

Optimist Charter School

Charter Petition March 2012

**Officially Submitted by the Board of Directors of Optimist
Charter School, Inc. to Los Angeles Unified School District**

**6957 North Figueroa St.
Los Angeles, CA 90042
(323) 443-3100**

Table of Contents

Initial Screening Checklist		
Letter of Intent		1
Charter Briefing Page		2
Affirmations and Assurances		9
Element 1: The Educational Program		10
A.	Student Population to Be Served	10
B.	Vision and Mission	18
C.	What it Means to be an Educated Person in the 21 st Century	19
D.	How Learning Best Occurs	20
E.	Goals of the Program	22
F.	Instructional Framework – Program and Curriculum	23
G.	Delineation of Core Subjects	29
	Graduation Requirements	30
	Scope and Sequence of Skills and California Content Standards	32
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English/Language Arts 	33
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics 	35
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Science/History 	39
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science 	41
H.	Adopted Textbooks for Instruction	44
I.	A Typical Day at Optimist Charter School	46
J.	Meeting Needs of Identified Populations	49
K.	Implementation Plan and Timeline	55
L.	Teachers	56
M.	Academic Calendar and Bell Schedule	58

N.	Research and Conclusion	60
	Element 2: Measurable Outcomes	63
	Element 3: Methods by Which Student Outcomes Will Be Measured	66
	Element 4: Governance	68
	Element 5: Employee Qualifications	77
	Element 6: Health and Safety	83
	Element 7: Racial and Ethnic Balance	91
	Element 8: Admission Requirements	95
	Element 9: Financial Audits	197
	Element 10: Student Expulsions	100
	Element 11: Retirement Programs	109
	Element 12: Attendance Alternatives	110
	Element 13: Employee Rights	111
	Element 14: Dispute Resolution	112
	Element 15: Employer Status and Collective Bargaining	114
	Element 16: Procedures to be Used if the Charter School Closes	115
	Works Cited	124
	Appendix 1: Facility Information	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolution from Board of Directors 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict of Interest 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OYHFS Articles of Incorporation 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OYHFS Bylaws 	
	Appendix 2: Budget and Financial Projections	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OYHFS Financial Documents 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimist Charter School Budget 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternate Budget 	
Appendix 3: Board Members, Petitioners and Teachers		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Member Questionnaires and Resumes 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Petitioners Due Diligence Questionnaires and Resumes 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Approval Signature Page 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resumes of Interested Teachers 	
Appendix 4: Emergency Preparedness		
Appendix 5: Optimist Charter School Documents		

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Innovation and Charter Schools Division

Letter of Intent to Apply for a Charter School

Name of proposed charter school	<u>Optimist Charter School</u>		
General location of proposed charter	<u>6957 N. Figueroa St., L.A. 90042</u>		
Projected Grade Levels-Year 1	<u>7-12</u>	Projected Grade Levels-Year 5	<u>7-12</u>
Projected Enrollment-Year 1	<u>100</u>	Projected Enrollment-Year 5	<u>120</u>

Lead Petitioner Information:

Name	<u>Alan Eskot, M.A.</u>		
Address	<u>6957 N. Figueroa St. L.A., 90042</u>		
Phone number(s)	<u>(323) 443-3114 or (310) 863-5923</u>	Fax	<u>(323) 443-3262</u>
E-mail address	<u>aeskot@ouhfs.org</u>		

Other members of the Charter Development team

<u>Lynn De Young, M.A.</u>	_____
<u>Silvio Orlando, MSW</u>	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Certification:

I/we certify that we are interested in applying for a charter school within LAUSD boundaries.

I/we have participated in the Orientation Meeting given by the LAUSD Charter Schools Division.

I/we did not participate in the Orientation Meeting given by the LAUSD Charter Schools Division.

<u>Alan Eskot, M.A.</u>		<u>09-30-11</u>
PRINT NAME	SIGNATURE	DATE

CHARTER BRIEFING PAGE

Name of Organization Applying for Charter: Optimist Charter School under the auspices of Optimist Boys Home and Ranch, Inc. Dba Optimist Youth Homes and Family Services.

