

Staff Report on Request for Material Revision to Mare Island Technology Academy Middle School Petition

Posted July 28, 2026

INTRODUCTION

Mare Island Technology Academy (MITA) is an independent charter school authorized by the Vallejo City Unified School District (VCUSD or District). MITA serves students in grades 6-8 and is currently operating under a five year charter term that expires on June 30 2030.

On May 1, 2026, the District received a written request from Griffin Technology Academies (GTA), its charter management organization, to materially revise MITA's charter (Request). GTA proposes to consolidate MIT Academy High School (MIT), another independent charter school authorized by the District, with MITA to create a single, comprehensive charter school that would serve students in grades 6-12. If approved by VCUSD's Board of Education, GTA would thereafter close MIT, add grades 9-12 to MITA, and change the name of MITA to "MIT Academy."

On June 17, 2026, the VCUSD Board held a public hearing during its regularly-scheduled meeting to determine the level of support for the Request from District teachers, other District employees, and parents/guardians.

The purpose of this report is to provide detailed information for the Board to assist with its determination of whether to approve or deny the Request.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MATERIAL REVISIONS

Material revisions are governed by the standards and criteria set forth in Education Code section 47605 and must be approved by the VCUSD Board. A request for a material revision must also include, but is not limited to, a reasonably comprehensive description of any new requirement of charter schools enacted into law after the charter was originally granted or law renewed. (Educ. Code 47607) On July 9, 2026, the California Governor signed Assembly Bill 126 (i.e., the K-12 education omnibus trailer bill) into law, which included key legislative changes impacting charter schools. Of significance here, is that SB 126 amended Education Code section 47607 to now provide the following: "Notwithstanding any other law, and beginning on July 1, 2026, standards and criteria include timelines, deadlines, and other procedures referenced in subdivision (b) of Section 47605 or subdivision (b) of Section 47605.6, as applicable." While the District had chosen, prior to the enactment of SB 126, to follow the same procedures and timelines applicable to initial petitions for purposes of this Request, this amendment now makes such procedures and timelines statutorily required under Education Code section 47607(b).

Education Code section 47605(a)(4) identifies two instances in which material revisions are mandatory: (1) if the charter school proposes to expand operations to one or more sites not identified in its approved charter, or (2) if the charter school proposes to expand operations to one or more grade levels not identified in its approved charter. In addition, a charter authorizer may, in its discretion, determine what types of changes are substantive, or material, and would constitute a material revision to a charter. Here, given that GTA seeks to expand MITA to add grades 9-12, the requirements applicable to material revisions under Education Code section 47605(a)(4) and 47607(b) must be followed.

A material revision request may be denied on the basis of written factual findings supporting one or more of the following:

1. The charter school presents an unsound educational program for the pupils to be enrolled in the charter school.
2. The petitioners are demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the program set forth in the petition.
3. The petition does not contain an affirmation of each of the conditions required by statute.
4. The petition does not contain a reasonably comprehensive description of all the required elements.
5. The petition does not contain a declaration of whether the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act (EERA).
6. The charter school, if materially revised, is demonstrably unlikely to serve the interests of the entire community in which the school is proposing to locate. Analysis of this finding shall include consideration of the fiscal impact of the proposed material revision to the charter school. A written factual finding under this paragraph shall detail specific facts and circumstances that analyze and consider the following factors:
 - (A) The extent to which the proposed material revision would substantially undermine existing services, academic offerings, or programmatic offerings.
 - (B) Whether the proposed material revision would duplicate a program currently offered within the school district and the existing program has sufficient capacity for the pupils proposed to be served within reasonable proximity to where the charter school intends to locate.
7. The school district is not positioned to absorb the fiscal impact of the proposed material revision. A school district satisfies this paragraph if it has a qualified interim certification pursuant to Section 42131 and the county superintendent of schools, in consultation with the County Office Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team, certifies that approving the charter school would result in the school district having a negative interim certification pursuant to Section 42131, has a negative interim certification pursuant to Section 42131, or is under state receivership. Charter schools proposed in a school district satisfying one of these conditions shall be subject to a rebuttable presumption of denial.

