# Charter Petition Renewal

## Term: 2026-2031

Merced Scholars
CHARTER SCHOOL

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**ASSURANCES**

As the authorized representative, I, Sherre Vernon, hereby certify that the information submitted in this renewal application for the California public charter school, named Merced Scholars Charter School (MSCS), with the office located at 1640 N. St., Merced, California is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that this application for renewal 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 renewal, MSCS will follow any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to MSCS, including but not limited to:

- MSCS shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Sections 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605.6(d)(1)]
- MCOE shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the school for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605.6(b)(6)]
- MSCS shall be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605.6(e)(1)]
- MSCS shall not charge tuition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605.6(e)(1)]
- MSCS shall admit all students who wish to attend the school, and who submit a timely application; unless MSCS receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case each application is given equal chance of admission through a public random drawing process. Except as required by Education Code Section 47605.6(e)(2), admission to the MSCS shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the student or his or her education rights holder within the state. Preference in the public random drawing shall be given as required by Education Code Section 47605.6(e)(2)(B). In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of MSCS in accordance with Education Code Section 47605.6(e)(2)(C). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605.6(e)(2)(A)-(C)]
- MSCS shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605.6(e)(1)]
- MSCS shall not discourage a pupil from enrolling or seeking to enroll in MSCS

for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code section 47605.6(e)(2)(B)(iii) – pupils with disabilities, academically low-achieving pupils, English learners, neglected or delinquent pupils, homeless pupils, or pupils who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by eligibility for any free or reduced-price meal program, foster youth, or pupils based on nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605.6(e)(4)]

- MSCS shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities, including but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- MSCS shall meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including but not limited to, credentials, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)]
- MSCS shall ensure that teachers in MSCS hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools is required to hold. As allowed by statute, flexibility is given to noncore, non-college preparatory teachers. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605.6(l)]
- MSCS shall at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
- MSCS shall, for each fiscal year, offer at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D).
- If a pupil is under 19 years old, and is expelled or leaves MSCS without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, MSCS 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 grades or report card and health information. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605.6(e)(3)]
- MSCS shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47612.5(a)]
- MSCS shall, on a regular basis, consult with its students and teachers regarding the school's education programs. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605.6(d)]
- MSCS shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities. [Ref. California Education Code Sections 47605.6 and 47605.1]
- MSCS shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for

public school enrollment. [Ref. California Education Code Sections 47612(b), 47610]

- MSCS shall comply with all applicable portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
- MSCS shall comply with the California Public Records Act [Ref. Government Code Section 7920.000 et seq.].
- MSCS shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
- MSCS shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- MSCS shall comply with Government Code section 1090 et seq. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47604.1]
- MSCS shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum of school days. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11960]
- Nonclassroom-based average daily attendance shall be claimed by MSCS only for pupils who are residents of Merced County or contiguous counties.
- MSCS will annually prepare and submit financial reports to the County Board and/or the County Superintendent of Schools in accordance with the provisions of Education Code 42100, 47604.33 and 47605.6, as applicable.
- MSCS will promptly respond to all reasonable inquiries from MCOE and/or the Superintendent of Public Instruction, including but not limited to inquiries regarding its financial records.

MSCS shall comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations as well as the policies and procedures of the Local Plan of the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) responsible for funding.

_____ _____

Sherre Vernon, Interim Principal
Merced Scholars Charter School

Date

## PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

Merced Scholars Charter School (MSCS) is submitting this Charter Petition for renewal to the Merced County Board of Education (MCBE). MSCS seeks to continue to be a viable TK-12 option for students seeking a rigorous and rewarding education in an alternative environment.

MSCS has been in operation for well over 20 years. What began as a nonclassroom-based (NCB) school serving high school students in the area has transformed into a modern, forward thinking school serving grades TK-12 with both a hybrid approach (in which students have a variety of opportunities and services available to them at the school site) and a classroom-based program for our Merced Dual Language Academy (MDLA) students.

### School Charter History

MSCS was approved for establishment as an NCB school by the MCBE on February 23, 2004. The school began serving students in grades nine through twelve in August 2004. In 2006, MSCS obtained approval from MCBE to add grades six through eight. In 2008, MSCS was accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and the University of California/California State University systems granted a-g approval of its courses. In June 2019, MSCS was granted a material revision to its charter that allowed it to expand to include grades TK/K - 5, and in 2022 MSCS was approved to add a phased classroom-based MDLA program. Initially the MDLA program provided dual immersion instruction in Spanish/English and Hmong/English. Since the 2024-2025 school year, the MDLA program has provided Spanish/English immersion only. The school's most recent renewal petition was approved by MCBE in 2020, and during that renewal, MSCS was categorized as a middle tier charter school. MSCS is now in its 22nd year of operation, successfully educating students for their postsecondary lives and careers.,

The school's offices are located at 1640 N. St., Merced, with additional sites to serve NCB in Atwater (at the Dr. Lee Andersen Education Center, 1800 Matthew Dr., Atwater) and Los Banos (715 W. H St.). Classroom-based students in our MDLA program are served at 1850 Wardrobe Ave., Merced. The school's main and satellite locations have changed numerous times over the years. The current locations serve our students in the following ways:

- The NCB locations provide quiet spaces for teachers to meet one-on-one with students for their weekly check-in appointments, plus space for students to meet with counselors, access other resources, and meet in small groups for special projects, social-emotional programming, tutoring, and other activities. Conducting school business out of these sites has allowed MSCS to serve more

students throughout the county and provide the wraparound services that our students and families have told us they need to support their NCB journey.

- The MDLA location is a traditional school site with classrooms, a gymnasium, cafeteria, counselors' offices, and other expected amenities. This location allows us to serve our MDLA families with our immersive curriculum in a welcoming space that provides the facilities required for a classroom-based TK-5 program.
- These school locations, covering the three largest cities in the County, have allowed us to grow our program, respond to community demand, increase support and enrichment programs, and make it possible to "grow in place" as demand for programs expands over time.

MSCS, a locally-funded charter, is currently supported by Steven M. Tietjen, Ed.D., Merced County Superintendent of Schools, and enjoys access to the extensive resources, expertise, and support of the following MCOE departments:

- Human Resources (hiring expertise and bargaining unit support)
- Business Services (fiscal and facilities support)
- Special Education (SELPA and support for special needs students)
- Educational Services (District Services) – (academic program support, professional development, and media resources)
- Educational Services (Student Programs) – MSCS is operated under this department and collaborates with other programs under this department, such as the College & Career programs (Regional Occupation Program (ROP), California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP), and EMPOWER Program), to provide career and postsecondary education awareness, and District Support Services for teacher credentialing and induction programs.

**PART TWO: STATEMENT OF NEED**

Since 2004, MSCS has filled the need in Merced County for a charter school that supports high academic student achievement. Students from throughout Merced County and adjacent counties have relied on MSCS to provide a supportive and unique learning experience that meets their needs in a non-traditional school environment. While education has experienced some major shifts over the past several years, MSCS's purpose has remained steadfast and focused on serving students in a diversified and personalized learning environment that is responsive to community needs.

When the need for an NCB charter school was identified 22 years ago, MSCS was developed to address that need. Since then, MSCS has proven its effectiveness in addressing unique student needs as demonstrated by its performance on measurable student outcomes, and the fact that, based on the number of students on the waitlist in

the 2025-2026 school year (42) the MSCS program is in demand and considered to be a high-quality education option in the community.

Merced County is a “majority-minority” area, meaning that fewer than 50% of residents are non-Hispanic whites. The County is 64.6% Hispanic or Latino, 22.5% White, 8.3% Asian, 3.9% Black, 2.8% American Indian or Alaska Native, 0.4% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 3.5% two or more races. Relative to California (40.8%) and the United States (20%), Merced County has a very sizable Hispanic population. While 64.6% of the overall Merced County population is Hispanic, 77% of public K-12 students are Hispanic versus 56% statewide. More than half of County residents speak a language other than English at home, compared to only 44.4% in California and 22.3% nationwide, and 22% of Merced County public school students are classified as English Learners, versus 17% statewide and 10% nationwide.

Merced County is far behind the state and nation in terms of educational attainment. Only 72% of Merced County residents have a high school diploma and only 15% have a Bachelor’s Degree or higher, compared to the statewide rates of 85% and 37% and the nationwide rates of 90% and 36%. For public school students in Merced County’s K-12 schools, educational attainment levels are similarly low. Only 31% of Merced County students graduate high school having met the University of California/California State University enrollment requirements, compared to 47% statewide.

MSCS is currently the only TK/K - 12 charter school with direct authorization under MCOE or any other district to operate in Merced County, meaning that it is the only school of choice for TK/K - 12 students in the area. Students wishing to attend a charter school, without the availability of MSCS, would be required to travel to Stanislaus, Madera, Fresno, and/or Mariposa counties. Based on the U.S. Census Bureau Poverty and Income data, the need for a local school of choice is even more apparent considering that Merced County trails the state in Median Household Income ($99,122 state versus $65,510 county), and Persons in Poverty (11.8% state versus 18.4% county). This makes transportation and proximity a major factor in the need for an available school of choice in the area.

**Charter Renewal Criteria**

Under AB 1505, which went into effect on July 1, 2020, charter authorizers must consider the charter school’s performance on the indicators included in the California School Dashboard when evaluating a petition to renew a charter school. The new renewal process creates essentially three tiers of renewal for high-performing, middle-performing, and low-performing charter schools.

1. High-Performing Charter Schools: A chartering authority shall not deny renewal for a charter school that meets the high-performing criteria and the school can be renewed for a period of between five and seven years. A charter school meets this criteria if, in the two preceding years, it has either:
    a. Received the two highest performance levels schoolwide on all state indicators, which is all blue or green, or
    b. For all measurements of academic performance, received performance levels schoolwide that are the same or higher than the state average, AND for a majority of subgroups performing statewide below the state average in each respective year, received levels that are higher than the state average.

A school that is renewed under the high-performing criteria is only required to update the petition to include a reasonably comprehensive description of any new requirements, and as necessary to reflect the current program offered by the charter school. Charter schools eligible for technical assistance are not eligible for renewal under high-performing criteria.

2. Low-Performing Charter Schools: A chartering authority shall not renew a charter school that meets the low-performing criteria. A charter school meets this criteria if, in the preceding two years, it has either:
    a. Received the two lowest performance levels schoolwide on all state indicators (which is all red or orange on the state evaluation rubric), or
    b. For all measurements of academic performance, received performance levels schoolwide that are the same or lower than the state average, AND for a majority of student subgroups performing statewide below the state average in each respective year, received levels that are lower than the state average.

However, the chartering authority may make an exception and renew for a period of two years a low performing school if it makes the written factual finding that the charter school is taking meaningful steps to address the underlying cause or causes of low performance reflected, or will be reflected, in a written plan adopted by the charter school's governing body.

3. Middle-Performing Charter Schools: For charter schools not falling under the high or low-performing criteria, the chartering authority shall consider for renewal based on the performance schoolwide, and the performance of all subgroups of pupils served by the school, on the state and local indicators on the Dashboard. In determining whether to grant a renewal, the chartering authority must give greater weight to the school's performance on measurements of academic performance.

A chartering authority may deny renewal of a charter school in the middle tier only upon making a specific written finding that the school has failed to meet or make sufficient progress toward meeting standards that provide a benefit to the school's students, that closure of the school is in the student's best interests, and that, if applicable, the decision provided greater weight to performance on "measurements of academic performance" - the test-based indicators in ELA and math, ELPI, and CCI. The renewal period for schools in the middle tier is five years.

Notwithstanding all the tier-based criteria, chartering authorities may deny renewal of any charter school upon a finding that either:

1. The charter school is demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the program set forth in the petition due to substantial fiscal or governance factors;
OR
2. The charter school is not serving the pupils who wish to attend, as documented by 47607(d).
The chartering authority must provide 30 days' notice with a reasonable opportunity to cure the violation AND make a finding that either:
a. The corrective action proposed by the charter school has been unsuccessful; OR
b. The violations are sufficiently severe and pervasive as to render a corrective action unviable.

**Charter Petition Renewal Guidelines**
The state legislature created charter schools in 1992 to encourage innovation in education beyond traditional classroom instruction. The state legislature further established the required elements to be included in a countywide charter petition. This charter petition renewal for MSCS provides evidence that the school continues to meet all the requirements set forth in the act, known as the Charter Schools Act of 1992.

MSCS wishes to maintain its status as a dependent, countywide charter of the Merced County Office of Education. The California Department of Education has identified MSCS as a middle performing charter school, based on the Dashboard data shared below. As a middle performing charter school, MSCS requests that the charter petition be renewed for a period of five years pursuant to Education Code section 47607.2(b).

## CA Dashboard ELA Two-Year Comparison of Distance from Standard to State

| Student Groups | MSCS Spring 2024 | State Spring 2024 | Charter Spring 2025 | State Spring 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **All students** | -44.5 orange | -13.2 orange | -33.8 yellow | -8.1 yellow |
| **English Learners*** | Not available | -67.6 orange | Not Available | -59.9 yellow |
| **Students with Disabilities*** | Not available | -95.6 red | Not available | -89.4 orange |
| **Socioeconomically Disadvantaged*** | -45.4 orange | -40.9 orange | Not available | -35.3 yellow |
| **African American *** | Not available | -58.9 orange | Not available | -51.3 yellow |
| **Hispanic*** | -40 orange | -39.3 orange | -43.3 orange | -33.7 yellow |
| **Pacific Islander *** | Not available | -34.7 orange | Not available | -29.3 yellow |
| **Asian *** | Not available | +60.7 blue | Not available | +61.9 blue |

*Applicable Student Groups to MSCS

## CA Dashboard Math Two-Year Comparison of Distance from Standard to State

| Groups | Charter Spring 2024 | State Spring 2024 | Charter Spring 2025 | State Spring 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **All Students** | -134.2 red | -47.6 orange | -116.8 orange | -42.4 yellow |
| **English Learners*** | Not available | -93.4 orange | Not available | -86.1 yellow |
| **Students with Disabilities*** | Not available | -124.3 red | Not available | -120.7 orange |
| **Socioeconomically Disadvantaged*** | -131.6 orange | -78.2 orange | -119.2 orange | -72.9 yellow |
| **African American *** | Not available | -102.2 red | Not available | -95.8 orange |
| **Hispanic*** | -140.5 red | -79.2 orange | -128.4 orange | -73.6 yellow |
| **Pacific Islander *** | Not available | -72.5 orange | Not available | -67.5 yellow |
| **Asian *** | Not available | +49.5 blue | Not available | +51.9 blue |

*Applicable Student Groups to MSCS

## CA Dashboard English Learner Progress Indicator (ELPI) Comparison

| Groups | Charter Spring 2024 | State Spring 2024 | Charter Spring 2025 | State Spring 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Schoolwide English Learners** | 30.8%<br>No progress color assigned | 45.7%<br>orange | 45.5%<br>No progress color assigned | 46.4%<br>yellow |
| **Long-Term English Learners** | 16.7%<br>No progress color assigned | 45.8%<br>orange | 50%<br>No progress color assigned | 49.1%<br>green |

## CA Dashboard CCI (College/Career Readiness) Comparison of Distance from Standard to State

| Groups | Charter Spring 2024 | State Spring 2024 | Charter Spring 2025 | State Spring 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **All Students** | 21.2% yellow | 45.3% yellow | 29% yellow | 51.7% green |
| **English Learners*** | Not available | 17.2%<br>orange | Not available | 24.3% yellow |
| **Students with Disabilities*** | Not available | 13.5%<br>orange | Not available | 18.7% yellow |
| **Socioeconomically Disadvantaged*** | 20%<br>No progress color assigned | 37.4%<br>yellow | 26.9%<br>No progress color assigned | 44.8%<br>green |
| **African American *** | Not available | 28.1% yellow | Not available | 35.7% green |
| **Hispanic*** | 20%<br>No progress color assigned | 37.4%<br>yellow | 32%<br>No progress color assigned | 45.1%<br>green |
| **Pacific Islander *** | Not available | 34.6%<br>orange | Not available | 40.2% green |
| **Asian *** | Not available | 74.5% blue | Not available | 77.9% blue |

## CAASPP ELA, Math Science Outcomes

### CAASPP ELA Percent Meeting/Exceeding Standard by Grade level

| Grade Level | 2019 - 2020 | 2021-2022 | 2022-2023 | 2023-2024 | 2024-2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3** | Not enough data available | 13.34% | Not enough data available | Not enough data available | 9.09% |
| **4** | Not enough data available | 14.28% | Not enough data available | Not enough data available | 9.09% |
| **5** | Not enough data available | 38.89% | 35.00% | 25.00% | Not enough data available |
| **6** | Not enough data available | 47.62% | 23.08% | 36.84% | 26.32% |
| **7** | Not enough data available | 17.24% | 46.16% | 40.00% | 25.81% |
| **8** | Not enough data available | 34.38% | 29.03% | 32.26% | 47.82% |
| **11** | Not enough data available | 54.06% | 25.53% | 48.57% | 55.55% |
| **Schoolwide** | Not enough data available | 33.52% | 30.15% | 35.88% | 35.04% |

### CAASPP Math Percent Meeting/Exceeding Standard by Grade Level

| Grade Level | 2019-2020 | 2021-2022 | 2022-2023 | 2023-2024 | 2024-2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **3** | Not enough data available | 13.33% | Not enough data available | Not enough data available | 8.63% |
| **4** | Not enough data available | 9.52% | Not enough data available | Not enough data available | 9.09% |
| **5** | Not enough data available | 5.56% | 5.00% | 0.00% | Not enough data available |
| **6** | Not enough data available | 9.52% | 7.69% | 0.00% | 5.26% |
| **7** | Not enough data available | 6.67% | 28.00% | 20.00% | 6.67% |
| **8** | Not enough data available | 12.50% | 9.68% | 6.66% | 20.00% |
| **11** | Not enough data available | 5.40% | 2.86% | 2.78% | 5.56% |
| **Schoolwide** | Not enough data available | 8.62% | 10.30% | 5.35% | 8.63% |

## CA Dashboard Chronic Absenteeism Rate in the Previous Term

| Groups | 2019 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Schoolwide** | 13%<br>orange | 42.3%<br>Very high | 36.6%<br>yellow | 16.6%<br>yellow | 16%<br>Yellow |
| **English Learners** | Not available | 44.2%<br>Very high | Not<br>available | Not<br>available | Not<br>available |
| **Socioeconomically Disadvantaged** | 15.8%<br>No performance color | 43.8%<br>Very high | 38.5%<br>yellow | 17.1%<br>yellow | 15.7%<br>yellow |
| **Students with Disabilities** | Not available | Not<br>available | Not<br>available | Not<br>available | 15.4%<br>yellow |
| **African American** | Not available | Not<br>available | Not<br>available | Not<br>available | Not<br>available |
| **Asian** | Not available | Not<br>available | Not<br>available | Not<br>available | Not<br>available |
| **Hispanic** | 9.1%<br>No performance color | 46.8%<br>Very high | 37.3%<br>yellow | 17.6%<br>yellow | 19.5%<br>orange |

*The 2022 chronic absenteeism indicator did not report colors to reflect growth/decline. It utilized status indicators (Very Low, Low, Medium, High, Very High)

## Suspension Rate in the Previous Terms

| Groups | 2019 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Schoolwide** | 0%<br>blue | 0%<br>Very low | 0%<br>blue | 0%<br>blue | 0.5%<br>green |
| **English Learners** | Not available | 0%<br>Very low | 0%<br>blue | 0%<br>blue | Not available |
| **Socioeconomically Disadvantaged** | 0%<br>blue | 0%<br>Very low | 0%<br>blue | 0%<br>blue | 0.6%<br>green |
| **Students with Disabilities** | Not available | 0%<br>Very low | 0%<br>blue | 0%<br>blue | Not available |
| **African American** | Not available | Not available | Not available | Not available | Not available |
| **Asian** | Not available | Not available | Not available | Not available | Not available |
| **Hispanic** | 0%<br>blue | 0%<br>Very low | 0%<br>blue | 0%<br>blue | 0.7%<br>green |

*The 2022 suspension indicator did not report colors to reflect growth/decline. It utilized status indicators (Very Low, Low, Medium, High, Very High)

## Graduation Rate in the Previous Term

| Groups | 2019 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Schoolwide** | 80%<br>No performance color | 78.6%<br>No performance level | 100%<br>No performance color | 97%<br>blue | 96.8%<br>blue |
| **English Learners** | Not available | Not available | Not available | Not available | Not available |
| **Socioeconomically Disadvantaged** | 77.8%<br>No performance color | 77.3%<br>No performance level | 100%<br>No performance color | 96.7%<br>No performance color available | 96.2%<br>No performance color |
| **Students with Disabilities** | Not available | Not available | Not available | Not available | Not available |
| **African American** | Not available | Not available | Not available | Not available | Not available |
| **Asian** | No available | Not available | Not available | Not available | Not available |
| **Hispanic** | 85.7%<br>No performance level | 88.9%<br>No performance level | 100%<br>No performance color | 96.7%<br>No performance color | 96%<br>No performance color |

*The 2022 graduation indicator did not report colors to reflect growth/decline. It utilized status indicators (Very Low, Low, Medium, High, Very High)

## Reflections on Successes and Opportunities for Growth

By reviewing data from the past five years, we have identified the following successes in academic performance and non-academic behaviors in MSCS students:

- Our schoolwide population has achieved modest but significant improvement in ELA and Math performance. For the 2025 school year, we are rated at yellow for ELA and orange for math. The student subpopulations for whom we have data have also achieved modest gains in math, and socioeconomically disadvantaged students also achieved modest gains in ELA.
- Our schoolwide English Learners and Long-term English learners have both increased their progress by approximately 15% in the past year
- In college and career preparedness, all students achieved a gain of approximately 8% over the past year, with student subpopulations achieving

similar gains

- Our chronic absenteeism rate has improved drastically for all groups since 2022 and has returned to around pre-pandemic levels
- Our suspension rate remains negligible, at only 0.5%
- Our graduation rate has improved drastically over the past 5 years. Today, virtually all (96%) MSCS students across all groups obtain their diplomas

We attribute the above successes to a variety of strategies we have implemented since the pandemic, which include:

- Universal SEL support and as-needed SEL groups and clinical counseling
- Increased access to extracurricular activities, including arts and sports
- Consistent use of standards-aligned A-G approved curriculum and CTE offerings
- 1:1 counselor meetings for every high school student that include multi-year planning and support for dual and/or concurrent enrollment for every student who is interested

In addition to these successes, we recognize opportunities for continued growth and improvement in our students meeting academic standards in ELA and Math and graduating students who are college and career ready. Overall, while Merced Scholars Charter School is making strides in attendance, intervention implementation, and some academic growth areas, there is an urgent need to address the academic gaps for all students and for student subgroups, to strengthen instructional coherence in ELA and Math, and to ensure that students leave our school ready for the adult world of work and postsecondary education.