Grades Served-Year 1: 7 - 12 **Grades Served-Year 5:** 7 - 12

Number of Students- Year 1: 120 **Number of Students -Year 5:** 144

Location Address or Target Neighborhood:

The target location is within possible 5 mi radius of our current location, 6957 N. Figueroa St., LA 90042.

Facility Status/Location:

Our facility is located at 6957 N. Figueroa St., L.A. 90042, which is located in Highland Park, 7 miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles. Optimist Nonpublic High School is currently certified by the State Department of Education and has a fire clearance for 300 students. No physical changes will be needed to open our charter school.

Prop. 39 –Application Submitted?

Prop. 39 application is not being submitted.

Does the location meet Board Policy? (Low API, Overcrowded):

Optimist Charter School’s location will meet the Board policy related to low API and overcrowded school relief. Eagle Rock H.S. has an API score of 715, Franklin H.S. has an API of 659, and Luther Burbank has an API score of 663. However, the majority of our residential students’ parents do not live within this community.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2011-12

(Revised 08-01-11)

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Retired Police Officer

McWEENEY, TERRY

10538 Stonybrook Avenue
South Gate, CA 90280

Res: (562) 869-4202

Fax: (562) 869-7852

VICE PRESIDENT

Computer

Engineering

SNYDER, BILL

930 Jacon Way
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

Res: (310) 454-2732

Cell: (310) 259-7596

Fax: (310) 230-1306

VICE PRESIDENT MONIZ, NORBERT Res: (661)263-6677
Retired VP, Furniture Sales 27976 Red Pine Ct. Fax: (661) 263-1789
Valencia, CA 91354 Cell: (661) 678-3637

TREASURER LAU, LELAND Bus: (626) 458-528/8528
Certified Public Accountant 3056 West Main Street Fax: (626) 458-532
Alhambra, CA 91801 Cell: (213)479-3308

SECRETARY GADBURY, DOLORES "Dee" Res: (661) 252-7313
Advertising Business 28109 Tenda Drive Cell: (661) 713-6642
Canyon Country, CA 91351

DIRECTORS

Councilman Huizar ANDALON, DANIEL S. Res (323) 258-6010
Field Deputy 6428 La Riba Way Cell (323) 376-0011
Los Angeles, CA 90042

New Truck Sales ANDOLSEK, DENNIS Bus: (858) 222-8330
7245 Magruder Street Res: (619) 463-4906
La Mesa, CA 91942 Fax: (858) 222-8339
Cell: (619) 861-9472

Attorney AUSTIN, GARY S. Bus: (310) 277-9595
1923 W. 81st St Cell: (310) 292-6435
Los Angeles, CA 90047

Retired BINCH, FRANK Res: (909) 861-6745
P.O. Box 4066
Diamond Bar, CA 91765

Commercial Real Estate BROWN, LARRY Res: (310) 476-5739
1010 No. Bundy Drive Fax: (310) 471-7500
Los Angeles, CA 90049

Retired Eligibility Worker CARTER, TED Res: (562) 427-4211
PSE District Representative 2561 Oregon Avenue Fax: (562) 427-4211
Long Beach, CA 90806

US Bank, Vice President	DIAZ, CARLOS US Bank 1153 Fair Oaks Ave. South Pasadena, CA 91030	Bus: 626-403-7900 Cell: 626-523-0900
Retired Staff Assistant to County Supervisor	DUBEN, PAMELA 30535 Hasley Canyon Road Castaic, CA 91384	Res: (661) 257-6867
Retired Contractor	FOX, JESSE 820 E. Verdugo Avenue Burbank, CA 91501	Res: (818) 845-5255
Retired Contractor	HUNT, ED 1538 Bellefontaine Riverside, CA 92506	Res: (951) 682-0327 Cell: (951) 522-2549
Chief of Police, LB	McDONNELL, JIM 400 W. Broadway Long Beach, CA 90802	Bus: (562) 570-7301 Fax: (562) 570-7114
Attorney	NIEDERBERG, RICHARD Esq. P. O. Box 1883 Studio City, CA 91614-0883	Bus: (323) 650-9600 Fax: (323) 654-3210 TDD: (323) 654-2700
Semi-Retired Business Owner	VILLACHICA, RON 10754 Burbank Blvd, #B North Hollywood, CA 91601	Bus: (818)763-1283