This report provides a summary and analysis of GTA’s Request and includes the District review team’s findings of fact addressing the legal criteria detailed above. The District review team has decided not to make a formal recommendation to approve or deny the Request but instead provides the information below for the VCUSD Board to make an informed decision. This report, however, identifies the options available to the VCUSD Board concerning the Request. As explained below, the Board has the option to: (1) approve the Request to add grades 9-12 to MITA and change its name to “MIT Academy,” (2) deny the Request, which would result in MITA continuing to serve grades 6-8 only and MIT continuing to serve grades 9-12, or (3) approve the Request with any conditions set by the Board.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Below is an executive summary of the District review team’s findings regarding the Request.

Does the proposed materially-revised charter petition demonstrate legal grounds for <u>denial</u>?		See specific findings.
1.	Does the charter present a sound educational program?	See below.
2.	Are petitioners demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the program set forth in the petition?	See below.
3.	Does the petition contain an affirmation of each of the required conditions?	Criterion met
4.	Does the petition contain reasonably comprehensive descriptions of all required elements described below?	Generally met, but see findings below.
5.	Does the petition contain a declaration of whether the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public employer of the charter school’s employees?	Criterion met
6.	Is the charter school demonstrably unlikely to serve the interests of the entire community in which the charter school is proposing to locate?	See below.
7.	Is the school district not in a position to absorb the fiscal impact of the proposed material revision?	No.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS OF THE PETITION			
No.	Element / Category	Reasonably Comprehensive?	Comments
1	Description of Educational Program	Partially Met	See findings below.
2	Measurable Student Outcomes	Yes	
3	Methods for Measuring Student Progress	YES	
4	Governance Structure	Yes	
5	Employee Qualifications	Yes	
6	Health and Safety Procedures	Yes	
7	Balance of Students from Different Student Groups	Yes	
8	Admissions & Lottery Procedures	Yes	
9	Annual Independent Financial Audits	Yes	
10	Student Discipline Procedures	Yes	
11	Retirement Systems	Yes	
12	Public School Attendance Alternatives	Yes	
13	Post-Employment Rights of Employees	Yes	
14	Dispute Resolution Procedures	Yes	

15	Closure Procedures	Yes
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FINDINGS OF FACT

Finding #1: Soundness of Educational Program.

Because the Request seeks to consolidate MITA and MIT to form a single charter school serving grades 6-12, the District review team analyzed the academic achievement and performance of each charter school both on a schoolwide basis and based on significant student groups since this also bears on the soundness of their respective educational programs.

MITA has been designated as a middle-performing charter school by the California Department of Education (CDE) based on its performance on the California School Dashboard (Dashboard).

2025 Results MITA

Academic Performance		
English Language Arts	Mathematics	English Learner Progress
All Students  Orange 57.1 points below standard Declined 12.8 Points	All Students  Yellow 72 points below standard Increased 6.2 Points	 Red 37.2% making progress Declined 10.5%

Academic Engagement	Conditions & Climate	Informational Purposes
Chronic Absenteeism All Students  Yellow 20.6% chronically absent Declined 4%	Suspension Rate All Students  Blue 0.7% suspended at least one day Declined 12.9%	Science All Students  Yellow 44.4 science points Increased 2.6 Points

The 2025 Dashboard results show a decline in Academic Performance in both English Language Arts (ELA) and English Learner Progress (ELPI), and improvements in Mathematics. Improvement was also noted in both Academic Engagement and Conditions & Climate.

The 2025 California dashboard results for MIT are displayed below.

2025 Results MIT

Academic Performance		
English Language Arts	Mathematics	English Learner Progress
All Students  Orange 10.3 points below standard Declined 7.9 Point	All Students  Yellow 92.3 points below standard Increased 23.3 Points	All Students  Red 33.8% making progress Declined 19.6%

Academic Performance	Academic Engagement	Conditions & Climate
College/Career All Students  Yellow Prepared 62.7% Declined 3.6%	Graduation Rate All Students  Green 94.2% graduated Increased 2.4%	Suspension Rate All Students  Green 3.6% suspended at least one day Declined 4.2%
Informational Purposes		
Science All Students  Green 57.8 science points Increased 2.7 Points		

MIT results are similar to those of MITA. Both schools experienced a decline in ELA and on the ELPI. The District review team is mostly concerned with the results on the ELPI, in which MITA showed a decline of 10.5% and MIT showed a decline of 19.6%, respectively. Based on the CDE Dataquest, the percentage of English Learners has increased in both 6th grade (24.7%) and 9th grade (23%) for the 2025-2026 school year. This could present a challenge for a consolidated EL program given the number of ELs to be served and the poor outcomes reflected for both charter schools on the Dashboard. Should the Request be approved, information on the instructional strategies, approaches, and actions that MIT Academy would undertake to address the strengthening of the EL

program in a manner designed to foster increased progress and improved outcomes would be required.