## PART THREE: CHARTER ELEMENTS

The Charter Schools Act of 1992 provides that a petition must contain a reasonably comprehensive description of all elements in California Education Code 47605. This section will cover all fifteen elements and how MSCS achieves the components of each element.

### Element I: Description of Educational Program

***"The educational program of the charter school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the charter school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an "educated person" in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners."*** **(Ed. Code § 47605.6(b)(5)(A)(i).)**

***"The annual goals for the charter school for all pupils and for each subgroup of pupils identified pursuant to Section 52052, to be achieved in the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school, and specific annual actions to achieve those goals. A charter petition may identify additional school priorities, the goals for the school priorities, and the specific annual actions to achieve those goals."*** **(Ed. Code § 47605.6(b)(5)(A)(ii).)**

### Mission and Philosophy

The vision, mission, and philosophy of MSCS cohesively work together to enable pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners who are prepared for the needs of an unpredictable future work environment. A report by The Economist Intelligence Unit in partnership with Google Education states that "we have no way of knowing what challenges tomorrow's graduates will face, and still less what jobs will exist for them to apply for." Each component of the school's overarching goal is aimed at developing the necessary characteristics for future success.

The vision of MSCS is as follows:
*Merced Scholars Charter School provides the most diverse and individualized program to students of all backgrounds in order to develop them into responsible and productive citizens.*

The mission of MSCS is as follows:
*Merced Scholars Charter School provides a personalized, versatile, agile program that is responsive to evolving community and global needs; thereby preparing students to become successful, responsible, and contributing citizens who read, write, communicate, and calculate with clarity and accuracy, using current technologies and resources.*

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

Because of the unpredictability of the future work environment, schools must prepare students for a global economy that we cannot currently imagine. Educated people in the 21st century will be required to have the tools necessary to problem solve; work in collaborative, multilingual environments; and to think outside the box for solutions. The vision, mission, and school philosophy are synced and closely aligned with the Six Cs of Education, which are the 21st century skills that today's students will need to be successful in the future workforce.

According to Michael Fullan, the Six Cs can be broken down as follows:

- Character Education
- Citizenship
- Communication
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Collaboration
- Creativity and Imagination

Michael Fullan states, "The overall purpose of these six Cs and their underlying DNA is the well-being of the whole student, and the well-being of society, which essentially consists of higher levels of student achievement and the capacity to apply what one knows. The fundamental purpose of education in an excellent system is to produce in all of its graduates — as close to 100 per cent as possible — the quality of leadership. By that we mean the capacity and commitment to act for one's own good and for the common good."

The Six Cs directly correlate to the schoolwide learner outcomes of making students productive citizens of their global community and to develop self-motivated and independent lifelong learners. The core of MSCS curriculum is centered around this idea. A look at MSCS's Schoolwide Learner Outcomes (SLOs) demonstrates the correlation between the 6Cs and the student outcomes. Graduates of MSCS will demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the school's expectations through the SLOs. The current SLOs state that graduates of MSCS will be:

I**. Motivated Academic Achievers Who:**

A. Demonstrate mastery of curriculum aligned to academic standards
B. Speak, read, write, and listen reflectively and critically in multiple languages
C. Calculate with accuracy and clarity
D. Are prepared to successfully pursue post-secondary education

E. Access global resources that enable them to make informed career choices
F. Effectively utilize technology

**II. Socially Responsible Citizens Who Demonstrate:**

A. Cultural awareness and appreciation of diversity
B. Responsibility, integrity, and respect for others
C. The ability to work as part of a team
D. Leadership and service within and outside their community
E. Initiative and agility in applying their learnings to address local and global issues

**III. Critical Thinkers Who:**

A. Identify and use resources effectively
B. Apply innovative solutions to complex problems
C. Understand the interconnectedness of social and work-related systems, both locally and globally

**IV. Self-Directed Learners Who:**

A. Develop and monitor personal education and career goals
B. Are committed to learning new skills and adapting to change

Students educated in 21st century skills will have the problem-solving, social, and self-motivating skills necessary for them to adapt to the ever-changing future work environment that is dependent on the masterful integration of technology.

**How Learning Best Occurs**

MSCS believes that learning best occurs in environments where students feel safe and secure to explore, understand, and problem solve in a community of individuals who wish to maximize their learning. MSCS believes that optimal learning environments are not only physically and emotionally safe but also contain the necessary support and structure to promote development of character and self-discipline. MSCS understands that such learning environments not only address the whole child but also address the 21st century skills needed by students for future success. The best way to think of these environments is as the support systems that organize the conditions in which humans learn. These systems accommodate the unique learning needs of every learner and support the positive human relationships needed for effective learning.

MSCS provides a unique program in which students are exposed to a multitude of learning environments. In the NCB program, the home is the primary environment for student learning. The school, including its facility, staff, classes, and all other elements,

provides support to the student in the overall process of learning. MSCS complies with all requirements for independent study set forth in MCOE Board Policy 6158 and Administrative Regulation 6158, and all legal requirements for independent study applicable to charter schools. MSCS has adopted new procedures in alignment with recent changes to the rules and regulations governing NCB programs, including:

- A minimum of 1 and up to 5 days a week of in-person touch points, depending on student need and grade level (general education, SAI, designated ELD, literacy intervention, and SEL supports)
- Daily, virtual small group check ins for TK-8
- CTE, dual enrollment, concurrent enrollment, and other community-based experiences for high school students
- Daily engagement logs for all NCB students
- Increased, targeted professional development on emotional intelligence and trauma-informed practices for all school staff
- Strategic use of tiered reengagement strategies that include phone calls home, home visits, SSTs, and SART meetings.
- Teachers meet legal requirements for assignment per California law under EC 44865.
- A current independent study master agreement (Master Agreement) for each MSCS student participating in independent study be maintained on file, and will include, at a minimum, all of the requirements set forth in Education Code section 51747(g). Each written Master Agreement shall be signed, prior to commencement of independent study, by the pupil, the parent or caregiver if the pupil is less than 18 years of age, the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study, and the certificated employee designated as having responsibility of the special education programming of the pupil, as applicable.

Under the MDLA program, MSCS provides a TK– 4 classroom-based program centered on developing a student's social, emotional, and academic skills. The program will add grade 5 in the 2026-2027 school year. The MDLA program takes an asset-based approach to student learning. To create an encouraging and positive learning environment, the program focuses on student assets rather than their deficits to allow students to thrive and succeed. As such, there are components critical to helping students in the overall learning process.

Whether it is the home, school, or college environment, there exists a given set of conditions that must be maximized for optimal learning. In such environments, learning best occurs when:

- The learning environment is safe, supportive, and respectful
- Teachers are cognizant of individual student needs
- Parents are committed to their students' education and recognize the importance of guidance and parental support
- Appropriately credentialed and/or authorized teachers utilize effective teaching methodologies
- Students and parents are provided all the educational materials and resources necessary for success
- Curriculum and instruction is based on real life applications and the subject matter is appropriate, relevant, challenging, and intellectually stimulating.
- Students are allowed to be creative and have voice and choice
- Learning opportunities are expanded by accessing various segments of the community and through partnerships with community-based organizations as well as private and public agencies
- Students understand that learning tasks have purpose, meaning, and application in and beyond the academic setting

Based on the belief in personalized learning and what best supports such learning, MSCS has a school philosophy that targets those specific qualities that have made our educational program successful. At MSCS, we believe that:

- MSCS must strive to meet or exceed the academic standards set forth by the State of California.
- Every child is capable of excelling in a personalized learning environment.
- Instruction should be adapted to meet the needs of the individual student.
- Parental involvement is a necessary component to the success of a child's overall educational growth and well-being.
- Dedicated staff, parents, and students should work as a cohesive unit to foster a love of learning and a commitment to responsible citizenship.
- Parents and educators must value partnerships with business and the community at large.
- Students who take ownership of their education will be life-long learners.
- Education must include academic, personal, and social development.
- Students must be provided with the tools to understand lifelong decision-making.
- Schools must practice sound management of business operations.

**Student Population to be Served**

MSCS is located in the City of Merced and serves students from Merced County and any contiguous county seeking alternatives to the traditional, comprehensive school campus environment. At the time the original charter petition was developed, the ability to access local, non-traditional educational resources was a critical need for families in

Merced County. Many students and parents were looking for opportunities for a rigorous education program that would lead to excellent academic performance through flexibility in both scheduling and curriculum delivery. This trend continues through the current day with more students seeking to enroll in the school each year.

The students who attend MSCS are representative of both the city and county of Merced and other school districts in general. Students who attend the school seek to complete their high school education and then proceed to the workforce, community college, and/or the university system. The 2024-2025 grade level distribution of MSCS students was:

| Grade | Number of students |
|---|---|
| TK | 24 |
| K | 25 |
| 1 | 20 |
| 2 | 25 |
| 3 | 13 |
| 4 | 14 |
| 5 | 6 |
| 6 | 17 |
| 7 | 26 |
| 8 | 25 |
| 9 | 33 |
| 10 | 40 |
| 11 | 36 |
| 12 | 30 |
| **Total** | **334** |

As we consider enrollment for the term of this renewal petition, it is important to look at MSCS's two programs separately. The current enrollment at MSCS-NCB is 266 students in grades TK-12, with a target of 316 students for the 2026-2027 school year with the anticipated addition of instructional staff to our Los Banos site. The MSCS-NCB program could sustain up to 346 students with the addition of one more teacher, should community demand arise. We anticipate a gradual increase of enrollment at the high school level. This gradual increase allows us to continue serving local families who are looking for a high-quality NCB program, while also allowing our program to continue to bolster our system-wide practices with a lens toward sustainability. Based on MSCS's NCB waitlist, and the program's consistent two-decade demand, we are confident in our ability to sustain these numbers. It is important to note that the NCB program, when looked at independent of the MDLA program, is entirely fiscally stable and capable of generating a small reserve for emergency funding.

| Five Year Enrollment Plan (NCB) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grades | 26-27 | 27-28 | 28-29 | 29-30 | 30-31 |
| TK-5 | 52 | 52 | 52 | 52 | 52 |
| 6-8 | 99 | 99 | 99 | 99 | 99 |
| 9-12 | 165 | 180 | 180 | 195 | 195 |
| Total | 316 | 331 | 331 | 346 | 346 |

When MDLA was first approved, the vision was to create an expansive Dual Language option in the Merced area. With the opening of other local Dual Language options, and other mitigating factors, MDLA did not experience the enrollment boom that it anticipated. Despite that, it has become a beloved cornerstone in our community with an engaged parent population. With the lessons learned from our first four years of operating the Merced Dual Language Academy, we have scaled back growth projections to target our enrollment at 204 students and our grade levels at TK-5$^{th}$ grade. The table below shows these adjustments.

The decision to reduce enrollment targets was not taken lightly. As a county authorized charter, MSCS's role is to provide high quality alternatives, when needed, to the community. Keeping a conservative enrollment target will allow administrative energies to be focused on the quality of the program being provided, ensuring that MDLA's families are well served with the program they have selected. To achieve these numbers, MSCS will implement a clear, actionable recruitment strategy that includes elements such as radio ads, presence at community events, printed promotional materials, and parent advocacy.

| Five Year Enrollment Plan (MDLA) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Grade** | **26-27** | **Grade** | **28-29 through 30-31** |
| TK | 24 | TK | 24 |
| K | 30 | K | 30 |
| 1 | 30 | 1 | 30 |
| 2 | 30 | 2 | 30 |
| 3 | 30 | 3 | 30 |
| 4-5 | 30 | 4 | 30 |
| **Total** | **174** | 5 | 30 |
| | | **Total** | **204** |

These two charts, taken together target MSCS enrollment at 550 students in the combined programs. It is important to note that the scaling back of enrollment at MDLA has created budgetary challenges; MDLA is not yet able to sustain itself fiscally. As a dependent charter, MDLA has entered into an MOU with our authorizer, MCOE, for a 2-year budget subsidy of approximately $1.5 million, which will cover the deficit created by MDLA's under enrollment. While this is not a long-term solution, it is a much-needed

collaborative stop-gap that will allow MDLA a path toward fiscal stability. We are also open to renewing the MOU with our authorizer at the end of the 2-year term, should such a subsidy remain in the best interest of Merced County. Should we not achieve fiscal sustainability by year 5, we will elect to self-close the MDLA program.

**Annual Goals and Annual Actions to Achieve Them**

The annual goals for the school are developed and monitored through the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) process. The goals support the school's overarching mission of preparing students for their post-secondary life. The following tables show the goals for the school through 2031. Also included are the actions associated with each goal and the metrics associated with the goals.

| **LCFF STATE PRIORITIES** | |
|---|---|
| GOAL #1 | |
| *All students will demonstrate growth in academic achievement towards meeting or exceeding CCSS standards in the areas of English Language Arts, math, science, and English proficiency to be ultimately College & Career ready upon graduation.* | **Related State Priorities:** 1, 2, 4, 7, 8 |
| Actions | |
| Action 1.1, Technology Plan - To ensure continuous access to technology for our core and supplemental curriculum, we will create and implement a strategic technology refresh plan to provide devices/accessories/connection/repair to our students and instructional staff for learning and enrichment purposes.<br><br>Action 1.2, Schoolwide Data Plan / Assessments - The school will review and refine the assessment system annually to determine: 1) if the program is effective, 2) it can support all learners including English Learners and Special Education students, and 3) the data produced is cohesive across the system.<br><br>Action 1.3, Guidance and Counseling - To support the needs of students staying on track to college & career success, our academic counselor will create, monitor, and update 6-year plans and individualized learning plans.<br><br>Action 1.4 College and Career Readiness Pathways - Students who are able to take college courses while in high school are more likely to continue with college after graduation. To encourage students to continue, especially for students from underrepresented populations, the school will provide dual enrollment options for students as well as encourage students to attend other courses at the college itself. The school will continue to purchase the textbooks and other materials for students taking concurrent classes at Merced College. To help students understand their college and career options, the school will provide field trips to colleges, universities, technical training programs, and select businesses to help students envision their post-high school options. The trips will target students considered low income, English Learner, and Foster Youth. The academic counselor will provide supports to include signing up for college and financial aid, transcript review, and record keeping.<br><br>Action 1.5, Highly Qualified core staff - Continue to employ and maintain certificated and classified employees with appropriate skills, credentials, and authorizations to work with students.<br><br>Action 1.6, Professional Development – Based on the data and staff input, professional development will be | |

provided in the form of coaching in instructional strategies regarding math, English language arts and English Language Development. Staff will also be encouraged to attend workshops and conferences provided by MCOE and other districts.

Action 1.7 Instructional Support Staff - School data shows a need for supplemental instructional opportunities for low income, foster youth, English learner, and special education students. MSCS will assign and/or hire additional instructional support staff to provide individualized and small group tutoring. Students will be identified for additional support based on assessment data, grades, social/emotional needs, by the Student Study Team (SST), or by an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Team.

Action 1.8, Supplemental Staff & Instructional Materials/Supports - To address academic performance gaps and improve student access to instructional support, the LEA will provide supplemental instructional materials and staffing focused on the needs of Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SED), Foster Youth (FY), and English Learner (EL) students. This includes purchasing intervention and remediation materials—primarily in ELA and Math—as well as additional subject- specific resources based on teacher recommendations. Supplemental staff will also be employed to support learning access, ensure accurate identification of student needs, and improve reporting for programs contributing to the College & Career Indicator (CCI).

Action 1.9, Elementary Core Curriculum - To support the implementation of the elementary grades, the school will seek and refine NCB and dual language immersion curriculum that supports the needs of all students in each program.

Action 1.10, Secondary Core and Elective Curriculum - Students of all backgrounds must be held to high levels of academic rigor and expectations. To support this belief, the school will maintain, refine, and/or revise the curriculum offerings and materials. This includes revising current a-g offerings and providing more in not only the core curriculum, but in CTE options as well. To support students with college and career exploration, the school will add more elective courses for students to explore areas of interest. In addition, the school will evaluate its CTE offerings and determine the need to increase or change the courses and pathways offered at the school.

Action 1.11, Supplemental EL Instruction and Materials - To work on English fluency among our English Learners with a goal of having ELs reclassified before their 7th year of ELD instruction begins, the school will use Benchmark Advance/Adelante for ELA/ELD and English 3D supplemental program for 4th-12$^{th}$ grade English Learners, provide designated ELD support classes, practice with ELPAC Interim practice tests, and provide classes, specific and targeted supports, and workshops specific to English learners.

Action 1.12, MTSS Tiered Intervention System (Academic) - School data shows a need for improvement in academics, especially mathematics. To address this need, the school will utilize and refine a tiered intervention system based on diagnostic, benchmark, and state assessments as well as students' grades, staff, and parent input. Interventions for TK-2 will be determined primarily by staff and parent input, on-to-one instruction, transitional goal support, and scaffolded assignments.

Action 1.13. Individualized Learning - To provide continued support for our students with disabilities, provide individualized support in grade level lessons and assignments and in progress towards individual goals including transitional goals. Students will also receive career skills such as resume writing. Students in NCB receive one-to-one supports from their assigned teacher. Core teachers will provide scaffolded supports and modified assignments, which includes teacher created supplemental curriculum.

Action 1.14. Transportation for Learning Recovery - According to our local climate surveys, students identified lack of transportation as one of the top 2 reasons for not attending school. To reduce this barrier and increase attendance rates, MSCS will provide transportation by bus/van/bus tokens to students to attend support sessions during the week.