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT (and current board member)

Retired High School Administrator	BERTRAND, BILL 10025 Roscoe Blvd. Sun Valley, CA 91352	Res: (818) 767-5113
--------------------------------------	--	---------------------

Description of Mission:

The mission of Optimist Charter School is to provide a motivating educational opportunity and integrated support services for young men and women, especially those experiencing challenging life circumstances who are placed by the Department of Probation in foster care homes and placements. Our students will include young men and women in the foster care and probation systems who have experienced a lack of success in the traditional educational environments. Our mission is to provide quality academics in a safe, structured setting that also provides therapeutic behavioral intervention and social skills training to promote educational success.

Description of Vision:

Our vision is to empower probation foster youth students to become self-reliant by helping them develop the skills, ambition, and self-confidence necessary for productive, successful lives. We intend to give them the tools for future academic success that will allow them to reach their potential.

Source/Core of Money:

Since we have been operating a nonpublic school for over 21 years, we have the necessary site, furniture, equipment, and most of the curriculum necessary to open our charter school. Additionally, some of our current Nonpublic School teaching staff will transfer to the charter school and only a few staff will require recruitment and training. Thus, our expenses for opening the charter school will be minimal. We currently have \$550,000 invested in mutual funds, \$550,000 in a certificate of deposit, and just over one million dollars in a line of credit for start up and operational costs. We are submitting two previous years of independent audits. See Appendix 2.

Top Leaders/Charter Development Team:

- **Alan Eskot** has been working in the nonprofit sector for 39 years. His first 5 years in the field were spent as a special education teacher in a nonpublic school, and for the past 31 years, he has been the Director of Education for three residential nonpublic school programs, all of which he established. He has been the Director of Education at Optimist High School since September 1990. Additionally, he has consulted with many agencies and has assisted in opening up 18 nonpublic school, most of them being in residential facilities. Alan has been very involved with special education policy and has served on several local and state committees regarding these issues. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from UCLA and a Master of Arts degree in Clinical Psychology from the California State University, Los Angeles.

- **Silvio Orlando** has worked in the field of child welfare since 1970. He worked as a child care worker, social worker, social work supervisor, residential director, and assistant executive director in Montreal, New York, and Los Angeles before becoming our executive director in 1999. Sil received his Masters of Arts Degree in Social Work (MSW) from Boston College. He is also a past president of the California Alliance of Child and Family

Services and is currently the president of the Association of Community Human Service Agencies here in Los Angeles.

- **Doug Buttrick** is a financial executive with over 36 years of experience. He has worked in both the private and non-profit sectors for a variety of companies in Boston, New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles before becoming our Chief Financial Officer in 2003. Doug graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts.

- **Lynn DeYoung** has been a Vice Principal at Optimist Nonpublic High School for the last 21 years. Prior to that, she worked for three years as a counselor and teacher with probation youth. She has her Single Subject Teaching Credential in English and has been the chair of the English Department at Optimist. In the last ten years, Lynn has been closely involved in the IEP process for students at Optimist. She has extensive experience in identifying students with special needs, preparing SST documents and participating in SST meetings, writing IEPs, and participating in IEP meetings. Lynn also has her Masters of Arts in Theatre and has a great deal of experience directing high school students in theatrical productions as well.

- **Bill Bertrand** is a retired teacher and principal who worked for 17 years for Burbank Unified School District. He has been on the Board of Directors of Optimist Youth Homes and Family services for many years and was recently the President of the Board for three years.

Has your charter applied to any other jurisdiction for approval?

Optimist has not applied to any other jurisdiction for approval.

Are there any sister charters? There are no sister charters.

What innovative elements of your charter could be considered “best practices” and replicated by other schools?

- **Small Class Size**

Optimist has been operating a nonpublic school for over 21 years and has extensive experience working with the targeted population of foster youth placed by probation in foster placement. One of the aspects of our nonpublic school program that is very effective is using small group classes to teach the core curriculum in a departmentalized setting. We will maintain core curriculum instructional groups of between 8 and 10 students per teaching personnel. Using small groups for instruction allows teachers to provide differentiated instruction as necessary, paying attention to each student, prompting and assisting those who need additional help, and knowing each student well so each teacher can intervene when either behavioral or academic problems arise.