Finding #2: Likelihood of Successful Implementation of the Charter School Program.

The District review team has evaluated whether the proposed consolidation of MIT and MITA could be successfully implemented and presents its findings for the Board's consideration below.

Blending the staff of MIT and MITA may present challenges. Site visits revealed two very different cultures at the high school and the middle school. Concern was voiced at the high school regarding the lack of transparency with regards to decisions and communication from CMO personnel, while the middle school felt totally supported by management and decisions at that level. Although the Director of Schools oversees both MITA and MIT, her organizational influence was more apparent at MITA.

Regardless of the approval of the Request, MITA will relocate to the current MIT campus at 2 Positive Place for the 2026-2027 school year. However, it is unclear in the Request of the location of the proposed MIT Academy. GTA lists both the Positive Place and the Corcoran addresses as facility locations indicating their use until a new facility is built. The Corcoran property has been vacated and turned back over to the District.

As reflected in its renewal petition that was approved by the VCUSD Board for a five-year term of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2030, MITA projects the following enrollment for grades 6-8:

Grade	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
6th	133	150	141	149	150
7th	105	130	145	137	144
8th	124	95	117	131	123
Total	293	306	313	317	326

If its Request is approved, the combined school (MIT Academy), would serve students in grades 6-12. GTA's updated projections for grades 6-12 are displayed below.

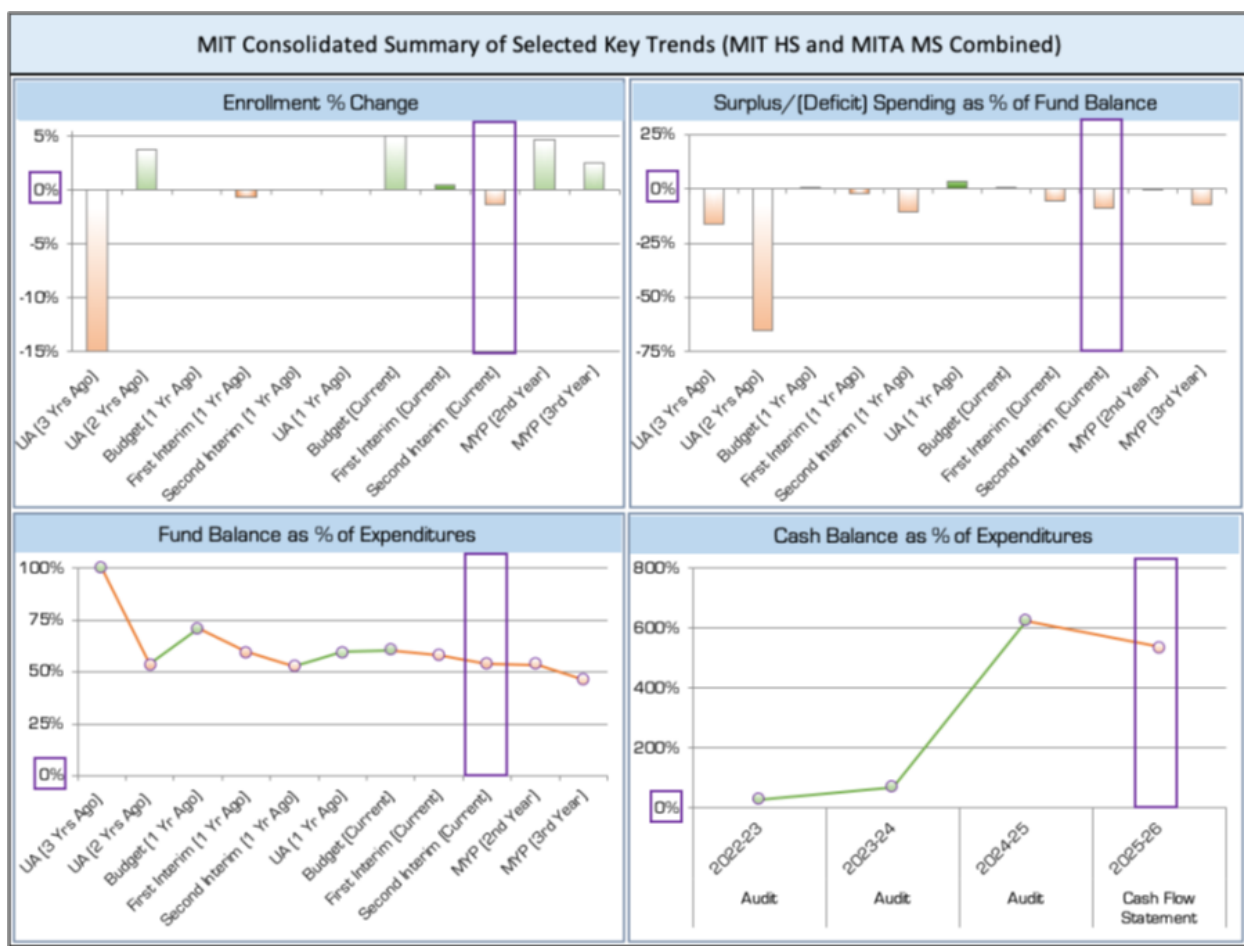
Grade	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
6th	85	85	90	90	95
7th	104	107	107	111	111
8th	104	114	116	116	120
9th	144	134	143	144	144
10th	133	150	141	149	150
11th	105	130	145	137	144
12th	124	95	117	131	123
Total	799	815	859	878	887
Additional	506	509	546	561	561