Action 1.15. Development of Dual Language Immersion Program - Continue to grow the dual language immersion program with increased enrollment and addition of a new grade level each year. We anticipate

| when students emerge from our program they will be fluent in two languages which will lead to success in middle school and high school and beyond. Students will earn the Seal of Biliteracy in high school and be prepared for College & Career. | | |
|---|---|---|
| Measuring and Reporting Results | | |
| Metric | Baseline | Desired Outcome for 2026-2031 |
| Metric 1.1 CAASPP: English Language Arts Distance from Standard | 2022/23<br>ALL 35.1 points below standard<br>SED 44.5 points below standard<br>Hispanic 33.9 points below standard<br>EL 62.2 points below standard | ALL 10 points below standard<br>SED 20 points below standard<br>Hispanic 20 points below standard<br>EL 40 points below standard |
| Metric 1.2 CAASPP: Math Distance from Standard | 2023/24<br>ALL 134.2 points below standard<br>SED 131.6 points below standard<br>Hispanic 140.5 points below standard<br>EL 171.1 points below standard | ALL 100 points below standard<br>SED 100 points below standard<br>Hispanic 100 points below standard<br>EL 150 points below standard |
| Metric 1.3 CAASPP: Science Distance from Standard | 2023/24<br>ALL 19.7 points below standard<br>SED 19.9 points below standard<br>Hispanic 21.3 points below standard<br>EL 32.2 points below standard" | TBD |
| Metric 1.4 English Learner Progress (ELPI) | 2022/23 ELs 40.9% making progress | 60% of English Learners making progress |
| Metric 1.5 EL Reclassification Rate | 2023/2024 3% reclassified | 10% proficient |
| Metric 1.6 Access to a Broad Course of Study | 100% | 100% |
| Metric 1.7 STAR 360 Reading | Grade level proficiency at/above 50<br>SGP/Below 50 SGP<br>All Students 48%/52%<br>EL 32%/68%<br>FY 0%/100%<br>SED 46%/54%<br>SWD 56%/44%<br>Hispanic 47%/53% | Grade level proficiency at/above 50<br>SGP/Below 50<br>SGP<br>All Students 60%/40%<br>EL 50%/50%<br>FY 50%/50%<br>SED 60%/40%<br>SWD 65%/35%<br>Hispanic 60%/40% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Metric 1.8 STAR 360 Mathematics | 2023-24<br><br>Grade Level Proficiency<br>At/Above 50 SGP/Below 50 SGP<br>All Students 43%/57%<br>EL 52%/48%<br>FY 0%/100%<br>SED 44%/66%<br>SWD 36%/64%<br>Hispanic 43%/57% | Grade level Proficiency<br>At/Above 50 SGP/Below 50 SGP<br>All Students 60%/40%<br>EL 60%/40%<br>FY 50%/50%<br>SED 60%/40%<br>SWD 50%/50%<br>Hispanic 60%/40% |
| Metric 1.9 Exact Path Intervention Program | 2023/24 - 700 achievements | 1,000 achievements |
| Metric 1.10 STAR 360 Grade Level Measure | 2023/24 -<br>2+ grade levels below 57.1%<br>2 years below 42.9%<br>1 grade below 0%<br>On Grade 0%<br>Above Grade 0% | On/above grade 20% |
| Metric 1.11 State reflection tool - Providing Professional Learning for teaching ELA/Math/ELD | 2023-24 (5 point rating)<br>Actual -<br>ELA avg 3.77<br>ELD avg 3.46<br>Math avg 3.69 | ELA avg 4.0<br>ELD avg 4.0<br>Math avg 4.0 |
| Metric 1.12 State reflection tool - Having CCSS aligned instructional materials in ELA/Math/ELD | 2023-24 (5 point rating)<br>Actual -<br>ELA avg 3.77<br>ELD avg 3.62<br>Math avg 3.77 | ELA avg 4.0<br>ELD avg 4.0<br>Math avg 4.0 |
| Metric 1.13 State reflection tool - Implementing programs to support staff in instructional improvement aligned to CCSS in ELA/Math/ELD | 2023-24 (5 point rating)<br>Actual -<br>ELA avg 3.46<br>ELD avg 3.38<br>Math avg 3.38 | ELA avg 4.0<br>ELD avg 4.0<br>Math avg 4.0 |
| Metric 1.14 College & Career Indicator (CCI) | 2022/23 - ALL 8.8% Prepared Status | ALL students 35% or more Prepared Status - Medium |
| Metric 1.15 % of students taking Merced College courses | 2023/24 - 92/297 = 31% | 50% |
| Metric 1.16 A-G Completion Rate | 2022/23 = 0% | 10% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Metric 1.17 Graduates Earning a Seal of Biliteracy | 2022/23 = 1 student | 5 students |
| Metric 1.18 # of CTE Completers | 2022/23 = 15 senior completers | 30 student completers |
| Metric 1.19 Graduation Rate | 2022/23 = 100% | 100% |
| Metric 1.20 Teachers are Fully Credentialed for placement (properly assigned) SARC | 2021/22 - 17.58% Fully credentialed and proper placement 25.36% Ineffective (without proper credential) 53.59% Out of Field - using the local assignment option" | 50% Fully credentialed and proper placement 0% Ineffective (without proper credential) 50% Out of Field - using the local assignment option |

| **LCFF STATE PRIORITIES** | |
|---|---|
| GOAL #2 | |
| Safe, Inclusive, and Positive School Culture - Maintain a safe, welcoming learning environment where all students feel connected and engaged with the school while increasing support so students can develop and maintain their social/emotional health and well-being." | **Related State Priorities:** 3,5,6 |

Actions

Action 2.1. Safe Learning Environment - To promote a safe school learning environment we will employ Campus Supervisors to build rapport with students, maintain a safe school environment (including off campus school experiences), and conduct home visits to develop the school/family connection. MSCS will monitor online school safety with a management program.

Action 2.2. Parent Communication - Ensure staff is in regular contact with the parent. Such contact will include the use of Parent Square for messages to all students or a select group of students, conference calls with parents and staff, individual meetings with parents, students, and staff. Bilingual staff will translate supports for families that require it.

Action 2.3. Family Engagement Events and Workshops - We will host a series of inclusive school events—such as Open House, Back to School Night, Awards Night, and cultural celebrations—alongside monthly parent workshops and training sessions. These workshops will provide families with tools to support student attendance, academic success, and well-being. Events and sessions will be scheduled throughout the year to promote consistent engagement, with focused outreach to families of unduplicated pupils. Bilingual supports and flexible formats (e.g., in-person, virtual) will be offered to remove participation barriers and ensure that all families feel welcomed, informed, and empowered to support their child's education.

Action 2.4. Community Engagement and Outreach - To better support the needs of students facing adverse conditions, the school will partner with community agencies and seek resources to better support the needs of the whole child. Through marketing and promotion, the school will create partnerships and seek donations to support students' and their families' economic and social emotional needs.

Action 2.5. School Field Trips - To create a sense of belonging and engagement with the school and staff, the school will provide field trips to better connect students with the school and other students.

Action 2.6, Professional Development for Staff in Improving the School Climate - We identified the importance of addressing needs in the area of social-emotional wellness by providing students with the proper coping skills to build resiliency. We will conduct workshops and purchase curriculum so staff and students can work on such topics as stress management, intrapersonal skills, dealing with trauma, and building a positive view of self. We will also provide professional development and resources to promote social-emotional wellness.

Action 2.7, Social-Emotional Supports (MTSS) and Positive Behavior Systems - We will refine and implement a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for social-emotional wellness, ensuring students experiencing trauma or adverse conditions receive timely, targeted support. The counseling team will identify students in universal, strategic, and intensive tiers and lead workshops focused on resiliency, coping skills, and emotional regulation. To reinforce these efforts and foster a positive school climate, we will integrate a system of behavior-based incentives using PBIS. Students will earn recognition for positive behavior, engagement, and personal growth, promoting both emotional well-being and a stronger sense of connection to the school community.

Action 2.8. STEAM Education, Including Arts and Music - Student surveys sought more opportunities for the arts. To achieve this, the school will provide workshops in music and art through school staff, district personnel, and outside agencies.

Action 2.9. MTSS Tiered Intervention System (Attendance) - The school will utilize and refine the tiered attendance system. The School Attendance Review Team (SART) will identify students in the universal, strategic, and targeted support categories and identify re-engagement strategies to decrease absences.

| Measuring and Reporting Results | | |
|---|---|---|
| Metric | Baseline | Desired Outcome for 2026-2031 |
| Metric 2.1 School facilities are maintained and in good repair as measured by the SARC | 2023-24 = Good Overall Rating | Good Overall Rating |
| Metric 2.2 Pupil Suspension Rate | 0% | 0% |
| Metric 2.3 School Spring Climate Surveys % Students with Positive Ratings | School Safety 99%<br>Support from School Staff 93%<br>Sense of Belonging 57%<br>Sense of Engagement 27% | School Safety 100%<br>Support from School Staff 100%<br>Sense of Belonging 75%<br>Sense of Engagement 50% |
| Metric 2.4 Pupil Graduation Rate | 100% | 100% |
| Metric 2.5 # of SEL workshops conducted | 13 | 15 |
| Metric 2.6 Attendance Rate as measured by P2 - All Students | 97% | 98% |
| Metric 2.7 Chronic absenteeism rate (K-8) | 2022/23<br>ALL 31.1%<br>SED 38.5%<br>Hispanic 37.3%<br>ELs 47.8%<br>SWD 40.7% | ALL 15%<br>SED 20%<br>Hispanic 20%<br>ELs 25%<br>SWD 25% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Metric 2.8 Local data plan - students with 10 or more absences in fall semester for students enrolled longer than 30 days | 7.2% | 5% |
| Metric 2.9 # of parent workshops | 11 | 15 |
| Metric 2.10 # of incidents reported on Securly | 2025/26 is baseline year | TBD |

The overarching goal of MSCS is to provide a program and environment that develops and enhances those skills and abilities that will make students successful in their post-secondary education and career. By creating an environment in which students can focus on academics and those social skills needed for life success, MSCS students will be prepared to attend a college or join the workforce upon graduation. Through the LCAP process, MSCS community members, parents, students, and staff have an avenue for participating in the school goal setting process as well as holding the school accountable to those actions and goals set forth each year. The school's goals as defined in the LCAP are derived and developed based not only on stakeholder input, but on the school's vision, mission, philosophy, and the schoolwide learner outcomes. Ultimately, MSCS seeks to develop students into lifelong learners who become productive citizens of their community. Students who graduate from MSCS will have the tools and resources necessary to be independent and self-motivated individuals.

MSCS shall annually update and develop the LCAP in accordance with Education Code Section 47606.5 and shall use the LCAP template adopted by the State Board of Education. The Charter School reserves the right to establish additional and/or amend school-specific goals and corresponding assessments throughout the duration of the charter term through the annual LCAP update. The Charter School shall submit the LCAP to the County Superintendent of Schools annually on or before July 1, as required by Education Code Section 47604.33(a)(2). As the LCAP undergoes annual updates, charter goals may be modified in conjunction with the plan and these updates shall not constitute a material revision to the charter.

The annual goals, actions, and metrics associated with each combine to create the MSCS system of "one school, all students." This idea recognizes that the needs of students are diverse and different from one student to the next. While some students may require academic support, most students are now requiring more instruction in behavior and social/emotional support. Such support has now shifted the school environment from one focused on academics to one focused on the holistic needs of the student – academic, behavioral, and social/emotional. As such, the focus of MSCS will

be on developing the whole child and instilling students with the necessary 21st century skills for future success. According to the Partnership for 21st Century Skills White Paper, “Academic achievement, as research from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) shows, is inextricably intertwined with social, emotional, and physical health. Thus, 21st century learning environments address the multiple and interconnected learning needs of the whole child.” Educating the whole child is essential to developing 21st century skills.

**Instructional Design**

MSCS is committed to providing students with high-quality instruction that adheres to five basic design principles:

1. Instructional programs that incorporate an enrichment rather than remedial approach, establishing high expectations for all students;
2. Program models that reflect the use of research-based instructional practices;
3. Programs that provide students with a rigorous instructional program designed to accelerate learning;
4. Programs that develop academic English and in the dual-language immersion program, high levels of academic proficiency in the native language;
5. Programs that provide students with access to grade level content standards.

To support the whole child, MSCS provides two programs: the NCB program and the MDLA program. The NCB program serves students in grades TK through twelve and the MDLA program serves grades TK through fifth . Both models focus on supporting the needs of the whole child and providing students the opportunities to be prepared for the global economy.

*NONCLASSROOM-BASED (NCB) PROGRAM*

The whole child approach was developed through the school’s participation in the California Scaling Up MTSS (SUMS) Initiative. MSCS has transformed the MTSS model into the idea of one school, all students. This model incorporates a variety of supports for students that are centered on the student’s needs. Based on this understanding, the core of the instructional program at MSCS continues to be focused on the belief that instruction should be personalized. The NCB setting where students meet one-on-one with certificated staff is one of the environments where this can occur. The belief, as is expressed in the school’s philosophy, is that every child is capable of excelling in a personalized learning environment. The key that makes this instructional design effective is the flexibility it allows for students in their educational plan.

To support the school program, MTSS includes supports and interventions to meet the needs of students. Students throughout their K-12 education are developing the

academic, social/emotional, and behavioral skills needed to be successful in future grades. Regular monitoring and assessment are important to ensure students make continuous progress. Interventions are in place for all studen and are also available to support the parent as the parent is a crucial part of the education of their child. Tutors work with parents and students to support students when they are struggling or need additional help. Students in all grades also have at least one support or enrichment class weekly to work on the student's social/emotional and behavioral development as well as their academic development. Data is reviewed regularly to ensure that proper supports are in place or modified as needed.

MSCS students are those who wish to participate in, and whose families are committed to, an NCB learning experience. MSCS provides a flexible learning option for these students, who experience a unique blend of teacher and parent-led instruction. Students receive the majority of their instruction in their home environments. However, students have a wide variety of opportunities to participate in activities on site such as support classes, student clubs, workshops, tutoring, and, most importantly, their required one-on-one personalized learning sessions with credentialed teaching staff. MSCS is very unique in the area in regards to this hybrid design for learning.

During the personalized learning session (PLS), the teacher meets with the student and sometimes parents to review the work the student was assigned for the previous week. The work is reviewed and graded and any concepts not understood may be retaught. The teacher will then assign the upcoming week's work and review and explain if time permits. The topics covered in the PLS are student-driven and based on student need. For example, a student needing additional help in math may spend more time on that and less time on other subjects. During the PLS, teacher and student are able to connect and build a relationship that will best support the student's success at MSCS.

To ensure that MSCS students reap the full benefits of individualized learning that requires a fairly high level of independent study, MSCS carefully monitors the effectiveness of its core and supplemental program, for adherence to and implementation of its educational philosophy. MSCS ensures that students make independent academic progress through access to:

- Professionally designed, research-based curriculum that aligns with the California Common Core State Standards
- Instructional time with certificated teachers
- Courses that meet the UC/CSU a-g requirements
- Classroom-based support classes
- Online courses

- Tutoring, mentoring, and other support to ensure academic success
- Computer and science labs
- Enrichment programs, such as leadership courses and community service opportunities
- Workplace-readiness programs, such as Career Technical Education (CTE) courses and pathways, employability workshops, etc.
- College preparation, including advising and assistance with financial aid documents
- State-mandated standardized testing
- Field trips and other special events and activities

The academic focus of MSCS continues to be on providing a rigorous college-oriented program offered in an alternative setting. MSCS understands that students are at different levels of abilities and preparation when it comes to college and career readiness. By addressing the needs of the whole child, MSCS believes a tiered system that addresses this need will help to bridge the gap among students and allow the opportunity for all students to attend college.

Attendance in the NCB program is calculated and supported according to California Education Code regarding Independent Study programs, including how attendance is tracked, recorded, reported for apportionment/ADA, time value of work products, evaluation of assignments, and compliance with related policies. Please see the attendance policy in the student handbook in the Appendices.

*Merced Dual Language Academy (MDLA)*
Although based on a more traditional mode of education, the MDLA follows many of the same precepts as the NCB program. The focus on the needs of the whole child in a safe and welcoming learning environment is critical in the MDLA model as well. To be willing to step out of their comfort zone and learn a new language, students must feel safe and supported to use trial and error to become successful in their language acquisition. Further, the personalized aspect of the NCB program translates to the classroom settings where teachers and other staff make connections and build relationships to support the individual needs of the students.

**MDLA Spanish/English Program**
This program enrolls both English learners and native English speakers in a classroom in which academic instruction is provided in both English and Spanish. On a typical day, students receive instruction in the primary language (English) fifty-percent of the time and in the partner language (Spanish) the other fifty-percent. This model of dual-language immersion is known as the 50/50 model. Academics in this model will be such

that students develop oral proficiency and reading/writing skills in both languages. Both languages are also used to provide students with grade-level instruction. For example, students will receive instruction in mathematics in both English and Spanish. In the 50/50 model, English and Spanish are used in equal proportions at every grade level. The allocation of time in English and Spanish for reading/language arts instruction is the same in both models; the allocation of time in the other curricular areas varies, however, to maintain these percentages of language use.

The MDLA program is designed to provide equal benefits to both Spanish and English speakers and promote equitable levels of status for both groups. The model establishes three broad goals for students:

1. All students develop high levels of both social and academic proficiency, including literacy, in English and Spanish.
2. By grade 6, students demonstrate mastery of grade-level content standards in both English and Spanish.
3. All students develop high levels of self-esteem, appreciate and understand the values of other cultures, and demonstrate cross-cultural competence.

**Instructional Minutes (50/50 Model)**

| **Grade Levels** | **Spanish** | **English** |
|---|---|---|
| **TK/K**<br><br>**200 minutes** | Spanish reading/language arts (50 minutes)<br><br>Math (50 minutes) | ELD (30-50 minutes)<br><br>English early literacy/phonics (10 minutes)<br><br>Other subjects (40 minutes) |
| **1 - 3**<br><br>**280 minutes** | Spanish reading/language arts (75 minutes)<br><br>Math (30 minutes)<br><br>Other subjects (40 minutes) | ELD (30-50 minutes)<br><br>English reading/language arts (75 minutes)<br><br>Math (30 minutes) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **4 - 6**<br><br>**300 minutes** | Spanish reading/language arts (60 minutes)<br><br>Math (30 minutes)<br><br>Other subjects (40 minutes) | ELD (30-50 minutes)<br><br>English reading/language arts (60 minutes)<br><br>Math (30 minutes)<br><br>Other subjects (40 minutes) |

**Curriculum and Instruction**

The core of the MSCS curriculum is focused on the California Common Core Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. To support English Learners, core subjects also include the California English Language Development (ELD) Standards. While the science and history/social science curriculum is based on the current California state standards, the New Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and new history/social science standards are implemented. Students receive appropriate grade level state standards-aligned materials including reading and math interventions, if needed. Core content materials are aligned with the State of California adopted frameworks and standards. Some key features and components of MSCS's educational program for the core subject areas are as follows.

(Note: for the MDLA program, curriculum is selected along the same criteria as that selected for the NCB program. While MSCS seeks materials that have multi-language translations, all materials are reviewed by the school staff for accuracy to the partner language. Not all multilingual materials from all publishers adhere to the strict standards set forth for dual-language instruction).

**English Language Arts** One of the curricular goals at MSCS is to improve, maintain, and extend literacy across all core content areas. This goal begins with a solid foundation in English language arts (ELA). Every ELA course at MSCS adheres to the state standards with the four high school courses also meeting the UC/CSU a-g requirement. In the ELA courses, students will demonstrate strong reading, writing, listening, speaking, and presentation skills and adapt these skills to respond to the varying demands of an audience, task, purpose, and discipline. Students will demonstrate comprehension as well as critique multiple forms of expression, including identifying evidence from increasingly complex literature and informational text. In the

MDLA program, rigorous and quality materials will be provided in the native and parent language. The goal, like the NCB program, is to improve, maintain, and extend literacy in both languages so dual immersion students become not just bilingual, but biliterate. ELA curriculum and instruction, therefore, will be focused on the formal academic instruction so students develop the academic skills in both languages.

**English Language Development/English as a Second Language** For the NCB program, students who have been identified as an English Learner (EL) will be enrolled in a Designated English Language Development course. The purpose of the course is to support EL students in the core curriculum and continue to develop their English language skills. The course itself incorporates adopted ELD, currently English 3D. Additionally, MSCS provides integrated ELD for all EIs and LTELs. These components provide EL students the additional support needed for success in their academic program. With the MDLA program, students are provided with language instruction and curriculum in English and Spanish in a 50/50 dual immersion model.

**Mathematics** Mathematics at MSCS continues to focus on developing and refining students' problem solving and critical thinking skills. The goal of the high school a-g mathematics courses (Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II) offered is the continued focus on providing students the foundation for college level mathematics. This math path allows college-going students to have access to higher level mathematics and is consistent with other schools prioritizing a-g graduation opportunities. Other math courses including Math Support, Pre-Algebra, Business Math, and the grade level math courses for middle school and elementary all focus on the eight mathematical practices outlined in the common core standards. For the MDLA program, mathematics is taught in both languages through the majority of the program.

**History-Social Science** Literacy development has also been extended to the history-social science curriculum. Each course will focus on four major components: content, inquiry, literacy, and citizenship. The middle school students follow the current structure of Ancient, Medieval, and U.S. History while the high school courses focus on World History, U.S. History, and American Government/Economics. All of the high school history-social science courses meet the UC/CSU a-g requirement. Students utilize a variety of instructional strategies including, but not limited to, collecting, evaluating, and employing information from multiple primary and secondary sources in order to construct and test hypotheses that demonstrate the connections, causal and otherwise, between particular historical events and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments. Students understand and apply civic, historical, and geographical knowledge in order to serve as responsible citizens in today's global environment. In MDLA, instruction in the partner language is similar and meets the same rigor and

quality. The partner language in which History-Social Science is taught will vary by grade level.

