Downtown College Preparatory](#) (San Jose)
- [E. C. Reems Technology and Arts Academy](#) (Oakland)
- [Envision Schools](#) (San Francisco Bay Area)
- [Escuela Popular](#) (San Jose)
- Ezequiel Tafoya Alvarado Academy (Madera)
- Five Keys Charter School (San Francisco)
- [Fresno Academy for Civic Leadership](#) (Novato)
- [Granada Hills Charter High School](#) (Granada Hills)

- Hiddenbrooke Charter School (San Anselmo)
- [Inland Leaders Charter School](#) (Yucaipa)
- [Inner City Education Foundation](#) (Los Angeles)
- Junior Space Exploration Academy (Oakland)
- LA Conservation Corps (Los Angeles)
- [Language Academy of Sacramento](#) (Sacramento)
- [Leadership Public Schools](#) (Northern California)
- [Lighthouse Charter School](#) (Oakland)
- [Making Waves Education Program](#) (Richmond)
- [Mark Twain Academies](#) (Santa Maria, Pismo Beach)
- [NOVA Meridian Academy](#) (Colton)
- Nuevo SOL (San Fernando)
- [Oakland Aviation High School](#) (Oakland)
- [OASIS Community School](#) (Oakland)
- [Oakland School for the Arts](#) (Oakland)
- [Oakland Unity High School](#) (Oakland)
- Richmond College Prep K-5 Charter School (Richmond)
- [Riverside Gateway to College](#) (Riverside)
- [Sol Aureus College Preparatory](#) (Sacramento)
- Space Exploration Academy (Oakland)
- [Stone Bridge School](#) (Napa)
- [Visalia Charter Independent Study](#) (Visalia)
- [XCEL Academy](#) (San Francisco)