Based on the information available, the District review team does not have specific concerns with the enrollment projections given that they represent a combination of MITA's and MIT's projections, respectively. However, it is important to note that if MIT closes, the students enrolled in that charter school would not automatically transfer to the consolidated MIT Academy. Rather, the parents/guardians of those students would be required to newly enroll in MIT Academy. Thus, consideration should be given to the possibility that parents/guardians may choose not to enroll their students in MIT Academy, which would result in impacts to the above enrollment projections (and budget).

MITA's fiscal health has improved with strong enrollment growth in the past year combined with management of cost escalation and expenses associated with construction of the new gymnasium. MITA anticipates a balanced budget in the current year and expects budget surpluses along with rising fund balances in the years ahead. Cash balance was significantly boosted with the receipt of Proposition 51 funds but is declining as these funds are spent. Both fund and cash balances currently sit at healthy levels.

The proposed MIT Academy would consolidate the financial statements of both MITA and MIT. Viewed on a consolidated basis, MIT Academy's fiscal condition appears reasonable. Enrollment fell short of expectations in the current year, driven by soft enrollment at the high school. However, growth is anticipated going forward. The consolidated school had a small budget surplus last year though estimates a modest budget deficit in the current year—again attributable to the high school. Fund balances and cash balances are generally declining, though still currently sit at healthy levels. A graphical illustration summarizing these trends as of Second Interim is displayed below.

The Request estimates modest improvement in the financial condition of MIT Academy in comparison to simply viewing the two individual schools combined as of Second Interim. The Request anticipates similar enrollment growth. The budget shows improvement that is largely attributable to managing expected cost escalation, turning around the modest budget deficits into small budget surpluses. A notable change is a decrease in costs associated with facilities due to the consolidation of the two schools onto one campus and the expiration of the facilities use agreement associated with the Corcoran location. Fund balances still appear healthy with small growth expected year over year. Cash balances deplete with the draw down of Proposition 51 funds and the school will need to be careful with its cash management during this time. However, cash balances are then expected to see small growth year over year.



The District review team also finds it relevant to share that any consolidation effort would require an extensive review of all of the written agreements between and among the District and GTA to the extent that they reference MITA and MIT as separate independent charter schools. Further, the District has confirmed with the California School Finance Authority that the Funding Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding in connection with MITA's and MIT's award of Proposition 51 state bond proceeds for the construction at the Positive Place location

would require the negotiation and approval of amendments to all of those agreements to reflect any consolidation of the charter schools and/or change in the name of the charter schools.

The review team anticipates that this would require the District to commit *extensive* time and resources by staff and legal counsel to prepare and negotiate any necessary amendments to those agreements to reflect a change from the two distinct charter schools to a single, combined “MIT Academy.” If GTA were to not agree to the proposed amendments, this could result in interpretation or enforcement issues due to the outdated terminology (i.e., reference to what would become a closed charter school and the formation of consolidated charter school under the new name of “MIT Academy”) and provisions in the existing agreements prohibiting the assignment of the rights and responsibilities of the parties. Surprisingly, GTA did not address this consideration in its Request or in the cover letter supporting its Request. Nor did GTA propose specific amendments to the existing agreements reflecting this change in structure to reduce the amount of administrative time and effort that would be required if the VCUSD Board approved its Request. This lack of foresight causes the District review team to question statements made by GTA that the approval of the Request would actually reduce the District’s administrative burden in overseeing the two charter schools when, in fact, the approval of the Request could actually increase those responsibilities (i.e., overseeing all of the closure-related actions for MIT and amending written agreements between the parties to account for the closure and restructuring of the charter schools).