**Science** Science courses at MSCS focus on the core areas of science of Life Science and Physical Science. Biology, an a-g approved course with lab classes offered on site, prepares students for college coursework. Other courses such as Earth Science, Life Science, Physical Science, and the middle school strand of science courses all focus on developing student's scientific inquiry and analytical skills. As the school transitions to the NGSS, courses will be updated, added, or replaced to include the crucial component of engineering design and using science to address and solve real world issues. The MDLA program extends these concepts in both languages. The project-based nature of science instruction can be utilized across languages and written and communication skills developed in both languages.

Some key features and components of MSCS's educational program for the other subject areas are as follows:

**Visual and Performing Arts** MSCS offers a course in Fine Art that meets the UC/CSU a-g requirement. Art I and II are also offered to students. MCOE Policy 6146.1 recognizes that a course in career technical education (CTE) can be counted as meeting the visual and performing arts requirement as long as the course is aligned to the career technical model curriculum standards and framework. With the increase in technology offerings at the school, MSCS will encourage students to take courses in both the arts and CTE technology courses to meet this requirement.

**Health and Physical Education** As part of the graduation requirements, each student who graduates from MSCS is required to have at least one semester in Health and two years of physical education. MSCS believes in the importance of both physical and mental health. While these courses are sufficient to meet the graduation requirements, MSCS is looking at improving on these courses so that they focus on the whole child including their physical, mental, and socio-emotional needs.

**World Languages** In the NCB program, MSCS offers Spanish I, II, and III for high school students wishing to study a foreign language. Each of these courses meet the UC/CSU a-g requirement for a foreign language. For those students seeking to learn other languages, MSCS partners with Merced College to provide students with additional languages, including American Sign Language. The MDLA program offers Spanish to the elementary classroom-based program. In doing so, the school extends foreign language opportunities in Spanish to students in grades seven through twelve in the NCB program.

**Electives** Electives at MSCS have shifted focus to areas of possible future jobs and careers. Courses such as Introduction to Programming, Advanced Robotics, and Web Technologies all seek to provide students with the skills that will be the basis for future technologies. However, other courses such as Leadership and Financial Literacy have not lost sight of the fact that students will continue to need those life skills to collaborate and communicate effectively with others. Each high school student is required to have 40 elective credits for graduation. Additional elective courses can be fulfilled through dual enrollment with Merced College.

For a comprehensive list of graduation requirements, courses offered, and how the course meets either a graduation, a-g, or other requirement, please see the MSCS Student and Family Handbook in the Appendices.

The uniqueness of MSCS that sets it apart from other programs is the hybrid nature of the program that allows a great level of flexibility in a student's education while maintaining the rigor of the state standards. The gamut of student plans varies from the more traditional at-home, independent study model to the college-like course offerings available on campus the a dual-language classroom-based program for elementary students. Most students fall in the middle of the spectrum where their learning plan will have some mixture of at-home course work, support classes on site, workshops, tutoring, extracurricular activities, and/or classes at Merced College.

MSCS is always looking at providing programs that enhance a student's learning. Over the past two years, online programs have been implemented through the Edmentum Learning Management System. Courses in Edmentum have been used more over the past few years. The onset of the pandemic forced the school to shift to an online learning environment to maintain the continuity of instruction and learning while both student and staff worked remotely. The continued, flexible use of such a program allows our small school to provide more opportunities for students while maintaining high levels of expectation. With rigorous and updated courses across all grade spans, including a-g courses for high school, the Edmentum platform is the adopted curriculum for the NCB program. While this program can be utilized to some extent in the MDLA program, the unique needs of MDLA require a curriculum that can support students in the native and partner language.

Because of the uniqueness of the program offered at MSCS, each teacher has flexibility in the use of the instructional methods and strategies to use for each student. One of the main instructional methods used involves reading and writing across the curriculum. MSCS feels that the need to focus on writing will develop not only the student's writing abilities, but their reading and verbal communication as well. The MDLA program

extends this idea of developing a student's written, reading, and verbal skills across two languages, thereby developing a student's biliteracy.

To complement the "one school, all students" approach, MSCS utilizes Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL is an educational framework based on research in the learning sciences, including cognitive neuroscience, which guides the development of flexible learning environments that can accommodate individual learning differences. UDL lends itself to incorporating inclusionary strategies for students. Students are provided opportunities to engage in content with their peers, but demonstrate their mastery in a way that best suits their ability. This instructional method has made the program at MSCS that much more personalized and truly reflective of the student's needs and abilities. UDL works well in the MDLA program to create a flexible learning environment focused on a student's strengths.

The UDL framework also provides MSCS the ability to support students in mastering the Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). UDL was originally developed as a universal design for buildings to allow access for all people including those with disabilities. In education, UDL is an approach to curriculum that minimizes barriers and maximizes learning for all students. By addressing curriculum development and implementation as well as instruction in this fashion, a teacher can address the needs of all students while maintaining the rigor and relevance of the content. UDL has teachers provide multiple means of representation, action, expression, and engagement for their students' learning.

MSCS has adopted  updated instructional materials to reflect the NGSS and the standards in social science. However, MSCS continually looks at its existing programs and what, if any, improvements or changes are needed. Despite the quality of the instructional materials available, MSCS understands that high-quality instruction is the cornerstone to student academic success. The NCB setting allows for the teacher to develop a curriculum unique to the student's needs while maintaining the rigor of state standards. This allows for a variety of instructional approaches and activities that students can utilize to demonstrate mastery of a particular topic(s). In the MDLA model, students center on STEAM related disciplines in mathematics, science, art, and technology to develop early on the problem-solving abilities of students to real world problems.

**Technology**

As MSCS prepares students for 21st century careers, students must have the ability to utilize technology and adapt to newer innovations when it comes to the use of technology. One of the paramount goals of MSCS is to prepare students for college and

their postsecondary careers. Technology and technology-related skills will play a large part in the student's time at MSCS. While the school recognizes the need to have a varied curriculum that involves both paper-based and virtual course work, the future holds that students must be skilled in technology applications and software to be successful in the newer and ever-changing learning and business environments. As such, MSCS provides one electronic device for each student appropriate to their age and the program they are enrolled in. Students are also provided with mobile Wi-Fi hotspots as needed to allow for internet access. All students receive instruction in appropriate use of technology and sign appropriate use agreements.

Having access to technology tools is only one part of the technology-related skills students will need. The other portion is to utilize these devices in all of their instructional environments. Additional courses in technology will be developed and implemented to better prepare students. Career Technical Education (CTE) courses can now meet the student's fine art requirement for graduation. Students will be encouraged to participate in CTE technology courses to meet this requirement. In the MDLA program, students utilize technology throughout their day. There are opportunities for students to dive deeper into technology by working on such things as basic coding and using computer applications in STEAM based enrichment activities.

Through UDL, teachers are equipped with additional instructional strategies to implement technology into site-based courses and with students' course work completed at home. Further, MSCS utilizes the Smarter Balanced Consortium (SBAC) Interim Assessments to help better prepare students for the computer-based state standardized assessments and determine mastery of specific content standards. All these components support student use of technology while ensuring that students are prepared to effectively use technology in multiple environments.

**A Typical Day**

*NONCLASSROOM-BASED STUDENT*

A day in the life of a typical NCB charter school student is better looked at as a week in the life. The typical week of an NCB charter school student starts with the student's PLS with their teacher. During this one-hour meeting, student work is reviewed and work for the following week is assigned. Instruction is provided in specific areas that the student or parent had questions or needed additional help. The student would stay some additional time and complete any quizzes or tests in the study area if they had not already done so. When the student returns home, the student and parent develop the schedule for the week and determine what subjects to address each day. This schedule is usually developed at the beginning of the year between the parent, student, and

teacher and the student follows this schedule throughout the school year. The teacher ensures the student receives synchronous instruction and live interaction consistent with the requirements for the student's grade level and individual needs.

The student may have one or two classes on site during the week. The student would come to the school on those days that they have class (times vary). While they are at the school for class, they may seek help from one of the tutors either during open tutoring time or by appointment. They may also spend time completing work on site if needed. Students identified as English Learners, Reclassified English Learners, having an individualized education program (IEP), or through a Student Study Team (SST) may also see the instructional support specialist for specific individualized instruction. During this week, the student may also attend classes at the college. Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities outside the home, so the student may also be part of a club or organization that they attend each week.

All other time will be used by the student to maximize completion of their academic work. All work is to be completed prior to the student's next PLS. The student will meet with their teacher at the end of their work week and the process will repeat for the following week. It is important that students maintain and adhere to a regular schedule in order to balance all these facets of their academic life.

*MDLA STUDENT*

A day in the life of a typical MDLA student is centered on the traditional school environment model where students will be attending school daily. The school opens to students at 7:30 a.m.. As students enter the school, staff members greet them in Spanish and as they do so, they also do a check in and observe the student's emotional state. Staff will ask "how are you feeling today" and the student will respond by selecting on a poster with a scale of 1 to 5 how they are doing, with 1 being a poor emotional state and 5 being happy. Students who are not 3 or above will have a staff member follow up with them to understand more of what the student is experiencing.

Students can receive breakfast upon entering the school followed by a brief time for students to play on the playground before school begins at 8:00 a.m. At the beginning of class, each teacher takes fifteen minutes for mindful wellness exercises (i.e., deep breathing) to help focus students on the learning for the day. After this, instruction begins with the first part of the day being taught in Spanish. From the time students arrive until lunch recess, students are exposed only to Spanish. Instruction in language arts is followed by math, both in Spanish. This is followed by a short recess for students where Spanish is also spoken. After recess, other subjects such as science (STEAM focused) and social sciences are taught.

Just prior to lunch, students begin switching to English and switch teachers so that now the Spanish teacher becomes the English teacher. English instruction continues to build on ELA and Math concepts taught during the morning instruction. PE and art time are included on alternate days during the afternoon..

Once school ends, all staff return to the front of the school to ensure student pick-up and to leave students with a final positive message. Students who elect to do so remain at school to engage in enrichment activities. When those students are later picked up, staff on site ensure that each student leaves with a positive message. The typical day of a MDLA student links their social, emotional, and academic skills development.

Graduation Requirements

A diploma of graduation from MSCS is awarded to each student who completes the following course sequence.

| Required Subjects | | | Required Credits |
|---|---|---|---|
| English | | | 40 |
| | English I (9th) | | |
| | English II (10th) | | |
| | English III (11th) | | |
| | English IV (12th) | | |
| Social Studies* | | | 30 |
| | World History | | |
| | U.S. History | | |
| | Government/Economics | | |
| Mathematics | | | 30 |
| | Algebra 1 or Math 1 | | |
| | Geometry | | |
| | Third year beyond Geometry | | |
| Science | | | 20 |
| | Biological Science | | |
| | Physical Science | | |
| VAPA/FL/CTE/DI | | | 40 |
| | VAPA/FL | 20 | |
| | CTE/Dual Enrollment | 20 | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Physical Education (P.E.) | | 20 |
| Electives | | 40 |
| | Total: | 220 |

VAPA = Visual and Performing Arts
FL = Foreign Language
CTE = Career Technical Education
DE = Dual Enrollment
* Ethnic Studies must be a high school graduation requirement starting with the class of 2030. MSCS is on track to meet this requirement.

MSCS and its School Site Council regularly review the graduation requirements so that they are reflective of what students will need to be successful after high school. Updated regulations and policies are analyzed to ensure all requirements are accurate. Also, the requirements from the local comprehensive high schools are reviewed to ensure we are meeting, if not exceeding, their requirements.

**Transfer of Courses/College Entrance Requirements**
MSCS is WASC accredited for grades 9 through 12 and its courses have been designated as college preparatory by the UC/CSU systems. This means MSCS courses are both transferable to other high schools and meet college entrance requirements. Parents and students will receive this information at the time of enrollment and orientation. The UC/CSU approved courses are also comprehensively explained in the MSCS Student and Family Handbook and the MSCS Annual Parent Notice.

Parents are informed of the transferability of courses and the courses eligible for college entrance when first meeting with their child's personalized learning teacher. At the beginning of each semester, student transcripts are reviewed along with the new master agreement for the semester. Parents are also presented with the student's Four-year Plan and how the courses align to meeting a-g, college entrance, and transferability requirements. MSCS employs a full-time counselor to review student plans multiple times per semester and to increase a-g completion, college applications and college enrollment. All students are provided with assistance in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) applications as needed.

While MSCS has considered WASC accreditation for grades kindergarten through eight, it will not seek WASC accreditation for these grades at this time. This decision is based on past recommendations from the WASC Visiting Committee, which has not

recommend accreditation for all grades based on the school's history, the programs it offers, and its affiliation with MCOE.

***Academic Calendar and Schedules***

MSCS offers a 180-day instructional program and the full-time equivalent teacher contract is 184 days. The school calendar is developed annually following the timeline, guidelines, and procedures of MCOE schools. MSCS develops the school calendar to align as much as possible with other local school calendars and with Merced College. The alignment with the local school districts is to help minimize any issues if a student decides to return to their district of residence.

The alignment with Merced College is crucial so that any credits earned through the college can be added to the student's transcripts in a timely manner. The alignment also helps students with their class schedule as students may be taking classes on site and through Merced College.

*NONCLASSROOM-BASED PROGRAM*

Our NCB program is designed to meet the requirements set forth in EC 51744-51749.6 including an adopted Board Policy, written Master Agreement, and applicable Teacher-ADA limits.

NCB students are assigned a supervising teacher who manages the delivery of the curriculum. Student schedules are personalized and developed each semester based on teacher, parent, and student input and credit/graduation requirements. On site classes and tutoring schedules are developed annually and revised during and at the end of each semester as needed, with students participating in in-person touchpoints between one and five times a week, depending on grade level and individual needs. Standard business hours for the school are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with one day during the week scheduled for 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. This allows staff time for professional development and collaboration. This schedule, along with the attendance requirements for NCB programs, student assignments, and student attendance in support classes will ensure that the program aligns with the minimum required annual instructional minutes.

*MDLA PROGRAM*

Charter schools have 175 required instructional days annually and the following annual instructional minute requirements by grade level: K = 36,000 minutes, grades 1-3 = 50,400 minutes, grades 4-8 = 54,000 minutes, and grades 9-12 = 64,800 minutes. These minute requirements are met by the MDLA program. MDLA student schedules vary by grade level.

**Sample First Grade Schedule**

| | **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 07:30-08:00 | Students arrive on site. - *Staff greet students in partner language and ascertain a student's social/emotional well-being upon arrival.* | | | | |
| 08:00-08:15 | School Start - *Pledge and morning exercise* | | | | |
| 08:15-09:45 | Spanish Language Arts and<br>Social Science in Spanish | | | | |
| 09:45-10:05 | Recess and Snack | | | | |
| 10:05-11:00 | Mathematics in Spanish | | | | |
| 11:00-11:05 | Transition from Spanish Teacher to English Teacher | | | | |
| 11:05-12:05 | English Language Arts/English Language Development | | | | |
| 12:05-12:45 | Lunch | | | | |
| 12:45-01:45 | Mathematics in English | | | | |
| 01:45-02:30 | Science/STEAM or P.E. | | | | |
| 02:30 | Student Dismissal or After School Program | | | | |

Student schedules in grades TK/K and second through sixth vary slightly to ensure adequate instructional minutes related to each course of the instructional design section of this document. Times for breaks and lunch are staggered to allow for proper supervision, safety, and support across grade spans.

**Meeting the Needs of All Students**

As stated previously, MSCS is focused on a multi-tiered system to support the needs of all students. MSCS is cognizant of the fact that some student groups require additional considerations and support. While MSCS will continue to focus development on the whole child, the following groups and their needs will be addressed based on federal and state law along with best practices for these student groups.

**Plan for English Language Learners**

MSCS is committed to high levels of academic success for all students, including English Learners (ELs). MSCS adheres to all federal and state requirements for serving ELs including, but not limited to, student identification, placement, research-based English Language Development (ELD) and core content instruction; annual notification to parents/caregivers; progress monitoring and intervention; teacher qualifications and training; reclassification criteria, and a process to reclassify qualified students to fluent English proficient status; monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness; and, standardized testing requirements. All the requirements and components of the plan for EL learners at MSCS are derived from the MCOE Master Plan for English Learners. The Master Plan can be found on the MCOE public postings website.

*Initial Identification*

When a student enrolls at MSCS, EL identification is determined by a records review. When required by law, a Home Language Survey (HLS) is completed and used to determine EL status.

If an incoming student has attended school elsewhere, every effort is made to avoid conducting a formal assessment of a student who has already been assessed in California. If records indicate a previous assessment, then the student is classified (English Only, Fluent English Proficient, or English Learner) according to the existing information and placed in classes as appropriate. Students whose HLS indicates a language other than English on questions 1, 2, or 3, and for whom no records of prior assessment exist, will be assessed within 30 days of enrollment.

*Instructional Program for EL Students*

Programs for English Learners are designed to incorporate the following elements:

- Designated ELD instruction is explicit, well-articulated, standards-based, and differentiated according to the needs of the student, using school-adopted materials.
- Integrated ELD/Core content instruction is explicit, well-articulated, standards-based, and differentiated according to the needs of the student, using school-adopted materials.

- All instruction includes structured activities designed to develop multicultural competency and promote positive self-esteem.

Teachers provide specialized instruction during their one-on-one personalized learning sessions with EL students. If more intensive support is needed, teachers may add the ELA support class to the student's course work. Additional support is also provided through scheduled additional time with the student and bilingual instructional support specialist.

**Designated English Language Development Curriculum** The materials to be used in the ELD program are specially selected to accomplish the rapid development of English language proficiency. Students who have been identified as EL learners will use the standards-based English 3D Program. The program effectively accelerates the academic language of students who are developing English proficiency. The evidence-based instructional routines and relevant text sets in *English 3D* create a dynamic platform for daily speaking and writing, enabling students to become confident and competent participants in content-area classes, college, and beyond.

**Instructional Strategies** Teachers employ integrated strategies and differentiate instruction to facilitate the inclusion of every English Learner. Bilingual teachers and/or bilingual support staff provide assistance in the content classes based on student need. This flexibility assures that English Learners who have unique needs are not locked into a specific track of courses.

**Professional Development** MSCS utilizes the expertise of the EL Program Specialist at MCOE, who works closely with MSCS staff on instructional strategies, and provides resources and tools to assist in the instruction of EL learners. Teachers have the yearly opportunity to participate in a variety of professional development activities related to the education of English Learners. These activities include instruction in content standards (ELD, content area, and English Language Arts), effective instructional strategies for designated and integrated ELD, text-specific training, integration of technology into instruction, and analysis of student achievement results to improve instruction. Bilingual support staff participate in many of the same trainings or in activities to improve their understanding of course content as well as activities that ensure that they are providing the best quality support to EL students. Staff in the MDLA program collaborate with other dual immersion programs to share instructional strategies and support.

*Annual Evaluation of the School's EL Program*
The evaluation of the school's program is conducted annually by the student programs section of the Educational Services Department in conjunction with the Special Education Department. Program evaluation data is communicated to the school through the site administrator who then disseminates the information to school staff and parents, students, and community members through the MSCS School Site Council. The evaluation criteria are reviewed as needed to ensure that the indicators are consistent with current assessment, evaluation, and reporting practices.

**Reclassification Criteria** - Reclassification procedures follow California law, including the four criteria below.

1. Assessment of English language proficiency
2. Teacher evaluation
3. Parent opinion and consultation
4. Comparison of student performance in basic skills against an empirically established range of performance in basic skills of English proficient students of the same age

*Monitoring Progress of ELs and Reclassified (RFEP) Students*
Students who have been reclassified as RFEP receive follow-up monitoring for a period of four years after reclassification. The school site administrator or designee accesses data in the student information system (AERIES) of RFEP students for the purpose of monitoring their subsequent academic progress. Monitoring will also cover the language goals section for any students with IEPs.

Reclassified students having difficulty in the core curriculum will have access to the support services offered at the school site. Those support services include ELA Support or support from the bilingual instructional support specialist. If the student is not making progress in any academic class, the teacher and site administrator will meet with the student and may recommend any or all of the following interventions:

- Student/teacher/parent conference
- Tutoring
- Placement in ELA or math support class
- Summer school

The site administrator examines the progress of individual EL and RFEP students annually along with data on the progress of all students as part of the process of evaluating the overall effectiveness of the English Learner program in terms of student learning.

One component of the ELD program that MSCS would like to improve on is identifying and monitoring those ELs who are at risk of becoming Long Term English Learners (LTELs) or who are already identified as LTEL. Students who have been an EL for six or more years are considered an LTEL. These students have not been able to make enough proficiency to be reclassified. With the addition of benchmark assessments aligned to the CCCSS and the addition of a school counselor, MSCS will be in a better position to quickly identify, regularly monitor, and provide additional support to LTELs to enable them to gain greater proficiency in English.