- **Behavioral Intervention and Social Skills Training**

Optimist Charter School intends to institute a school-wide behavior management system that includes clear defined expectations and concrete rewards to encourage both work productivity and positive appropriate school behaviors. Our nonpublic high school has been using this system with a great deal of success with our special education students in the nonpublic school setting for the past 21 years. We have found it to be very effective at managing problem behaviors and effecting change in students who have previous histories of difficulty in school in the past. Our two-tiered positive token economy system will be modified slightly to meet the needs of our targeted population of general education students and special education students with either RSP or SDC setting requirements. In addition, the small setting will allow for the development of relationships that promote understanding and a cooperative learning environment. In our type of setting, teachers can be role models of appropriate interactions and can provide constructive feedback.

- **Crisis Management and Therapeutic Crisis Intervention**

Many of the students placed by probation in foster care have difficulty with anger management and exhibit volatile behaviors at times. Optimist has many years of experience in working with this population and understands the unique needs of foster youth on probation. All of our staff will be trained in PRO-Act techniques of crisis intervention. The goal is to provide a safe and structured setting where students can learn and know they will remain safe and protected. Our teachers learn to recognize trigger behaviors and to intervene quickly before conflict escalates to assaultive behaviors. However, should violence ensue, they are also trained in safe methods of intervention and restraint when absolutely necessary. Our training instructs staff how to intervene in the types of crises that require empathic understanding rather than physical intervention.

- **Vocational Education and Work Experience**

Identifying current academic goals and future career goals will be an important feature of the program. Students will complete vocational and career interest inventories and/or assessments to identify vocational areas of interest and strengths. Students will explore potential careers within those fields of interest. Career oriented classes in basic construction, auto mechanics, computers, and computer graphics will expose students to these vocations. Working in our cafeteria, auto shop, and recreation departments will allow students a real life experience and will assist in learning a multitude of skills necessary for work in the community. Students earning a high school diploma will receive assistance with enrolling in a trade school or college as they prepare to graduate.

OPTIMIST CHARTER SCHOOL PETITION

The address of the Charter School is 6957 N. Figueroa St., LA, CA 90042.

The phone number of the Charter School is 323-443-3100.

The contact person for the Charter School is Alan Eskot, Dir. of Ed. or Lynn DeYoung, Principal.

The term of this charter shall be from August 15, 2012 to June 30, 2017.

The grade configuration is 7th through 12th grades.

The number of students in the first year will be 120.

The grade level(s) of the students the first year will be 7th through 12th.

The scheduled opening date of the Charter School is August 15, 2012.

The admission requirements include:

- Students in 7th through 12th grades
- Students who are probation placed foster youth living in a foster home, group home, or residential facility

The operational capacity will be 160.

The instructional calendar will be: August 15, 2012 through June 30, 2013, 180 instructional days which will closely approximate LAUSD's regular track calendar.

The bell schedule for the Charter School will be: 8:00 to 3:00, with 380 instructional minutes.

If space is available, traveling students will have the option to attend.

AFFIRMATIONS AND ASSURANCES:

Optimist Charter School shall:

- Be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and all other operations.
- Not charge tuition.
- Not discriminate against any student on the basis of disability, gender, 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.
- Admit all pupils who wish to attend the school. EC 47605(d)(2)(A) (See admissions criteria.)
- Determine admission by a public random drawing, if the number of pupils who wish to attend the school exceeds the school capacity, and preference shall be extended to pupils who currently attend the Charter School and pupils who reside in the District. EC 47605(d)(2)(B)
- Not enroll pupils over nineteen (19) years of age unless continuously enrolled in public school and making satisfactory progress toward high school diploma requirements.
- Not require any child to attend the Charter School nor any employee to work at the charter school.
- In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(3)], if a pupil is expelled or leaves the charter school without graduation or completing the school year for any reason, the charter school 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.