For the above reasons, the District review team finds that there are grounds supporting the determination that GTA is demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the proposed consolidated grade 6-12 charter school program. However, this determination ultimately rests with the VCUSD Board.

Finding #3: Affirmation of Required Conditions.

No findings.

Finding #4: Reasonably Comprehensive Descriptions of Required Elements.

The materially-revised petition, as presented, generally includes reasonably comprehensive descriptions of the required elements except as noted below.

Description of Educational Program

The District’s review team observed that the materially-revised version of the petition includes a new educational curriculum for both middle and high school students. GTA proposes to adopt Grades 6-8 EL Education (Expeditionary Learning) from Open Up Resources as curriculum for the middle school’s ELA program, and GTA proposes to adopt the Odell Education English Language Arts curriculum, also from Open Up Resources, for the high school’s ELA program. The description of the adopted curriculum does not describe Expeditionary Learning or address how GTA or MIT Academy would provide professional development on how to deliver the instruction or how the curriculum would combine knowledge and skills-based content through cross-subject learning

expeditions—the intent of Expeditionary Learning. The updated petition also includes new curriculum in the areas of Science and History/Social Science, both disciplines adding new texts from Open Up Resources, with no mention of their compatibility or interfacing abilities with the ELA curriculum.

Additionally, adopting EL Education for grades 6-8 and Odell Education for grades 9-12 constitutes a major systemic shift. Amplify relies on a digital, blended learning loop with game-like quests and integrated online platforms, whereas EL utilizes collaborative, physical module-based “learning expeditions” rooted in interdisciplinary projects and Odell is structured around linear, text-dependent units focused on developmental and applied civic/academic literacy. Changing to this program updates how high school student progress and mastery is measured. These differences appear to alter the instructional design of the approved charter and could represent a material change in and of itself. If this is the case, the District review team finds that additional information regarding this new curriculum and how it is integrated into the overall instructional design is needed to consider the proposed change.

It should also be noted that the dependent charter school authorized by VCUSD uses an Expeditionary Learning K-8 model. The Expeditionary Learning component for MIT Academy for grades 6-8 offers nothing new to the community. If the original intent of charter schools was to create publicly funded laboratories of innovation, this program may now duplicate an innovative program already in existence within the district.

Notably, the District review team observed that the curriculum outlined in both proposed material revision requests for Griffin Academy High School (GAHS) and MITA are the same, which lends to the likelihood of further duplication of programs. The District review team expects GTA to address why it intends to implement the same curriculum across the two sets of consolidated schools if the Request and the material revision request for GAHS are approved by the VCUSD Board.

Finding #5: Declaration of Public School Employer.

No findings.

Finding #6: Demonstrably Unlikely to Serve the Entire Community in Which the Charter School Proposes to Locate.

No findings, except that the District review team notes that the Request for MITA and the material revision request for GAHS propose the same curriculum as well as the Expeditionary Learning model which is already implemented by the District’s dependent charter school. This calls into question whether the GTA charter schools would serve the interests of the community in which they are located given that this learning model is already being implemented at another school in the District that is located in relatively close proximity to the GTA charter schools.

Finding#7: Fiscal impact.

No findings.

VCUSD BOARD OPTIONS

The District review team has presented the above proposed findings for the VCUSD Board's consideration. The following options are available to the Board in its consideration and action on the Request to materially revise MITA's charter:

1. Approve the Request which would authorize GTA to close MIT Academy and expand the grade-level offerings of MITA to include grades 9-12, thus creating a grades 6-12 charter school. The name of the school would change to "MIT Academy."
2. Deny the Request, which would result in no changes to the current structures of MITA or MIT. The denial would be final and **not** be subject to appeal to the Solano County Board of Education or State Board of Education.
3. Approve the Request with any conditions agreed upon by the Board (e.g., amendments to all written agreements to reflect closure of MIT and consolidation of schools, etc.).

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