As the MCOE Master Plan for English Learners is updated, the procedures for meeting the needs of EL students will also be updated accordingly.

**Plan for Students Who are Academically Low or High Achieving**

*Students Who Are Low Achieving*

The plan to support students who are low achieving begins with an academic universal screener. The academic universal screening tool is used to identify students' academic levels in reading and math and the appropriateness of the curriculum and courses in which they are enrolled. MSCS further identifies students who are academically low achieving through teacher observation, benchmark testing, state standardized testing, completed work, and anecdotal records. As a result of the highly individualized academic program, MSCS is poised to respond to each student's needs as indicated by their performance on these measurement tools.

Once students are identified, MSCS utilizes a three-tiered system of support that provides assistance for students based on their needs. The tiered system is designed as follows:

- **Tier I (Universal Support)** is what all students will receive by participating in the school's program. This tier incorporates high quality instruction delivered by highly qualified teachers. These teachers regularly assess and monitor student's progress on reaching grade level standards. Tutoring and other support services are optional at this level.
- **Tier II (Targeted Intervention)** is for students who have achieved between the 31$^{st}$ and 50$^{th}$ percentiles on the assessments, scoring below grade level on standards-based assessments, or receiving failing grades in multiple courses. Students in this tier are assigned to a computer-based intervention program Edmentum, a remedial support class, targeted tutoring, or curriculum modification to address the student's need. These services will be mandated and incorporated into the student's learning plan.
- **Tier III (Intensive)** is for students who have not shown success with Tier II interventions or who are below the 31$^{st}$ percentile on the assessments. Students

in this tier will meet with a Student Study Team (SST) to determine the proper plan and measures to support the student. If no IEP is in place, this team may determine if assessment for a specific learning disability is warranted.

The tier that the student is in will determine the how their progress will be monitored and analyzed. For example, the Tiered I and II students will have their teacher or a set of teachers (if assigned to support classes) that will track students' progress with prescribed assessments during the intervention course. Students in the Tier III level will have the SST determine their progress using similar assessments as Tier I students or additional assessments as determined by the team.

*Students who are High Achieving*

MSCS also identifies students who are academically high achieving through teacher observation, assessments, benchmark testing, standardized testing, completed work, and anecdotal records. Specifically, MSCS responds to the needs of students who are academically high achieving by:

- Facilitating dual/concurrent enrollment in college-level classes. Students can be co-enrolled in college courses while still in high school. MSCS has a long-standing, successful partnership with Merced College with providing MSCS students with dual enrollment opportunities.
- Providing students access to online resources, such as Edmentum online courses (student participation in these courses is closely monitored by their personalized learning teachers)
- Providing students the opportunity to work at their own pace, including options such as finishing courses early or taking additional courses

*Socio-Economically Disadvantaged/Low Income Students*

MSCS believes that students should be provided opportunities both in and out of school to enhance their learning. No student shall be deprived of such opportunities for the inability to pay. To identify socio-economically disadvantaged students, the school collects the Household Income Form. This information is used to determine where the student's family income falls in relation to the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) income tables. Since MSCS began collecting this data in 2014, the number of low-income students has increased annually. A majority of MSCS students are low income (reflective of the community of Merced) and additional supports and services are provided to those students based on this data.

Field trips and other experiential activities are important in developing a student's overall knowledge. Socio-economically disadvantaged students may not have such experiences available to them on a regular basis. MSCS plans several field trip events

during the school year. As the school continues to grow, so will the opportunities for students to experience different activities. One such activity now available for students is the Fab Lab – a maker space classroom available for students to utilize a wide variety of technology tools for project-based assignments.

Another opportunity provided to low-income students is the video production classroom where students can learn to produce, record, and edit videos in a professional-style studio. Further, the relationship between MSCS and Merced College provides opportunities for students to take college courses without the cost of a registration fee nor the cost of materials. Finally, technology devices such as laptops and tablets are provided to students free of charge. No student is required to provide their own devices or materials for school required assignments.

To support the specific academic needs of low-income students, MSCS identifies these needs as described previously. Incoming students are assessed as part of the enrollment process and courses, curriculum, and support are provided per their assessment results. Should it be determined by the assessment results or lack of progress show additional resources are needed by the student, an intervention plan will be prepared and implemented based on the tiered support structure stated previously. Students will regularly be assessed to determine if interventions should continue or other services need to be provided.

**Plan for Special Education**

MSCS shall assure that a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) is provided for all children with disabilities attending MSCS in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 20 U.S.C. Section 1400 et seq., and implementing regulations. In accordance with Education Code Section 47641(b), MSCS is considered a school of the Merced County Office of Education for the purposes of special education.

As a school under MCOE, MSCS abides by MCOE Policy 6159 regarding Individualized Education. The policy states that students with disabilities shall receive a FAPE and be placed in the least restrictive environment which meets their needs to the extent provided by law. MCOE Regulation 6159 states that at the beginning of each school year, the school shall have an individualized education program (IEP) in effect for each student with a disability within the school's jurisdiction. The IEP shall be a written statement designed by the IEP team to meet the unique educational needs of the student with a disability.

MCOE Regulation 6159 states the IEP team, in accordance with California Education Codes 56341 and 56341.5, shall include the following members:

1. One or both of the student's parents/guardians and/or a representative selected by them
2. The student's assigned personalized learning teacher (PLT)
3. The student's special education teacher or special education provider
4. The school administrator acting as the representative from the MCOE
5. An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of assessment results (this person may already be a member of the team described in numbers 2-4 above)
6. At the discretion of the parent/guardian or MCOE, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the student, including related services personnel as appropriate
7. Whenever appropriate, the student with the disability
8. When the student is suspected of having a specific learning disability, at least one individual who is qualified to conduct diagnostic examinations of the student, such as a school psychologist, speech pathologist, or remedial reading teacher

**SELPA Membership** Pursuant to legal provisions of both federal and state law, eligible students enrolled in charter schools are entitled to special education services provided in the same manner as such services are provided in other public schools and charter schools within the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). MSCS is a member of the Merced County SELPA by being a school under MCOE. The Merced County SELPA is a consortium of twenty districts and the Merced County Office of Education. The purpose of the SELPA is to ensure that quality special education programs and services are available throughout the region to meet the individual needs of special education students. The SELPA provides staff development, information systems technology and technical assistance, transition planning support, program specialist support, and also coordinates a countywide bus transportation system for its member schools. MSCS receives special education funds and support through the SELPA.

**Special Education Programs and Services** Because public schools, including charters, may not deny admission based on disability, charter schools operating an NCB program must accept students with special needs who enroll or are admitted through the charter schools' lottery process. Upon expressing interest in enrolling, the student with an IEP and the parent/caregiver will meet with the MSCS administrator or designee to review the student's current IEP, review transcripts, and discuss course assignment. This process is consistent with the enrollment procedures utilized for all students wishing to attend MSCS.

While all charter schools are required to accept students with exceptional needs, there are special considerations for charter schools that exclusively operate NCB programs. In order for a student with exceptional needs to participate in an NCB program, California Education Code Section 51745(c) requires that a student's IEP specifically provide for this type of program. Before a charter school may provide an NCB program to a student with an IEP, the program must be offered as part of the student's FAPE in the IEP and consented to by the student's parent/guardian or the student, if over 18 years of age. Therefore, when a student with an active IEP enrolls in MSCS, he/she is provided an interim special education placement and a transition IEP meeting will be held within 30 days to develop an updated IEP. After the interim placement, an IEP team will revise the IEP with appropriate goals and access to services at MSCS or to consider alternate placement options should it be determined that MSCS would not be the most appropriate placement.

If the IEP team determines that instruction aligned with Independent Study Education Code is appropriate, then the school may offer the program as FAPE for the student by including it in the IEP and obtaining parental consent. Often, special arrangements will need to be made to provide any necessary related services and support. The availability of related services and support should be considered when discussing the appropriateness of the program at MSCS, as should the methods and feasibility of monitoring the student's progress on IEP goals. If the team determines that the student cannot receive a free appropriate public education through NCB instruction, the team will discuss and offer alternative program options.

**School Responsibilities** MSCS will deliver the required and appropriate special education services to enrolled students unless other agreements have been reached between the MCOE or Merced County SELPA regional providers.

Services shall include:

- Assure all students with disabilities are identified, located, and evaluated.
- Initial, annual, and triennial evaluations.
- IEP development.
- Service delivery for all provisions as delineated on students' IEP.
- Special education transportation as indicated on IEPs.
- Due process/compliance proceedings and related attorney fees.
- Nonpublic school/agency placements.
- Submission of all required reporting, etc. to fully comply with Merced County SELPA and California State Department of Education (CDE) requirements.

**Provisions for and Compliance of Special Education Services Referral** MSCS will refer for Student Study Teams to determine if alternative interventions are appropriate for students demonstrating low performance. Through this process, students, teachers, key school personnel, or other interested persons systematically review and make recommendations about student performance related to:

- Academic progress;
- Social/Emotional development;
- Physical limitations; and/or,
- Behavioral history.

Students shall be referred for special education assessment only when their individual needs interfere with school performance and resources of general education have been considered and utilized when appropriate, or if requested by a parent of a student under 18, or an adult student. Objective and complete data will be collected during an initial SST referral to ensure appropriate recommendations for students are made (i.e., work samples, cumulative record review, CA test scores, and health history). At all SST meetings, members are assigned responsibilities for monitoring the success of the strategies offered. A follow-up date is scheduled to review the progress of the proposed strategies. If sufficient progress is noted at the follow-up meeting, more restrictive interventions will not be warranted. If progress is not noted, the SST may refer the student to a second tier where more intensive research-based curricular strategies are implemented or may refer the student for special education assessments.

As stated above, a formal request from a parent or adult student to assess a student for special education supersedes the SST process and MSCS staff will comply with all timelines and procedures for developing an assessment plan or sending Prior Written Notice if an assessment is deemed not appropriate (MCOE Policy and Regulation 6159.1)

**Initial and Triennial Assessments** When students are referred for an initial evaluation to determine if they meet eligibility requirements to receive special education, MSCS will generate a referral for special education; monitor all legal timelines; develop an assessment plan offering testing in all suspected areas of need/disability; coordinate qualified personnel to provide the required testing; generate IEP meeting notices; develop and facilitate the IEP meeting; and, distribute copies of the IEP to appropriate personnel. MSCS will ensure copies of the reports are available at the meeting. MSCS will utilize the Merced County SELPA web-based Special Education Information System (SEIS) to complete all IEPs and report CALPADS information.

At least once every three years, a student will be re-assessed to determine his/her continued eligibility to receive special education services. Following any initial or triennial assessment, if a student has a documented learning or related disability but does not meet other eligibility requirements for special education, a Section 504 Accommodation Plan is offered and if accepted, developed at the meeting.

**Identification of Bilingual Special Education Students** Before a student whose native language is not English is referred for special education, their level of English proficiency will be determined to ensure their lack of acquisition of language skills is not the reason for lower academic performance. Every attempt will be made to have personnel fluent in the student's native language and familiar with their native culture participate during the SST process and during the referral, assessment, and identification processes for determining the eligibility for special education.

The Limited English Proficiency/Fluent English Proficiency status of a student will be used to determine the language that he/she will be assessed in when a formal referral to special education is made. This will be documented on the assessment plan. Bilingual personnel will translate during IEP meetings and are available to transcribe all written documents (assessment reports, IEP forms, Parent Rights and Procedural Safeguards, etc.) when requested by a parent. All goals and objectives for bilingual students will be documented in the language goals section of the student's IEP, linguistically appropriate, and developed so that the student's language acquisition needs are taken into account. Special education personnel who assess and deliver services outlined on the student's IEP will have CLAD certification.

**Staffing, Curriculum, Service Provisions, and Student Accountability** All special education services will be provided by highly qualified staff as defined by MCOE's Human Resources Department. Special education services will supplement general education and will not supplant other sources of federal, state, and local funds. Special education students will be provided accommodations and/or modifications to allow access to the same core curriculum and assessments as their general education counterparts and as outlined on their IEPs.

All services, supplementary materials, or assistive devices required to access core curriculum will be provided at no cost to the student. No facilities utilized for purposes of special education will present any physical barrier that would limit an eligible student's full participation in the educational or extracurricular program.

**Disenrollment, Suspension, Expulsion** Attendance for special education services will be monitored closely to ensure identified students' access to all services as outlined on their IEP. If a student with an IEP is identified as a student who has attendance issues

(over 5 absences) MSCS will contact the family and request an IEP meeting. Staff will also continue to monitor that the NCB model or the dual immersion model remains an appropriate placement for the student. The IEP team will monitor progress to assure educational benefit for the student.

Students with disabilities will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Parent Handbook and MCOE policies. Students with disabilities will be afforded the protections in federal law against an unlawful change in placement. If a student with an IEP or 504 plan is suspended for more than 10 consecutive school days or a pattern of removals is noted that may result in a total of more than 10 school days, MSCS will schedule a Manifestation Determination meeting to determine if the misconduct is a manifestation of their disability.

A school psychologist or administrator will be involved in all phases of expulsion proceedings and parent/student will be provided due process rights throughout. In cases where suspension (beyond 10 days per year) or expulsion is recommended following the Manifestation Determination meeting, the Merced County Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services and Assistant Superintendent of Special Education for MCOE will be notified and the regular discipline procedures will apply.

Before imposing a disciplinary removal that constitutes a significant change in placement under Section 504, the school will convene a group of knowledgeable persons to conduct a reevaluation, determine whether the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability or of any failure to implement the 504 plan, and provide parents with notice and procedural safeguards.

**Maintenance of Special Education Records** MSCS shall maintain all student's special education files, use appropriate forms/software, and file reports as necessary to maintain legal compliance. MSCS shall verify the accuracy of all reports and submit them in a timely manner as required by the Merced County SELPA.

**Special Education Funding** MSCS, in cooperation with the Merced County SELPA and MCOE, shall document that all state and federal special education funds are used for the sole purpose of providing special education instruction and/or services to identified students with disabilities. Such funds shall be used to supplement and not supplant other sources of federal, state and local funds apportioned to MSCS.

**Parent/Caregiver Concerns/Complaints** Parent/Caregiver concerns and complaints will be addressed to MCOE Policy and Regulation 6159.1. Parent/Caregiver complaints regarding special education services shall be first directed to the school administration. MSCS administration and staff shall address the parent/caregiver concerns. MSCS will

address, respond to, investigate, and take any and all necessary actions to respond and attend to all complaints involving special education and IDEA compliance. MSCS may initiate a due process hearing concerning an enrolled student if the school determines it legally necessary to meet MSCS's responsibilities under federal and state law. If a parent/caregiver files for a due process hearing, MSCS shall follow all procedures per MCOE policy.

**Section 504 and Americans with Disability Act (ADA)**

MSCS recognizes its legal responsibility as a public school of the MCOE, to ensure that no qualified person with a disability will be excluded from participation, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination in any program of the school, based on his or her disability. Any student who has an objectively identified disability that substantially limits a major life activity, such as learning, is eligible for accommodation at MSCS within the requirements of the ADA. MSCS will utilize its SST process to guide the referral of students for evaluation under Section 504 or the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). MSCS will follow the identification, referral, development, and monitoring procedures outlined in MCOE policy and the 504 plan. Once a student is identified as being eligible for accommodations under this provision, a 504 plan will be developed.

If a student with an IEP enrolls, services will continue as written in the IEP, and an IEP evaluation will be held to determine whether NCB/Independent study is an appropriate offer of FAPE for that student. MSCS shall assume responsibility for compliance with Section 504 of the American with Disabilities Act.

## Element II: Measurable Student Outcomes

***"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. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both schoolwide and for all groups of pupils served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for grade levels served by the charter school."*** **(Ed. Code § 47605.6(b)(5)(B).)**

### Measurable Goals of the Educational Program

***The measurable goals and outcomes for MSCS, schoolwide, and for numerically significant subgroups, are those that have been outlined in the LCAP, and are identified in the "Annual Goals and Annual Actions to Achieve Them" section of this Petition.***

The goals are reviewed annually through the LCAP process. Progress is based on the data from the metrics used to determine the achievement of each goal and the corresponding completion of the action items for each.

The goals also address each of the eight state priorities as identified in Education Code 52060(d). The priorities are addressed in the school's goals as follows:

- Priority 1: Basic Services (Conditions of Learning) – Goal 1
- Priority 2: Implementation of State Standards (Conditions of Learning) – Goal 1
- Priority 3: Parent Involvement (Engagement) – Goal 2
- Priority 4: Student Achievement (Pupil Outcomes) – Goal 1
- Priority 5: Student Engagement (Engagement) – Goal 2
- Priority 6: School Climate (Engagement) – Goal 2
- Priority 7: Course Access (Conditions of Learning) – Goal 1
- Priority 8: Student Outcomes (Pupil Outcomes) – Goal 1

To determine the achievement of the school's goals, MSCS utilizes several indicators to measure progress. These indicators fall under state indicators, local indicators (per the state definition), and other measures which are locally adopted. The following indicators are addressed in the following sections: CAASPP results, school climate assessments, and assessment information on student growth.

**State Indicators**
*Measurable Pupil Outcomes: Summative Assessment Performance Targets*

**Smarter Balanced Assessments** The SBAC assessments for California determine if students in the state have mastered content relative to their grade level. Students in grades three through eight and eleven must take these tests for ELA and mathematics. The SBAC assessments have two components: the computer adaptive test (CAT) and Performance Task (PT). The student's overall performance on ELA or math is determined by combining the performance on each part and generating a scale score. That score is then categorized as showing what level the student achieved. The levels are categorized as follows:

Level 1 – Standard Not Met
Level 2 – Standard Nearly Met
Level 3 – Standard Met
Level 4 – Standard Exceeded

The goal is for students to score at standard met and above. For eleventh grade students wishing to attend a university immediately after high school, the goal is to achieve at Level 4 - standard exceeded.

**Local Indicators**

Under the LCAP, priorities 1, 2, 3, and 6 are determined at the local level by the LEA or charter school. To support LEAs and charter schools, the State Board of Education has approved standards that measure and report the progress within a priority area. For each standard, the LEA or charter must measure the progress on a local indicator based on locally available information and report that information to the local governing board or authorizer and to stakeholders through the California State Dashboard. One of three performance levels are determined based on the local information: Met, Not Met, Not Met for Two or More Years. The local indicators for the 2025-2026 LCAP were as follows:

Priority 1 - Teachers, Instructional Materials, and Facilities: STANDARD MET

- 29% of teachers rated as “clear”, with clear referring to the percentage of full-time equivalent teachers who are Fully Credentialed (Preliminary or Clear) for Subject and Student Placement (properly assigned). An assignment describes a position based on its setting, subject, and grade level. Regarding the high number of teachers designated as out-of-field or ineffective, MSCS operates as a credit recovery program, which requires teachers to cover multiple subject areas. Due to limited enrollment, it is not feasible to assign a separate teacher for each subject. Many MSCS teachers hold clear credentials; however, to meet instructional needs, we utilize the local assignment option. Additionally, the vast majority of teachers identified as ineffective are currently serving under Provisional Internship Permits (PIPs) or Short-Term Staff Permits (STSPs), which are in place to address teacher shortages. We are committed to supporting these educators in obtaining full credentials through ongoing professional development and credentialing pathways, though this process requires time and sustained effort.
- 0% of students were lacking access to curriculum aligned instructional materials
- 4 instances where facilities did not meet the "Good Repair" standard. The increase since the last charter term in facilities not meeting the “good repair” standard is primarily due to the implementation of more rigorous evaluation criteria by our newly appointed Director of Facilities and Maintenance. While there have been no material changes to the physical condition of our facilities since the prior year, the updated assessment approach has identified more areas needing improvement. In response, we have been actively collaborating with the new director, consistently following up on work orders, and have made notable progress since receiving our ratings.

Priority 2 - Self-Reflection Tool for Implementation of State Academic Standards: STANDARD MET. For this priority, schools are rated on a scale of 1-5 regarding their

progress on fully implementing state academic standards. Here is how MSCS performed:

- In providing professional learning for teaching to the recently adopted academic standards and/or curriculum frameworks, MSCS received ratings between 3 (Initial Implementation) and 4 (Full Implementation).
- In making instructional materials that are aligned to the recently adopted academic standards and/or curriculum frameworks identified below available in all classrooms where the subject is taught, MSCS received ratings between 3 (Initial Implementation) and 4 (Full Implementation).
- In implementing policies or programs to support staff in identifying areas where they can improve in delivering instruction aligned to the recently adopted academic standards and/or curriculum frameworks identified below (e.g., collaborative time, focused classroom walkthroughs, teacher pairing), MSCS received ratings between 3 (Initial Implementation) and 4 (Full Implementation).
- In implementing other adopted standards (including Career Technical Education, Health Education Content Standards, Physical Education Model Content Standards, Visual and Performing Arts, and World Language), MSCS received ratings between 3 (Initial Implementation) and 5 (Full Implementation with Sustainability).
- In support for teachers and administrators, MSCS received ratings between 2 (Beginning Development) and of 4 (Full Implementation)

Priority 3 - Parent and Family Engagement): STANDARD MET. In seeking input from parents in decision making and promoting parental participation in programs, MSCS received ratings of Full Implementation and Full Implementation/Sustainability.