INTRODUCTION

The mission of Optimist Charter School is to provide a motivating educational opportunity and integrated support services for young men and women, especially those experiencing challenging life circumstances. Our students will include young men and women in the foster care system placed by the Department of Probation who have been unsuccessful in traditional educational environments. Our mission is to provide quality academics for foster youth in a safe, structured setting that also provides therapeutic behavioral intervention and social skills training to promote educational success. We hope to create a model program for foster youth students that can be replicated throughout the state.

Element 1 – The Educational Program

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

A. Student Population to be Served

Optimist Boys Home and Ranch dba Optimist Youth Homes and Family Services will be operating Optimist Charter School. We have been operating a nonpublic (NPS) special education school for the past 21.5 years and plan on continuing to operate this school in a separate building on our premises. Our NPS will continue to serve students with IEPs which delineate nonpublic school placement. Our proposed Charter School will serve students who reside in the community and are placed by the Department of Probation in either foster, group home, or residential homes. We will serve students who are in 7th to 12th grades.

Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services (OYHFS) is a nationally accredited non-profit 501(c)3 corporation. We are one of the oldest and largest agencies of this kind in Southern California, having opened our doors to orphaned boys in 1906 and incorporated in 1914 as a home for boys. That original site is our main residential campus for boys in Los Angeles. Referrals are accepted from throughout the state of California. We serve over 500 at-risk youth and their families everyday. Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services provides culturally sensitive, comprehensive treatment, specialized education, and support services to abused, neglected or at-risk children, youth and their families, to promote stability within families and communities. The agency is committed to giving all children the chance at a bright future which they so fully deserve. In combining therapy, education and a nurturing residential living environment, we provide the specialized care and understanding needed by each and every child. Through life skills training, we aim to help young people overcome the negative experiences of their youth in order to lead meaningful, independent adult lives.

The main campus is a rate care level 12 facility that houses up to 99 adolescent males age twelve to nineteen, who live in one of five dormitories or in one of three independent living units. These young men are referred by county Departments of Probation in Southern and Northern California. In addition, Optimist Youth Homes & Family Services owns and operates four community group homes in Los Angeles County, each housing six adolescents. Two of the homes are for girls and two for boys, and they are also staffed by youth care counselors and a social worker.

Our nonpublic school has served a probation foster youth population for the past 21.5 years. We have utilized a CDS classroom on our campus for the past 5 years as well as enrolling some of our students in our public school, Eagle Rock H.S. After all these years of educating these residentially placed Probation youth, it is our conclusion that this type of population needs to be in a sequestered educational setting. It is our mission to work with this type of probation foster youth in and around our area.

A precedent for preferential enrollment in a charter school within LAUSD has already been established. New Village Charter School in LA, which is associated with Saint Anne’s residential facility, only accepts female students. It is our desire to request a similar preference for foster care students who are placed by the Department of Probation in similar foster, group, or residential homes within our community.

Eagle Rock High School, a span school serving 7th to 12th grade students in the area, is the home school for the residents of the Optimist residential facility. Other public schools in the area are Franklin High School and Luther Burbank Middle School. Two charter schools in the Eagle Rock serving similar populations as the public schools are the California Academy of Liberal Studies located at 7350 North Figueroa St., and the Renaissance Arts Academy at 1800 Colorado Blvd. Below is demographic data for those schools.

**DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE SITE
(Surrounding Schools Data)**

LAUSD SCHOOLS	# of Students	Multitrack School	API Score	API State Ranking	Similar Schools Rank	% Students Eligible for Free Lunch	% of Special Ed. Students	% of E.L.L. Students	% Major Ethnicity #1	% Major Ethnicity #2	% Major Ethnicity #3
Luther Burbank MS.	1314	No	663	1	2	81	15	23	90 % Hispanic	4 % Filipino	2.3 % AA
Eagle Rock HS.	2849	No	738	5	2	64	11	13	65.6 % Hispanic	18.8 % Filipino	8.4 % White
Franklin HS	2556	No	659	2	4	_____		22	90.8 % Hispanic	3.1 % Filipino	2.7 % Asian
CHARTER SCHOOLS											
Academy of Liberal Studies	315	No	861	9/10	_____	81 %	_____	0.1 %	94.9 % Hispanic	2.6 % White	1.6 % Asian
Renaissance Arts Academy	293	No	886	10	_____	65 %	7 %	5 %	55 % Hispanic	29 % White	10 % AA