Priority 6 - School Climate: STANDARD MET. The highest positive ratings were identified by students in the areas of school safety in person or virtually (98%), believing teachers and staff truly care about them (98.55%), and feeling supported by school staff (90%).

Priority 7 - Access to a Broad Course of Study: STANDARD MET MSCS met this priority by ensuring access to a broad course of study for all students.

**Other Performance Targets**

As a local assessment measure, MSCS utilizes STAR360 assessments in reading and mathematics. Students are assessed in this universal academic screener for several reasons: to determine the student's level for course placement, to determine intervention or advancement, and as a measure of student growth. Below is student

performance on these assessments over the last 3 years with performance targets for the next charter term.

| STAR360 Math<br>MSCS NCB Students<br>At or Above 50% Percentile Rank | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Student Groups** | **2023-2024** | **2024-2025** | **2025-2026** | **2026-2031** |
| **All NCB students** | 26% | 44% | 31% | 60% |
| **Economically Disadvantaged** | 26% | 46% | 25% | 60% |
| **Hispanic** | 22% | 43% | 28% | 60% |
| **Black** | 0% | Not available | 11% | No specific goal set in LCAP |
| **Foster** | Not available | Not available | Not available | 50% |
| **Homeless** | Not available | 50% | Not available | No specific goal set in LCAP |
| **Special Education** | 7% | 46% | 12% | 50% |
| **Limited English Proficiency** | 0% | 47% | 5% | 60% |

| STAR360 Math<br>MSCS MDLA Students<br>At or Above 50% Percentile Rank | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Student Groups** | **2023-2024** | **2024-2025** | **2025-2026** | **2026-2031** |
| **All MDLA Students** | 44% | 46% | 45% | 60% |
| **Economically Disadvantaged** | 36% | 20% | 42% | 60% |
| **Hispanic** | 38% | 52% | 42% | 60% |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Black** | Not available | Not available | Not available | No specific goal set in LCAP |
| **Foster** | Not available | Not available | Not available | 50% |
| **Homeless** | Not available | 0% | Not available | No specific goal set in LCAP |
| **Special Education** | 67% | 40% | 57% | 50% |
| **Limited English Proficiency** | 33% | 0% | 38% | 60% |

| **STAR360 Reading<br>MSCS NCB Students<br>At or Above 50% Percentile Rank** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Student Groups** | **2023-2024** | **2024-2025** | **2025-2026** | **2026-2031** |
| **All NCB students** | 24% | 55% | 51% | 60% |
| **Economically Disadvantaged** | 20% | 54% | 47% | 60% |
| **Hispanic** | 20% | 57% | 50% | 60% |
| **Black** | 0% | Not available | 33% | No specific goal set in LCAP |
| **Foster** | Not available | Not available | Not available | 50% |
| **Homeless** | Not available | Not available | Not available | No specific goal set in LCAP |
| **Special Education** | 7% | 40% | 17% | 65% |
| **Limited English Proficiency** | 0% | 25% | 5% | 50% |

| STAR360 Reading<br>MSCS MDLA Students<br>At or Above 50% Percentile Rank | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Student Groups** | **2023-2024** | **2024-2025** | **2025-2026** | **2026-2031** |
| **MDLA** | 31% | 21% | 62% | 60% |
| **Economically Disadvantaged** | 27% | 27% | 64% | 60% |
| **Hispanic** | 27% | 29% | 61% | 60% |
| **Black** | Not available | Not available | Not available | No specific goal set in LCAP |
| **Foster** | Not available | Not available | Not available | 50% |
| **Homeless** | Not available | Not available | Not available | No specific goal set in LCAP |
| **Special Education** | 33% | 46% | 43% | 65% |
| **Limited English Proficiency** | 33% | 38% | 62% | 50% |

## Element III: Assessment of Measurable Student Outcomes

***"The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured. To the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card."*** **(Ed. Code § 47605.6(b)(5)(C).)**

Method for Measuring Pupil Progress Toward Outcomes.

| **Assessment** | **Grade Levels** | **Frequency** |
|---|---|---|
| CAASPP ELA and Math Interim | 3-8, 11 | 3x per year |
| *What does it measure and how is it used?* | | |
| • Evaluates student proficiency in English language arts and mathematics.<br>• Provides data to inform instruction and improve teaching strategies. | | |

- Identifies areas where students may need additional support or resources.
- Helps schools and districts measure educational progress over time.
- Informs parents and guardians about their child's academic performance.
- Supports accountability measures for schools and educators.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| California Science Test (CAST) | 5, 8, and 11 or 12 | 1x per year |

*What does it measure and how is it used?*

- Evaluates knowledge of scientific practices and concepts across various disciplines.
- Assesses students' ability to apply scientific reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Measures proficiency in understanding and interpreting scientific data and information.
- Provides insights into student performance for educators and policymakers.
- Helps identify areas for improvement in science education and curriculum.
- Supports accountability and informs instructional strategies.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ELPAC Initial | 100% new to CA public school based on Home Lang. Survey | All school year within 30 days of enrollment |

What does it measure and how is it used?

- Evaluates listening skills to understand spoken English in academic settings.
- Assesses speaking abilities through interactive tasks and conversations.
- Tests reading comprehension with various texts and questions.
- Measures writing skills through prompts requiring written responses.
- Identifies students who may need additional language support in school.
- Helps educators tailor instruction to meet individual student needs.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ELPAC Summative | Current EL students | 1x per year |

What does it measure and how is it used?

- Evaluates listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English.
- Determines students' progress in acquiring English language skills.
- Identifies students' proficiency levels for appropriate educational support.
- Helps schools comply with state and federal accountability requirements.
- Informs instruction and curriculum development for English learners.
- Provides data for reclassification decisions of English learners.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Physical Fitness Test | 5, 7, and 9 | 1x per year |

- Evaluates cardiovascular endurance through activities like the mile run.
- Measures muscular strength and endurance with push-ups and sit-ups.
- Assesses flexibility using the sit-and-reach test.
- Tests body composition through height and weight measurements.
- Provides data to identify students needing fitness improvement.
- Helps schools develop tailored physical education programs.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| STAR360 Reading and Math | All | 3x per year |
| What does it measure and how is it used? | | |
| • STAR Reading: This test measures the reading skills of students in grades K-12, covering a range of skills, including vocabulary, comprehension, and reading fluency. The test is adaptive and adjusts the difficulty of the questions to match the student's reading ability.<br>• STAR Math: This test measures the math skills of students in grades K-12, covering a range of skills, including computation, problem-solving, and math fluency. The test is adaptive and adjusts the difficulty of the questions to match the student's math ability.<br>• The tests provide teachers and administrators with the information they need to support student learning and growth, and to help students achieve their full potential. The tests provide valuable insight into student progress and can help identify students who may require academic intervention | | |
| English 3D Reading Inventory | Current EL students | 2x per year |
| What does it measure and how is it used? | | |
| • Measures students' reading comprehension and fluency levels.<br>• Provides a diagnostic tool for educators to identify reading strengths and weaknesses.<br>• Offers a variety of texts to engage different reading interests and levels.<br>• Helps track progress over time through repeated assessments.<br>• Informs targeted instruction and intervention strategies for individual students.<br>• Supports data-driven decision-making in literacy programs. | | |
| Amira Reading Screener | K-2 | 3x per year |
| What does it measure and how is it used? | | |
| • Administers a brief, structured assessment to evaluate reading abilities.<br>• Targets key areas such as phonemic awareness, fluency, and comprehension.<br>• Designed to identify students at risk for reading difficulties.<br>• Provides immediate feedback to educators for targeted instruction.<br>• Helps in tracking progress over time to inform instructional decisions. | | |

### ***Data*** **and Reporting**

Data on student achievement is collected from a variety of resources. Academic data is aggregated through the evaluation of student work and assessment results from STAR360, SBAC, and other standardized testing. The data is compiled and analyzed utilizing the school's student information system (SIS) known as Aeries. Aeries allows for the storage and integration of various data measures including state and local

assessments along with interventions. Currently, the SIS is being utilized primarily to track state assessment information. The program now also offers intervention tracking, which will be used to track and assess the effectiveness of student interventions.

It is the duty of the school administration to collect and disseminate data to various stakeholders. This is done through a variety of means including staff meetings, School Site Council meetings, MCBE board presentations, LCAP meetings, the school website, and the state dashboard. Assessment information can be aggregated on the individual level, group or site level, and community level through the MSCS LCAP report. Data at this level is used to determine the school's goals and any adjustments that may need to be made to the program as a whole. Once student achievement data has been disseminated to teachers, they in turn share it with parents/guardians and students during one-on-one meetings.

Data is also utilized by teachers to identify needs in the areas of curriculum development and delivery, and to determine opportunities for improvement for individual students. The school administration and teaching staff hold regular meetings to review student data, curriculum, and other issues relevant to the operation of the school. Teachers discuss curriculum delivery problems they may have encountered, and compiled data is used to develop, implement, and evaluate solutions. Data is also used on a regular basis to communicate student achievement to the school community, other stakeholders, MCOE, and other interested parties.

**Grading, Progress Reporting, and Promotion/Retention**

Grades serve a valuable instructional purpose by helping students and parents/guardians identify the student's areas of strength and those areas needing improvement. Course grades represent an accurate evaluation of the student's achievement. Teachers determine a student's grades based on impartial, consistent observation of the quality of the student's work and his/her mastery of course content and standards. Students have the opportunity to demonstrate this mastery through a variety of methods such as classroom participation, homework, tests, and portfolios. The teacher of each course determines the student's grade.

MSCS staff currently utilize the following standardized grading policy:
A = 90 – 100% mastery of content presented
B = 80 – 89% mastery of content presented
C = 70 – 79% mastery of content presented
D = 60 – 69% mastery of content presented
F = Failure to master at least 60% of the content presented.

Grading policies at MSCS may be re-examined and adjusted based on current educational research and best practices.

Teachers provide grades to students and parents on a weekly or bimonthly basis. Progress reports are sent home at mid-semester and report cards displaying students' grades in each subject or course are distributed at the end of each semester.

In case of possible student retention or promotion, the student's grades, performance on local and state assessments, teacher recommendation and parent recommendation are used to determine the benefit or detriment of such placement. In regards to retention/promotion, MSCS abides by the guidelines set forth in MCOE Policy and Regulation 5123.

## Element IV: Governance Structure

***"The governance structure of the charter school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the charter school to ensure parental involvement."*** **(Ed. Code § 47605.6(b)(5)(E).)**

### Governance Structure

Merced Scholars Charter School (MSCS) is a public charter school authorized and operated by the Merced County Office of Education (MCOE), which is a public school district, local education agency, and county office of education.

MCOE is responsible for the management of MSCS and it is compensated by the revenue limit for the services its administrators, teachers, and classified staff provide to the school. Fiscal services are also provided by MCOE, and MCOE provides insurance coverage for MSCS. All charter school activities fall under the supervisory responsibility of the Merced County Superintendent of Schools. MSCS follows applicable policies set forth by the Merced County Board of Education (MCBE) and the administrative regulations set by the Merced County Superintendent of Schools. MSCS and MCOE coordinate the operation of the school via a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that is reviewed and revised as needed.

### Governing Board

The MCBE serves as the Governing Board for MSCS and retains roles and responsibilities as defined in Education Code 1040 – 1047 for MSCS. The MCBE members are publicly elected and represent districts (trustee areas) of the county. The MCBE is currently comprised of the following members:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Dennis Hanks | Term Expires 2026 | Area 1 |
| Ryan Heller | Term Expires 2026 | Area 2 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Frank Fagundes | Term Expires 2028 | Area 3 |
| Rodrigo Espinosa | Term Expires 2028 | Area 4 |
| Geneva Brett, Vice Chairperson | Term Expires 2026 | Area 5 |

**The Board as the Governing Body**

The MCBE complies with all rules, regulations, and laws governing the operation of public boards of education. It complies with the Brown Act, Public Records Act, and generally accepted conflict of interest policies. Board members serve terms of four years. The Merced County Superintendent of Schools is elected and oversees all MCOE and MSCS employees. The MCBE oversees MSCS in matters of policy, curriculum, finances, labor issues, and all other matters on which a public school would typically receive governance and guidance from the board of its school district.

**The Board as the Authorizer**

As the chartering authority, the MCBE will be responsible for fulfilling its statutory oversight responsibilities as required by law, including the duties identified in Education Code Section 47604.32. The MCBE is responsible for reviewing and taking action on charter petition renewal requests, and has the authority to initiate revocation proceedings if necessary as provided by Education Code Section 47607.

**Stakeholder Involvement – MSCS School Site Council**

The involvement of parents, students, and community members is a crucial component of ensuring that these stakeholders are engaged in the school's operations and functions. Those stakeholders who wish to have a voice in the school program can do so by becoming a member of or attending the School Site Council (SSC). The SSC serves the same purpose that a site council would at a traditional, Title 1 public school. The SSC assists in setting and monitoring performance goals for the school, makes recommendations on how to improve the school's educational program, makes suggestions for the utilization of any grants or donations the school receives, and provides general guidance on matters of curriculum, finance, operations, and other issues that arise. The SSC also serves as the LCAP committee, provides regular opportunities for input on the development of the LCAP and its annual update, and is responsible for the review and approval for the School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA). The SSC's composition is spelled out in bylaws and consists of the following:

| Affiliation | Term |
|---|---|
| MCOE Educational Services, Student Programs Director | Appointed by the Superintendent |
| MSCS Administrator | Appointed by the Superintendent |

| | |
|---|---|
| MSCS Teacher | Two years |
| Parent of MSCS Student | One year |
| Parent of MSCS Student | Two years |
| Community Representative | One year |
| Community Representative | One year |
| Student Representative | One year |

The terms of the SSC members follow the school fiscal calendar (July 1 – June 30). In order to allow existing and incoming parents to participate, annual elections to select parent representatives are held prior to the first SSC meeting of the school year. All other elections are held by May 31st. MSCS teachers will elect their teacher representative. The parents of MSCS students will elect the parent representatives. The above listed members will elect the community representative.

The SSC holds regularly scheduled meetings on a quarterly basis. All meetings of the SSC comply with Parliamentary Procedure, Robert's Rules of Order, and the provisions of the Greene Act. If any issue that comes before the SSC is deemed a conflict of interest for a member, the member must abstain.

In addition to the parent/guardian members, all parents and guardians are invited to attend SSC meetings. MSCS School Administrators encourage parents to form a parent committee and offer support and resources to parents to promote their involvement in the school. However, parents and guardians are informed that parental involvement is not a requirement for their student's acceptance or continued enrollment at MSCS.

**Governance Structure – General Roles and Responsibilities**

*Merced County Board of Education and County Superintendent of Schools:*

- Oversee the school's operation
- Monitor the school's performance
- Review and approve annual and revised budgets
- Review and adopt the school calendar
- Approve or revoke the charter petition
- Acquire property
- Adopt required plans

*MSCS School Site Council*

- Review amendments to the charter and bylaws
- Review Memorandums of Understanding and any other agreements with the Merced County Office of Education

- Consider programmatic decisions affecting day to day operations
- Review annual and revised budgets
- Review established procedures in alignment with board policy
- Monitor the school's performance
- Encourage parent involvement and participation
- Suggest school activities, field trips, community service opportunities, and projects for students and parents
- Review relevant documents affecting the school, including charter petition renewals, the MSCS Comprehensive School Safety Plan and WASC Self-Study Report
- Make recommendations to the Merced County Board of Education and the Merced County Superintendent of Schools
- Serve as the LCAP committee for the school
- Review and approve the school's SPSA

*Educational Services, Student Programs Director:*

- Oversee the school program
- Collaborate with the MCOE Human Resources department to hire an MSCS Administrator
- Evaluate MSCS Administrator

*MSCS Administrator(s):*

- Maintain professional credentials and appropriate qualifications for school administration
- Align operations with MCOE policies
- Monitor student enrollment
- Analyze and report school data
- Assure curriculum is aligned with current standards
- Assure state testing and assessments are properly administered
- Collaborate with MCOE Human Resources department to hire staff
- Evaluate staff
- Ensure staff is participating in professional development
- Manage day-to-day fiscal responsibilities
- Collaborate with the Business Services Internal Director to develop memorandums of understanding/management agreements with collaborative partners and service providers
- Manage record keeping and all legal documents required by the California Department of Education
- Uphold California Education Code as it is interpreted for charter schools

*MSCS Credentialed Teachers:*

- Maintain professional credentials and appropriate qualifications for instructing at the charter school
- Provide subject specific instruction
- Provide curricular and academic advice to students and families
- Provide access to approved curricular options for credit
- Apply process for evaluating student work
- Provide strategies for students to complete their assignments
- Use rubrics and assessment tools to effectively assess student performance and progress
- Design and/or implement curriculum to improve student achievement
- Analyze individual student test data to best determine academic growth needs
- Participate in professional development activities

**Compliance With Conflict-of-Interest Principles**

MSCS shall comply with the conflict-of-interest principles codified in Government Code 1090 and the Political Reform Act. Any employee of MSCS or members of the Advisory Board or School Site Council shall not be financially interested in any contract made by them in their official capacity, or by any body or board of which they are members. Nor shall they be purchasers at any sale or vendors at any purchase made by them in their official capacity.

## Element V: Employee Qualifications

***"The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the charter school."*** **(Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(F).)**

### *Categories of Employees*

MSCS staff is composed primarily of administrative and instructional employees. The school staff currently consists of an administrator, seven certificated staff members, two instructional support specialists, a registrar, a school counselor, and a school site secretary.

All MSCS staff are hired through the MCOE Human Resources Department in accordance with MCOE policies and procedures. This department continuously verifies credentials. Hiring is a process involving initial screening of applicants, an interview process, checking of references, and "tests of ability" if required for the position. A hiring panel interviews each applicant, including administrative, credentialed and classified. All employees are required to be pre-screened, fingerprinted, submit to a criminal background check, and provide a Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) report if necessary for their position.

All MDLA teachers demonstrate native or native-like oral and written language proficiency in both Spanish and English and hold BCLAD certification in Spanish. Subjects taught in English are taught by teachers with native English proficiency. Benchmark assessments are implemented to monitor and evaluate student progress and to modify teaching and learning needs.

MSCS is collaborating with credential programs at both the University of California, Merced and California State University, Stanislaus, both of whom provide bilingual credential programs. Both universities have a robust BCLAD Spanish credential program. MDLA teachers will be recruited from both former and current graduates of these local universities. Further, outreach into Spanish speaking communities will allow the school to recruit not only potential teachers, but also other staff members such as community liaisons and other support staff. Support from both communities allows the school to recruit those candidates with strong native skills in each target language and an understanding of the cultures related to both languages.

Teachers and staff at MSCS are expected to attend and engage in professional learning on a regular basis, including:

- Full-day PDs as negotiated by the MCOE bargaining units. For certificated staff this is currently set to 4 days: 1 for teacher planning, 1 for site PD, 1 for MCOE Kick Off and 1 for LEA-wide PD.
- Additional, optional, partial and full-day buy-back days as allowable by funding and determined by need. For the 26-27 school year, these will include PDs on Teacher Fundamentals, PDs to support teachers of students with disability, and other job alike PDs.
- Optional conferences targeted to teacher interest and need.
- Weekly 1-2 hour site-based PDs designed to address student, teacher, and community need and the CSTPs. These PD calendars are drafted at the beginning of the school year, in collaboration between the site and LEA leaders, but kept dynamic. In the 25-26 school year, topics included Trauma Informed Practices, Emotional Intelligence, PLCs and collaboration time, LEA-wide guidance for NCB/Independent Studies best practices, among other things.
- Staff meetings, which usually occur 1-2 times a week for community-wide collaboration.
- Support from MCOE subject-matter coordinators when deemed appropriate.
- Mentoring for all teachers not holding a clear credential.

### *Key Staff Positions and Qualifications*

*MSCS Administrator*

Minimum Qualifications include:

- BA/BS Degree
- 6 years educational experience including 5 years classroom teaching experience
- One year experience in an administrative capacity
- Valid California Teaching Credential
- Valid California Administrative Services Credential

*MSCS Teachers*

All MSCS teachers are credentialed and "highly qualified" pursuant to State and Federal definitions. MSCS has no non-credentialed teaching positions.

Minimum Qualifications include:

- BA/BS Degree
- Hold/Qualify for valid California Teaching Credential
- Experience working with students in an educational setting where academic development is the primary activity
- Experience working with individualized instruction and/or experience developing curriculum for an NCB venue
- DLI teachers must also possess a BCLAD credential in Spanish
- DLI teachers must show native or native-like proficiency in the partner language

### *Legal Requirements*

MSCS adheres to all legal requirements relating to charter school employees, including those pertaining to credentialing. Additionally, MSCS recognizes that all employees, even those not considered "public employees", are subject to state and federal employment laws.

## Element VI: Health and Safety Procedures

***"The procedures that the charter school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include all of the following: (i) the requirement that each employee of the charter school furnish it with a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237, (ii) the development of a school safety plan, and the annual review and update of the plan, pursuant to Section 47606.3, and (iii) that the school safety plan be reviewed and updated by March 1 of every year by the charter school."*** **( Ed. Code § 47605.6(b)(5)(G).)**

***MSCS adopts and updates a comprehensive safety plan consistent with EC 47606.3 each year by March 1. All MSCS staff will receive annual training on the Comprehensive School Safety Plan (including its procedures and roles).***

***As a locally-funded charter, MSCS follows Board policies for all health and safety procedures.***

The MSCS Comprehensive School Safety Plan (CCSP) is updated and approved by the County Superintendent Annually by March 1. The school works with departments within MCOE to ensure that the school site and adjacent facilities are prepared for a variety of possible incidents that may occur and the appropriate responses for each. The MSCS Comprehensive School Safety Plan is included as an Appendix.

The CSSP is designed to identify and address potential risks on campus, prepare for emergencies, and ensure a safe and secure learning environment for students and staff. It also aims to prevent violence and behaviors that undermine safety and security. Designated stakeholders must annually engage in a systematic planning process to develop strategies and policies for a wide range of incidents, including:

- Emergencies, natural, and other disasters
- Hate crimes and violence
- Cyberbullying, discrimination, and harassment
- Child abuse and neglect
- Discipline, suspension, and expulsion

The CSSP includes the following information:

- Assessment of current school crime status
- Child abuse and neglect reporting procedures, consistent with California Penal Code. This includes clear identification of child abuse/neglect signs and mandatory reporting obligations for all school/district employees and athletic coaches who have a "reasonable suspicion".
- Disaster procedures, including routine and emergency plans, and crisis response plans, with adaptations for students with disabilities.
- Earthquake emergency procedures, including a school building disaster plan, a "drop" procedure practiced quarterly in elementary schools and semiannually in secondary schools, and protective measures.
- Fire drills (monthly for elementary/intermediate, twice yearly for secondary).
- School building disaster plans for situations like bomb threats, bioterrorism, intruders, weapons, explosions, gas/fumes, and power failures.
- Procedures allowing public agencies to use school facilities for mass care and welfare shelters during an emergency.

- Suspension/expulsion policies and procedures, including recent legislation (SB 274) which prohibits suspensions and expulsions for willful defiance in K-12, with limited exceptions. Alternatives to suspension that focus on addressing root causes and improving behavioral and academic outcomes are encouraged.

- Procedures to notify teachers of dangerous students

- Discrimination and harassment policy, including hate crime reporting procedures

- Schoolwide dress code, including prohibition of gang-related apparel.

- Procedures for safe ingress and egress of pupils, parents/guardians, and employees.

- Maintenance of a safe and orderly learning environment

- Rules and procedures on school discipline.

- Procedures for conducting tactical responses to criminal incidents, including individuals with guns on school campuses and at school-related functions. Procedures for active shooters or other armed assailants are based on specific needs and context. High-intensity drills are prohibited.

- Procedures to assess and respond to dangerous, violent, or unlawful activity.

- Procedures to respond to incidents involving sudden cardiac arrest or other life-threatening medical emergencies.

- A protocol for opioid overdose for grades 7-12.

- An Instructional Continuity Plan to provide instruction when in-person instruction is disrupted.

- Collaboration with other school site councils or safety planning committees.

- Annual access to the CDE's online training resources for bullying and cyberbullying prevention for certificated staff and all other school site employees who regularly interact with students.

- Engagement with Pupils and Families

- Access to Instruction
- Instructional Continuity
- Access (Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion)
- Professional Learning
- Well-Being and Support Services
- Site-Based Collaboration
- Procedures for Immigration Enforcement Notification
- Procedures Regarding Pupil Smartphone Use During Emergencies
- Emergency Contact Numbers
- Merced Scholars Charter School-MDLA (Merced) and NCB (Atwater) Incident Command System
- Incident Command Team Responsibilities
- Emergency Response Guidelines, including identifying the type of emergency, level of emergency, immediate response action, and communication of response
- Specific procedures for various types of emergencies, including aircraft crash, animal disturbance, armed assault on campus, biological or chemical release, bomb threat/threat of violence, bus disaster, cardiac arrest, disorderly conduct, earthquake, explosion or risk of explosion, extreme weather, fire in surrounding area, fire on school grounds, flooding, loss or failure of utilities, motor vehicle crash, pandemic, psychological trauma, suspected contamination of food or water, tactical responses to criminal incidents, and unlawful demonstration or walkout.
- Emergency Evacuation Maps for all facilities

In addition to the above items included in the CSSP, MSCS adheres to all health and safety policies of MCOE, including the following:

**Employee Criminal Record Summary**
All MSCS employees are fingerprinted and submit to a criminal background check prior to commencing employment. MCOE provides these screenings for all MSCS employees in cooperation with the Department of Justice to facilitate receipt of a criminal record summary prior to hire as described in Education Code 44237. This same procedure applies to any outside contractors, consultants, or other non-school employees who may work with students unsupervised.

**Employee Tuberculosis Screening**
All MSCS employees are screened for tuberculosis (TB) prior to commencing employment, and every four years thereafter. Employees with expired TB clearances are not allowed to work until a current clearance is submitted. Employees are reimbursed for the cost of the TB skin test. If the test is positive, the employee must obtain a chest x-ray from their private physician (for which they will also be reimbursed).

**Pupil Immunization Requirements**
All enrolled students will be required to provide records documenting immunizations as is required at public schools pursuant to Health and Safety Code Sections 120325-120375; Title 17, California Code of Regulations Sections 6000-6075; and Title 4, California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1, unless the student qualifies for an exemption to the immunization requirement.

The MSCS NCB Program is a nonclassroom-based independent study program in which pupils receive instruction exclusively through independent study as authorized by the Charter and applicable law. MSCS shall request and maintain immunization records for students enrolled in the NCB Program. Pursuant to subdivision (f) of Section 120335 of the Health and Safety Code, however, the immunization requirements set forth in subdivision (b) do not apply to a pupil who is enrolled in an independent study program and does not receive classroom-based instruction. Therefore, consistent with Health and Safety Code Section 120335, subdivision (f), a pupil enrolled exclusively in MSCS's NCB independent study program who does not receive classroom-based instruction shall not be denied admission for failure to provide proof of immunization otherwise required by Section 120335. Students enrolled in the NCB Program who do not provide full immunization records are not permitted to come to campus, however, or participate in off-campus MSCS activities, until full immunization records are provided unless they are exempt from such requirements. Notwithstanding the independent study exception, the Charter School shall comply with all applicable public health reporting, exclusion, and communicable disease control requirements imposed by state or local public health authorities.

**Pupil Health Screenings**

MSCS administers mandated health tests and screenings to students. The school nurse, who is employed by MCOE, conducts the tests. All parents are made aware of the health screening requirements with a written notice they are required to read and sign. The tests and screenings are conducted on the following schedule:

- Hearing tests: 2nd, 5th, 8th, and 10th grades
- Vision tests: At school entry and every third year after through grade 8
- Scoliosis: 7th grade for girls and 8th grade for boys

**Sexual Health and HIV Prevention Education**

MSCS will provide students in grades 7 through 12 comprehensive sexual health education and HIV prevention education. Students receive this instruction at least once in middle school (grades 7 and 8) and at least once in high school. MSCS will provide qualified instructors and materials that will provide students with information on sexually transmitted infections, HIV, reducing the risk of transmission of such diseases, abstinence, and available local resources for sexual and reproductive health care, among other things (Education Code 51934).

**Access to Pupil Mental Health Services**

MSCS shall inform students and parents at least twice per school year on how to initiate access to available pupil mental health services, whether at the school or in the community. Students and parents are informed of access to such services when given the Student and Family Handbook. For the second notification, a letter will be sent to the student's home informing them of such information. Additionally, the school will have the information for access to mental health services on the school website. The information on the website will be reviewed and updated at least twice per year.

**Facilities**

MCOE provides regular safety training for school staff, and complies with all state and federal laws designed to protect children, including those related to the proper administration of medication, the reporting of child abuse, and the requirement that MSCS be a drug and tobacco-free site. The school complies with all food service guidelines for providing students food in the NCB program and will do the same for the dual immersion program. MSCS complies with all applicable laws related to environmental protection, and all federal health and safety laws that apply to charter schools. The MCOE Maintenance and Operations staff regularly inspect the MSCS facility and are responsible for posting all required safety notices.

## Element VII: Means to Achieve Student Population Balance

***"The means by which the school will achieve a balance of racial and ethnic pupils, special education pupils, and English learner pupils, including redesignated English proficient pupils as defined by the evaluation rubrics in Section 52064.5, that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the county board of education to which the charter petition is submitted…"."*** **(Ed. Code § 47605.6(b)(5)(H).)**

Pursuant to state and federal law, pupils are admitted to MSCS without regard to disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, or one's association with a person with those listed characteristics. MSCS actively recruits a diverse student population from the county and surrounding areas who understand and value the school's mission and are committed to the school's instructional program.

The student recruitment strategy for MSCS includes the following elements to ensure a balance of representation that is reflective of MCOE, the authorizing district:

- An enrollment procedure that allows for a broad-based recruiting and application process.
- The development of promotional and informational materials that appeal to racial and ethnic groups represented in the district, including limited English-proficient populations. The school will achieve to the greatest extent possible a parity of English Learners to English only students in the proposed DLI program
- The development of promotional and informational materials targeted towards students with disabilities
- Bilingual and multilingual staff members at MCOE available to communicate with parents and students in some of the other languages common in the district.
- Special Education staff members at MCOE available to assist in recruiting and communicating with disabled students and their families.
- Outreach meetings throughout the district to reach prospective students and parents.

California charter schools are required to attempt to achieve a balance of racial and ethnic pupils, special education pupils, and English learner pupils, that is reflective of the general population residing in the jurisdiction of the county board of education. This table shows how the demographics of the MSCS student body compare to the demographics of the authorizing district (MCOE) and the general population of Merced County.

| Demographic Group | Merced County, all residents* | MCOE** | MSCS** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **American Indian or Alaska Native** | 2.8% | 0.4% | 0.3% |
| **Asian** | 8.3% | 5.2% | 3.6% |
| **Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander** | 0.4% | 0.2% | 0% |
| **Filipino** | This category is not part of the US Census | 0.4% | 1.2% |
| **Hispanic or Latino** | 64.6% | 77.4% | 73.4% |
| **African American** | 3.9% | 2.4% | 1.2% |
| **White** | 22.5% | 11.7% | 16.8% |
| **Two or more races** | 3.5% | 1.6% | 3.6% |
| **None reported** | This category is not part of the US Census | 0.6% | 0% |
| **Limited English and English Learners** | Unknown | 22.3% | 7.5% |
| **Disabled and Special Education** | 8.8% | 17.2% | 16.5% |
| **Homeless** | 0.3% | 3.7% | 2.4% |

** U.S. Census Bureau, ** California Department of Education*

## Element VIII: Admissions

***"Admission policy and procedures, consistent with subdivision (e)."*** **(Ed. Code § 47605.6(b)(5)(M).)**

MSCS adheres to the California Code of Regulations and California Education Code for nonclassroom-based charter schools. MSCS will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, and all other operations, and will not charge tuition nor discriminate against any student based upon any of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220.

**Admission Requirements**

Admission to the school shall be open to any resident of Merced County or adjacent counties who wish to pursue an inclusive NCB, personalized learning environment or a classroom-based dual-language immersion program for all students, including students with special needs. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into MSCS with the exception of students in grades 2 through 6 in the MDLA program, who will be assessed on their language ability (see below). As stated in the previous section, all students will be considered for admission without regard to nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, disability, perceived disability, or any other characteristic. MSCS is nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, and all other operations, and will not charge tuition. As an NCB charter, no student shall be required to attend MSCS. MSCS will comply with all laws establishing minimum and maximum age for public school attendance in charter schools. In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(iv), admission preferences shall not require mandatory parent/guardian volunteer hours as a criterion for admission or continued enrollment.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47605.6(e)(4)(A), MSCS will not discourage a pupil from enrolling or seeking to enroll in the charter school for any reason, including, but not limited to, academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code Section 47605.6(e)(2)(B)(iii), including pupils with disabilities, academically low-achieving pupils, English Learners, neglected or delinquent pupils, homeless pupils, or pupils who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by eligibility for any free or reduced-price meal program, foster youth, or pupils based on nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Similarly, in accordance with Section 47605.6(e)(4)(C), MSCS will not encourage a pupil currently attending the Charter School to disenroll from the Charter School or transfer to another school for any reason, including, but not limited to the academic performance of the pupil or because the pupil exhibits any of the characteristics described in Education Code Section 47605.6(e)(2)(B)(iii), as listed above. Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605.6(e)(4)(D), the MSCS will post a notice developed by the CDE on the Charter School website, outlining the requirements of Section 47605(e)(4), and make this notice available to parents/guardians/educational rights holders.

Upon interest in the school, parents complete the Intent to Enroll Form, which is limited to the program of interest, the student's name, address, age, grade, and names of siblings. Intent to Enroll Forms are accepted throughout the year and students are added sequentially to a waitlist. When a vacancy does occur, parents are contacted in the order they appear on the waitlist and offered placement at MSCS. After the offer of enrollment, the parent and student will decide if they would like to continue with the

enrollment process and if so, the enrollment information is then collected and processed.

Upon enrollment in MSCS, the parent/guardian and student attend a formal orientation and enrollment conference with the school registrar and/or counselor (NCB) or other staff (MDLA) during which they complete all enrollment forms. The Student and Family Handbook is also distributed at that time and school policies are reviewed. For NCB, the student is then assigned to a personalized learning teacher (PLT). The PLT will schedule an initial meeting during which an individualized learning plan (ILP) is developed, placement testing is administered, and all parties review and sign the Master Agreement that specifies expectations for school attendance and instructional hours. Students who have an IEP will have a transition meeting scheduled within the first 30 days of enrollment, unless a transition was completed prior to enrollment.

By grade two, to enroll in MDLA, students must have enough ability in the partner language as they will be joining a class where students have been studying in Spanish immersion curriculum for one or more years. Entering students in grades 2-5 must have a level in the partner language similar to those students enrolled in their grade level.

MSCS actively recruits a diverse student population from Merced County and contiguous counties. who understand and value the school's mission and are committed to the school's instructional and operational philosophy. The school promotes enrollment through its website and through school events such as Back-to-School night, Open House, and through volunteer and service in the community.  The school strives to attract students who understand and value the school's mission and are committed to the school's instructional and operational philosophy.

Open enrollment for each program will begin in the first week of February and will run through the first week of April. Intent to Enroll forms will be made available at the school site and through the school's website. Submitted forms will be date/time stamped and student names added to an information sheet for those interested in enrollment in order to track receipt. If by the close of open enrollment, the number of forms received is less than the number of spaces available, all potential students will be accepted and enrolled in the school, upon submission of an enrollment packet. Subsequent intent to enroll forms will be accepted until capacity is reached.

Outreach for the recruitment of native Spanish speaking students for the MDLA program will take place at an array of community events including the Mercado Thursday Night Market in Downtown Merced, the Saturday Swap Meet, local flea markets, and other cultural events and celebrations. Outreach and recruitment will also occur through

communication and collaboration with local immigrant serving agencies, migrant education programs, local faith-based organizations with Spanish speaking families, and grassroots Hispanic advocacy organizations.

**Lottery Preferences and Procedures**

MSCS shall admit all students who wish to attend. If the number of pupils who wish to attend MSCS exceeds the school's capacity in any grade or class of each program, enrollment shall be determined by a public random drawing ("lottery"). Students currently enrolled in the school are exempt from the lottery. Existing students who wish to return must notify MSCS during open enrollment.

**Enrollment Timeline for the Upcoming School Year**

| | |
|---|---|
| February through first week of April | Intent to Enroll Forms available at school office or online on the MSCS website. |
| By the second week of April | Determination of whether public random drawing will be needed. |
| By the last week of April | Public random drawing conducted if necessary ("lottery) |
| By the first week of May | Admission notification and |
| By the end of the third week of May (maximum 10 business days) | Signed commitment letter due back to MSCS. |
| By the fourth week of July | MSCS Round Up – completed enrollment packets due, which will include proof of immunizations, proof of residency, proof of age requirements, and proof of withdrawal from prior school and district of residence. Foster and Homeless youth are entitled under law to a grace period for providing enrollment documentation. |

Prior to the drawing, or lottery, MSCS shall have the right to grant priority in admissions to the following (listed in order of preference):

1. Siblings of currently enrolled students
2. Children of MSCS staff members
3. Children who reside within Merced County
4. Children who reside within adjacent counties to Merced County

MSCS enrollment preferences will not require mandatory parent volunteer hours as a criterion for admission or continued enrollment.

In the event that a public, random drawing is needed, MSCS shall conduct the drawing by the last week of April of the school year prior to enrollment and in accordance with

state and federal regulations. Students selected through the lottery will receive written notification via mail and by phone. Students will have 10 business days to sign a commitment letter to indicate their intention to attend the school. If the signed commitment letter is not returned within the allotted period of time, the school will proceed to offer enrollment to the next student on the waiting list created through the lottery process.

After the wait list has been created through the lottery system, intent to enroll forms will continue to be accepted and date/time stamped on a rolling basis for addition to the wait list with students accepted for enrollment on the basis of available capacity. If no lottery was conducted for students enrolling for the current school year, students who complete an intent to enroll form and after meeting with the school administrator will be accepted into the program, space permitting.

MSCS will adhere to the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths. MSCS shall provide specific information, in its outreach materials, websites, at community meetings, open forums, and regional center meetings that notifies parents the MSCS is open to enroll and provides services for all students and provides contact information (e.g. phone number, website) for access to additional information regarding enrollment. MSCS shall comply with all applicable provisions of Education Code Sections 48850 – 48859.

MSCS will not encourage disenrollment/transfer of a student from the charter school, for any reason, including but not limited to academic performance or any characteristics of the student listed under EC § 47605.6(e)(2)(B)(iii).

### Element IX: Audit & Fiscal Issues

***"The manner in which annual, independent financial audits shall be conducted, in accordance with regulations established by the state board, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved."*** **(Ed. Code § 47605.6(b)(5)(I).)**

### Independent Annual Audit

MCOE certifies that MSCS fulfills its fiduciary duty with regards to the use of public funds. MCOE ensures that MSCS receives an independent audit each fiscal year in conjunction with the annual audit for the district. The audit verifies the accuracy and validity of the school's financial statements, attendance and enrollment statistics, accounting practices, and the school's internal controls.

MCOE's Business Services Department is responsible for contracting with an independent auditor and overseeing the audit process. The auditor will have, at a minimum, a CPA and educational institution audit experience and be approved by the State Controller on its published list as an educational audit provider to conduct the audit in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing standards and the Audit Guide issued by the Controller of the State of California. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope will be expanded to include items and processes specified in applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars. The K-12 public school guidelines for independent study will be evident in the annual audit as per Education Code 47612.5(b).

The audit will be conducted in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applicable to public schools. Under normal circumstance, the annual audit is completed by December 15 each year and a copy of the auditor's findings is forwarded to the School Administrator, Direct of Student Programs, Educational Services Assistant Superintendent, Chief Financial Officer of MCOE, MCBE, the State Controller, the County Superintendent of Schools, and the California Department of Education.

The MCOE's Assistant Superintendent of Business Services will review any audit exceptions and, with input from the Superintendent, will provide recommendations for resolutions. All audit exceptions shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the Merced County Superintendent of Schools, and will be reported to the MCOE Board of Education. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel (EAAP) in accordance with applicable law.

### Element X: Suspension/Expulsion Policies and Procedures

***"The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled from the charter school for disciplinary reasons or otherwise involuntarily removed from the charter school for any reason These procedures, at a minimum, shall include an explanation of how the charter school will comply with federal and state constitutional procedural and substantive due process requirements that is consistent with [subdivisions (i)-(iii) of Education Code section 47605.6(b)(5)(J)]."*** **(Ed. Code § 47605.6(b)(5)(J).)**

### School Climate and Student Discipline System

MSCS believes that learning best occurs when students are in a positive, safe, and welcoming learning environment. MSCS sets the highest expectations for its students. The Student and Family Handbook states policies and expectations for student behavior. The handbook includes policies on behavior conduct, dress code, participation in school sponsored activities, and acceptable student use of technology.