Although some of this demographic data is relevant in relation to those youths who reside at Optimist, much of it is not, since our residents are placed by the Department of Probation in our facility. The young men and women who are placed in the Optimist residential programs are placed here from a variety of counties throughout the state. Approximately 70% of our clients are placed by LA County and 30% by other counties. Most of the Out-of-County clients come from Riverside and San Bernardino, but we have Orange County, Alameda County, San Joaquin County, Kern County, and Ventura County clients as well. Over the last 4 years, approximately 52% of our clientele are Hispanic, 29% African American, about 12 % are Caucasian, 2% list themselves as multicultural, and the other 5% include Asian, Native American and other ethnicities. Because they are placed by these various probation departments, we have constant enrollments and discharges. With a total of 123 beds in our dorms, group homes, and Independent Living Program, Optimist has served an average of 416 residents per year in the last four years, from January of 2007 through December of 2010.

Over the last three years, 2008 through 2010, the average length of stay for clients in these residential programs has been 4.6 months. This includes clients who may run away or be terminated because they are unable to abide by the rules of the program in the first few weeks of placement. For those who are able to successfully remain in placement beyond those first thirty days, the length of stay increases to about 6 months. Unfortunately, for young people whose lives have been subject to a great deal of mutability already, residential placement is destined to be another relatively short time of stability and respite. This is one of the reasons Optimist is applying for a Charter School in order to provide intensive rehabilitation and stability in an alternative, structured and nurturing school environment geared to providing both the necessary educational components and behavioral intervention for students similar to ours. This Charter School will be modeled in part on our current NPS, which has been a successful part of the Optimist facility for the last 21 years.

We will continue to operate our Nonpublic School (NPS), which was opened 21 years ago on September 28, 1990 and will be located in a separate building on campus. We are a state certified nonpublic special education school, which contracts with a variety of school districts including: Los Angeles, Pasadena, Inglewood, Long Beach, and Glendale Unified School Districts. It serves some of our residential and group home clients and up to 80 community students who qualify for special education and have IEPs stipulating NPS. Eighty percent of our community students were previously in our residential program and now live within our transportation boundaries. The other educational programs operating on our campus, is an LAUSD Community Day School (CDS) classroom, which offers up to 21 of our residents a regular education public school experience. Some of the residents who do not have special education services are scholar-shipped in the nonpublic school when their histories indicate that they have had unsuccessful experiences on previous public school campuses, and therefore will most likely continue poorly. In these cases the parent/guardian has agreed to placement in that program. Many of these also have

significantly below average academic test scores as well. Some of these students are in the process of being tested and evaluated by LAUSD for special education.

Finally, we also utilize full time placement at public school for some of our residents who have been able to successfully handle this type of public school environment in the past. Most of the residential students who attend the local public school, Eagle Rock High School have had relatively positive prior school histories and are not significantly behind in their credits. Some of these students have IEPs and are receiving either RSP or SDC special education services on the public school campus. However, many of these students continue to have some difficulty in the public school setting.

Of those who enter the Optimist Residential Program, about 25% were receiving some type of special education services prior to placement. However, most of the other 75% have a variety of long-term educational difficulties. A significant number of our residents have a history of poor and failing grades, suspensions and expulsions from school, significant truancy, and behavioral and emotional difficulties in various school settings. Of those residents who do not have special education services, 77% fall into the 15 to 17 year old age bracket and should chronologically be in the 10th to 12th grades. Of that group, approximately 57% enter Optimist with fewer than 30 credits. Of those who enter in the chronological 11th and 12th grades, only 10% have 90 or more credits and are therefore not close to earning a regular high school diploma. Some of this group may be close to earning a high school diploma through AB167, but even then, many of those students do not have the essential credits to meet those requirements prior to their expected graduation date.