MSCS provides its students access to educational opportunities in an orderly school environment that protects their safety and security, ensures their welfare, and promotes

their learning and development. MSCS adheres to MCOE discipline policies that specify standards of behavior for students and the disciplinary procedures for addressing violations of those standards, including suspension and/or expulsion. These MCOE policies are shared with parents through the Student and Family Handbook and are stated in the Comprehensive School Safety Plan. They address all the requirements set forth in the California Code of Regulations regarding Suspension and Expulsion Procedures for charter schools. Procedures shall, at a minimum, include an explanation of how the charter school will comply with federal and state constitutional procedural and substantive due process requirements consistent with the following:

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

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

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

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

(iii) No pupil shall be involuntarily removed by the charter school for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the pupil has been provided written notice of intent to remove the pupil no less than five school days before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian, or, if the pupil is a homeless child or youth, or a foster child or youth, in the native language of the homeless or foster child's educational rights holder. In the case of a foster child or youth, the written notice shall also be provided to the foster child's attorney and county social worker. If the pupil is an Indian child, as defined in Section 224.1 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, the written notice shall also be provided to the Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker. The written notice shall inform the pupil, the pupil's parent or guardian, the homeless child's educational rights holder, the foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, or the Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker of the right to initiate the procedures specified in clause (ii) before the

effective date of the action. If the pupil's parent or guardian, the homeless child's educational rights holder, the foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, or county social worker, or the Indian child's tribal social worker or, if applicable, county social worker initiates the procedures specified in clause (ii), the pupil shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the charter school issues a final decision. For purposes of this clause, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions specified in clauses (i) and (ii).

(iv) A foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker and an Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker shall have the same rights a parent or guardian of a child has to receive a suspension notice, expulsion notice, manifestation determination notice, involuntary transfer notice, and other documents and related information.

MSCS strictly adheres to all policies and regulations regarding the suspension or expulsion of students. Policies and procedures, including MCOE board policies and regulations, and Student and Family Handbook, may periodically be reviewed and updated to address modifications regarding suspension, expulsion, and involuntary removal procedures, and grounds for MSCS to take such action.

**Due Process Protections**

MSCS ensures that all students are afforded due process in disciplinary actions.

No student shall be involuntarily removed by MSCS for any reason unless the parent or guardian of the student has been provided written notice of intent to remove the student no less than five schooldays before the effective date of the action. The written notice shall be in the native language of the student or the student's parent or guardian, or, if the student is a homeless child or youth, or a foster child or youth, in the native language of the homeless or foster child's educational rights holder. In the case of a foster child or youth, the written notice shall also be provided to the foster child's attorney and county social worker. If the pupil is an Indian child, as defined in Section 224.1 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, the written notice shall also be provided to the Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker. The written notice shall inform the pupil, the student's parent or guardian, the homeless child's educational rights holder, the foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker, or the Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker of the right to initiate the procedures for suspensions of 10 days or more and all other expulsions for disciplinary reasons before the effective date of the action. If the student's parent or guardian, the homeless child's educational rights holder, the foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, or county social worker, or the Indian

child's tribal social worker or, if applicable, county social worker initiates such procedures, the student shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the charter school issues a final decision. For purposes of this clause, "involuntarily removed" includes disenrolled, dismissed, transferred, or terminated, but does not include suspensions specified in clauses (i) and (ii) of Education Code section 47605.6(b)(5)(J)(I & ii).

A foster child's educational rights holder, attorney, and county social worker and an Indian child's tribal social worker and, if applicable, county social worker shall have the same rights a parent or guardian of a child has to receive a suspension notice, expulsion notice, manifestation determination notice, involuntary transfer notice, and other documents and related information. [Education Code 47605.6(b)(5)(J)(iii)]

Despite that lack of significant behavioral issues, MSCS always looks to improve the program and practices to benefit all students.

**Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion**

The grounds for suspension and expulsion and the procedures for recommending and/or implementing suspension and expulsion shall be those specified in law and administrative regulation. MSCS staff enforce the rules concerning suspension and expulsion of students fairly, consistently, and in accordance with MCOE's nondiscrimination policies. A list of offenses that are grounds for which students can be suspended or expelled are stated in MCOE Regulation 5144.1 – Suspension and Expulsion Due Process (all MCOE policies are available on the MCOE website)

MSCS and MCOE shall provide for the fair and equitable treatment of students facing suspension and expulsion by affording them their due process rights under the law. MSCS shall comply with procedures for notices, hearings, and appeals as specified in regulation and law (Education Code 48911, 48915, 48915.5).

MSCS utilizes the Alternative Expulsion Hearing Process described in MCOE Regulation 5144.1. Students and/or their parents/guardians are entitled to file an appeal of an expulsion decision with the County Board. The appeal must be filed within 30 days of the decision to expel, even if the expulsion action is suspended and the student is placed on probation. The student shall submit a written request for a copy of the transcripts and supporting documents from MSCS simultaneously with the filing of the notice of appeal with the County Board. MSCS shall provide the student with these documents within 10 school days following the student's written request (Education Code 48919).

1. For suspensions fewer than 10 days:

    - Students will receive oral or written notice of the charges.
    - If the student denies the charges, they will be given an explanation of the evidence.
    - Students will have an opportunity to present a rebuttal to the charges.

2. While it is not standard practice for MSCS as a dependent, county authorized charter, to suspend a child for more than 10 days, for suspensions of 10 days or more and all expulsions for disciplinary reasons, both of the following:

    - The student and their parent/guardian will receive timely written notice of the charges and an explanation of the student's basic rights.
    - The student will have the right to a hearing before a neutral officer within a reasonable timeframe, at which the student has a fair opportunity to present testimony, evidence, and witnesses and confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, and at which the student has the right to bring legal counsel or an advocate.

MSCS implements the following strategies as part of a Rehabilitation Plan for students who have been suspended. Not all strategies will apply to all students, but will vary dependent upon the nature of the student's offense. The Rehabilitation Plan calls for the school administrator or designee to:

- Hold a conference with the student and his or her parent or guardian
- Provide information on behavioral resources offered by government and community agencies
- Schedule a meeting for the student with the school psychologist
- Provide information on after-school programs that address specific behavioral issues or expose pupils to positive activities and behaviors, including, but not limited to, those operated in collaboration with local parent and community groups

MCBE periodically reviews and revises MCOE's Suspension and Expulsion policies to ensure they are comprehensive, inclusive of pertinent offenses that may warrant suspension and/or expulsion, and compliant with California State law.

## Element XI: Retirement System

***"The manner by which staff members of the charter schools [sic] will be covered by the State Teachers' Retirement System, the Public Employees' Retirement System, or federal social security."*** **(Ed. Code § 47605.6(b)(5)(K).)**

Staff members of MSCS are employees of the Merced County Office of Education. As such, they are covered by the State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS) and the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) in the same fashion as are all employees of the County Superintendent. All employer contributions required by STRS, PERS, and Social Security, as applicable, are made by the County Superintendent. The County Superintendent also makes contributions for workers' compensation insurance, unemployment insurance, and any other employer payroll obligations. MCOE's Departments of Human Resources and Business Services are responsible for ensuring appropriate arrangements for the coverage have been made.

## Element XII: Attendance Alternatives

***"The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools."*** **(Ed. Code § 47605.6(b)(5)(N).)**

MSCS is a public school of choice and attendance at MSCS is voluntary. Students who opt not to attend MSCS will be recognized as a student of the district in which they reside. Students may attend a school within the district of residence in accordance with the district of residence policy or may attend another district school via an approved inter-district transfer request in accordance with the existing enrollment and transfer policies of the district of residence and receiving district and/or county of residence. If a student wishes to leave MSCS and return to a traditional public school, MSCS provides the parents/guardians and students with information concerning their school of residence.

MSCS informs students of attendance alternatives by:

- Providing notification during the recruitment and enrollment process
- Providing information in languages students understand (e.g., translation for non-English speakers, per EC § 48980 and related requirements).
- Communicating about the attendance alternatives through information provided in enrollment packets, on the school website, in orientation and counseling sessions, and through written notices.

## Element XIII: Employee Rights on Leaving and Return

***"The rights of an employee of the county office of education upon leaving the employment of the county office of education, to be employed by the charter school, and of any rights of return to the***

***county office of education that an employee may have upon leaving the employment of the charter school."*** **(Ed. Code § 47605.6(b)(5)(O).)**

All employees of MSCS are employees of MCOE and have the same rights and privileges of any MCOE employee, including those pertaining to vacation, sick leave, and earned service credits. MCOE collective bargaining contracts are updated frequently and will be controlling. If an employee transfers from any department of MCOE to work at MSCS, that employee has the right to return to his/her previous department of employment or transfer to another department. This is based on the employee's longevity, evaluations, skills, and department openings. Currently, these rights are found in the classified bargaining agreement. The CBAs govern seniority, tenure, placement rights, bumping rights, rehire priority, and mandatory reinstatement.

Any employee of the MCOE who chooses to leave their existing position at MCOE to work at MSCS shall have the right to apply for a transfer into any open position for which they are qualified and will follow the policies and procedures outlined in their collective bargaining agreement.

## Element XIV: Dispute Resolution Procedures

***"The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the county board of education to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter."*** **(Ed. Code § 47605.7(b)(5)(L).)**

The following procedures describe the process for resolving disputes originating within MSCS or involving MSCS. Responsibility for any costs associated with such disputes is the responsibility of MSCS.

MSCS's dispute resolution procedures are in compliance with Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) under EC § 35160 et seq. and 5 CCR § 4600 et seq. The UCP and internal processes are communicated to parents, staff, and the community via the school handbook, website, and annual employee notices. Except for disputes between the chartering authority and the charter school, all disputes involving the charter school shall be resolved by the charter school according to the charter school's internal policies. If any such dispute concerns facts or circumstances that may be cause for revocation of the charter, the authorizer shall not be obligated by the terms of the dispute resolution process as a precondition to revocation.

### Intent

The intent of this dispute resolution process is to (1) resolve disputes within MSCS pursuant to the school's policies, (2) minimize the oversight burden on the MCBE, and (3) ensure a fair and timely resolution to disputes.

**Public Comments**
The school administration and MCBE agree to attempt to resolve all disputes regarding this charter pursuant to the terms of this section. Both shall refrain from public commentary regarding any disputes until the matter has progressed through the dispute resolution process.

**Disputes arising from within MSCS or involving MSCS and other parties**
Disputes among and between students, staff, parents, volunteers, consultants, partner organizations, advisory members of the school, and other parties beside the State Board of Education, shall be resolved pursuant to the uniform complaint procedures developed by MCOE and the dispute resolution procedures set forth on a Memorandum of Understanding between MCOE and MSCS.

**Disputes between MSCS and the Merced County Board of Education/Merced County Office of Education**
Any and all disputes between MSCS and the MCBE/MCOE regarding the Charter or the operation of MSCS shall be resolved in accordance with MCBE/MCOE dispute resolution procedures. If any such dispute concerns facts or circumstances that may be cause for revocation of the Charter, MCBE/MCOE shall not be obligated by the terms of this Element or the County Board's MCBE/MCOE dispute resolution procedures as a precondition to revocation.

**Element XV: Declaration of whether or not the charter school will be the exclusive public school employer of the charter school employees.**

MCOE is the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O)]

**Element XVI: Procedures for School Closure**
***"The procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the charter school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records."*** **(Ed. Code § 47605.6(b)(5)(P).)**

MSCS operates as a school of MCOE. IfMSCS closes, the assets and liabilities of the school will be disposed of in accordance with MCOE policy and as set forth in this section for the procedures for school closure. The school closure procedures will adhere to all applicable state and federal regulations regarding the closure process.

**Documentation of Closure Action**
The decision to close MSCS for any reason will be documented by an official action of the MCBE in accordance with applicable law and policy. The official action will identify the reason for the school's closure. The County Superintendent or designee will act as the designated entity responsible to conduct closure-related activities.

**Notification to Parents and Students**
MSCS will ensure the notification to parents and students if the school were to close. Parents and students of MSCS will be notified as soon as possible when it appears school closure is imminent. The notification will include information on assistance in transferring the student to another appropriate school, and a process for the transfer of all student records.

**Notification to the California Department of Education**
If MCBE takes action to deny renewal of the MSCS charter, revokes the MSCS charter, or MSCS ceases operation for any reason, the County Superintendent or designee shall notify the California Department of Education (CDE). The notification shall be provided to the CDE within 10 calendar days of the MCBE action. The notification to CDE shall include, but not be limited to, a description of the circumstances of the closure, the effective date of the closure, and the location of student and personnel records.

**Notification to Receiving Districts and the SELPA**
MSCS will notify any school district that may be responsible for providing education services to former students so the receiving district(s) will be prepared to assist in facilitating student transfers. MSCS will also notify the Merced County SELPA of the closure so that the SELPA is able to ensure that students with disabilities are appropriately supported in their transition to another school.

**Student and School Records Retention and Transfer**
As applicable, MSCS will provide students with a packet of student information that may include the closure notice, grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements and college entrance requirements, etc. that will facilitate transfer to another school.

MSCS will provide the County Superintendent or designee all required records, including a list of students in each grade level and the classes they have completed, together with information on the students' district of residence, if applicable. All pupil records, state assessment results, and any special education records will be maintained by the County Superintendent, as required by law, except for records and/or assessment results that the law may require to be transferred to a different entity. Staff records for the school remain with the MCOE Human Resources Department.

**Financial Close-Out**

If MSCS were to close, the MCOE Business Department will commence an independent audit as soon as is reasonably practical. The independent audit shall be completed within six months after the closure of the school, which may function as the annual audit of the school. The purpose of the audit is to determine the net assets or net liabilities of the school. The assessment will include an accounting of all the school's assets, including cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and supplies and an accounting of the school's liabilities including any accounts receivable, which may include reduction in apportionments as a result of audit findings or other investigations, loans, and unpaid staff compensation. The audit will also assess the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to the MSCS. The cost of the audit may be considered a liability of MSCS.

In addition to the final audit, MSCS will submit any required year-end financial reports to the California Department of Education, the Merced County Board of Education, and the County Superintendent of Schools in the form and within the time frame required. These reports will be submitted as soon as possible after the closure action, but no later than the required deadline for reporting for the fiscal year.

**Dissolution of Assets**

Upon completion of the closeout audit, the MSCS administration and the County Superintendent will develop a plan for the repayment of any liabilities in compliance with the California Code of Regulations, Title 5 (5 CCR), sections 11962 and 11962.1. Any net assets remaining after all debts and liabilities of charter school (i) have been paid to the extent of the school corporation’s assets, or (ii) have been adequately provided for, shall be returned to the MCOE.

## PART FOUR: REQUIRED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

***The governing board of a school district shall require that the petitioner or petitioners provide information regarding the proposed operation and potential effects of the charter school, including, but not limited to, the facilities to be used by the charter school, the manner in which administrative services of the charter school are to be provided, and potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the charter school and upon the school district. The description of the facilities to be used by the charter school shall specify where the charter school intends to locate. The petitioner or petitioners also shall be required to provide financial statements that include a proposed first-year operational budget, including startup costs, and cashflow and financial projections for the first three years of operation.***

A. Facilities

The school's offices are located at1640 N. St., Merced, with additional sites to serve NCB students in Atwater (at the Dr. Lee Andersen Education Center, 1800 Matthew Dr., Atwater) and Los Banos (715 W. H St.). Classroom-based students in our MDLA program are served at 1850 Wardrobe Ave., Merced. These locations serve our students in the following ways:

- The NCB locations provide quiet spaces for teachers to meet one-on-one with students for their weekly check-in appointments, plus space for students to meet with counselors, access other resources, and meet in small groups for special projects, social-emotional programming, tutoring, and other activities. Conducting school business out of these sites has allowed MSCS to serve more students throughout the county and provide the wraparound services that our students and families have told us they need to support their NCB journey.
- The MDLA location is a traditional school site with classrooms, a gymnasium, cafeteria, counselors' offices, and other expected amenities. This location allows us to serve our MDLA families with our immersive curriculum in a welcoming space that provides the facilities required for a classroom-based TK-5 program

B. Administrative Services

MSCS's fiscal and operational impact on the charter-granting authority (MCOE) is described in the MOU between the two entities.

MSCS is entitled to receive administrative services at the same level and to the same extent provided to each MCOE school site or administrative unit within the MCOE in exchange for an amount equal to the state approved indirect cost rate of the actual annual expense from revenues. This rate will be the same as paid by other departments/programs of MCOE. These services include, but are not limited to, accounting, budgeting, payroll, personnel management, purchasing, warehousing, and centralized data processing.

MSCS will not enter into a contract with an education management organization. MCOE's Business Services Department will maintain fiscal duties with support from Educational Services management.

C. Budgets and Financial Planning

MSCS works with the MCOE Business Office to develop an annual budget and cash flow projection which will establish the school's spending priorities and the spending authority needed to operate the school. The major assumptions of the school's budget will include the projected enrollment and student needs, staffing, the level of wages and benefits, and facility costs.

MCOE has written budget policies and procedures addressing such items as the budget timeline, preparation, administration, and budget transfers. MCOE fiscal staff and MSCS leadership collaborate to ensure that the budget remains in balance throughout the year through maintaining and projecting cash balances throughout the year, along with abiding by the budget policies. It will compare actual to budgeted expenditures and actual to budgeted revenues along with procedures to project revenue collection and future expenditure needs for the remainder of the year. MCOE will provide a budget status report for MSCS to MCBE and the individuals responsible for controlling spending on a regular basis.

A comparative budget report showing current years of actuals and a multi-year forecast on the proposed budget based on the estimated ADA is included as an Appendix.

# *Charter School Legal Compliance*
# *Merced Scholars Charter School Renewal June 30, 2026*
# *(Last renewal 2020)*

***Pursuant to Education Code Section 47607, subd, (b), charter renewal petitions must include "a reasonably comprehensive description of any new requirement of charter schools enacted into law after the charter was originally granted or last renewed."***

| Legal Requirements Enacted Since Charter was Last Renewed (Ed. Code, § 47607(b)) | Effective Date | Requirement Met (if applicable) |
|---|---|---|
| Charter schools must provide and maintain at least one, easily accessible, all-gender restroom for student use at every school site by no later than July 1, 2026. Identifying signage must be placed outside of all-gender restrooms.<br>SB 760 | 7/1/2026 | MSCS is in the process of placing permanent labeling on gender neutral bathrooms for student use. This process will be complete by July 1, 2026. |
| School districts and charter schools must include instruction about the dangers of fentanyl use during health education courses in health education, when it's a requirement for graduation. School districts must begin implementing the fentanyl education requirement by the 2026-2027 school year.<br>AB 2429 | 1/1/2025 | MSCS integrates this information into the 5 units of health instruction required for graduation. |
| The annual notification to parents and guardians must include information related to the safe storage of firearms and California's child access prevention laws.<br>AB 452; SB 906 | 1/1/2023 | Notices are sent to parents and guardians as required |
| Charter schools must recognize Juneteenth as a holiday requiring schools to close.<br>AB 1655; Education Code sections 37220, 79020 | 1/1/2023 | Juneteenth is listed as a Holiday on school and District calendars. |
| Charter school officials are required to receive ethics training to the same extent as other local agency officials.<br>AB 2158; AB 215 | 1/1/2023 | All Board members receive annual ethics training. |

| Legal Requirements Enacted Since Charter was Last Renewed (Ed. Code, § 47607(b)) | Effective Date | Requirement Met (if applicable) |
|---|---|---|
| All LEAs serving high school students must provide a one-semester course in ethnic studies to high school students by the 2025-2026 school year; at its discretion, an LEA may instead require a full-year course. Completion of a one-semester course in ethnic studies is required as a high school graduation requirement for students graduating in 2030 and beyond.<br>AB 101 | 10/8/2021 | An ethnic studies course is offered by our curriculum provider and students have begun enrolling in it. We are on track to meet the 2030 requirement. |
| Public schools maintaining any combination of classes from grades six to twelve must supply cost free menstrual products in all of the school's women and all-gender restrooms, and in at least one men's restroom.SB 367 | 10/8/2021 | The school provides menstrual products free of charge in our women's and gender-neutral bathrooms. |
| Must submit the following reports to its chartering authority and county superintendent of schools on or before:<br>● July 1: preliminary budget<br>● July 1: LCAP / annual update to achieve goals identified in petition<br>● December 15: interim financial report through October 31<br>● March 15: second interim financial report through January 31<br>● September 15: final unaudited report for the full prior year<br>Education Code sections 47604.33(a), 47606.5 | 1/1/2021 | This is done by the MCOE business office and the LCAP is maintained by MCOE Student Programs. |