Our statistics are consistent with those of other residentially placed youth throughout the country. According to the *Survey of Youth in Residential Placement: Youth Needs and Services* (SYRP) by Andrea J. Sedlak, Ph.D. and Karla McPherson, Ph.D., a survey of more than 7,000 youth in custody in 2003, 49% of 15 years olds are below modal grade level, and this number steadily increases with the older population. “The percentage below modal grade level leaps upward from an already high level (50% of the 17-year-olds) to close to two-thirds of the 18- to 20-year-olds.” The dropout rate for overall custody population (ages 10 through 20 in SYRP) is more than three times higher than the event dropout rate for students in grades 10 through 12 in the general population.”

Related to the problem of grade level and poor credit accrual for the foster child in residential placement is the problem of transience. According to the FAQ Sheet for AB167:

California’s foster children are often bounced from placement to placement and from school to school. These transitions often result in education related problems, including a loss of school credits, academic problems, and a delay in earning a high school diploma. Studies show high school pupils who change schools even once are less than 50 percent as likely to graduate from high school as compared to high school pupils who do not change schools (1).

Optimist residents' records, for example, clearly provide evidence of this. The "normal" child whose family does not move about attends three schools before graduating, an elementary school, a middle school, and a high school. Only about 4% of Optimist residents have that type of enrollment histories. Disconcerting and troubling is that an equal percentage of our clients have attended more than 10 schools! The vast majority fall in the middle. Forty-five percent of our residents have attended four to six schools, and almost half, 46%, have been enrolled in seven to ten different schools during their lives prior to their placement at Optimist. *Ready to Succeed*, a study of foster care youth in California, shows similar data. In a list of statistics regarding foster youth, it notes that California students who changed schools even once were less than half as likely to graduate as those who didn't change schools (8).

Although some of these school moves are due to family moves, numerous are also due to behavioral problems that lead to opportunity transfers or expulsions, as well as placements in juvenile halls and prior residential placements. In the article *Improving School Stability: An Exploratory Study Of The Work Of The AB490 Liaisons In California*, Nancy M Shea, Andrea G. Zetlin, and Lois A Weinberg report that "Foster youth are more likely than other children to have academic and behavioral trouble in school, including higher rates of disciplinary referrals, grade retention and placement in special education classes, and lower performance in the classroom and on standardized achievement tests in reading and mathematics" (2). In the case of many of our residents for whom Optimist is their first residential placement, poor performance in school is one of the violations of probation that helped determine the necessity for residential placement. Poor performance in school is often both academic and behavioral and includes poor and failing grades, suspension, transfers, expulsions and truancy.

The SYRP also addresses this high rate of suspensions and expulsions stating that "61% of youth in custody report they experienced one or both of these disciplinary actions" prior to being in custody. "Most of these (57% of all youth in custody) say they were suspended, but more than one-fourth (38%) acknowledge that they were expelled." *Ready to Succeed*, notes that 67% of foster youth were suspended from school at least once compared with 28% in the general population, and 17% had been expelled from school as compared to 5% of the general population (8). In a recent ad hoc study of residents at Optimist, 85% report having been suspended at least once, and 32% report having been expelled, opportunity transferred, or "kicked out." Although many of our students have not been in the foster system since childhood (a significant number have, however), they are now involved in the foster care system due to criminal activity and often continued problems in the community both at home and school. One could say that antisocial behavior has resulted in placement in the system, and that these behaviors usually include school problems resulting in suspensions and expulsions. Regardless, behavioral issues have clearly had an effect on their ability to succeed in school, pass classes, and earn credits.

Of our residents who reported suspensions, 57% listed fighting, 46% defiance, and 59% listed disrespect of school staff as reasons for at least one suspension. Of course, many also reported numerous suspensions for varying reasons. Clearly, difficulty managing anger and handling frustration are major problems for our population, another factor that is highly prevalent in youth in custody. “Two-thirds of youth (68%) say that, in the past few months, they have been easily upset, and nearly as many (61%) say they have lost their temper easily or felt angry a lot.” (SYRP) In the survey, 30% of those youth reported that they had hurt or broken something on purpose, just because they were mad.

Certainly, these behaviors are evident in the residents at Optimist who will be eligible to enroll in the charter school. Records kept by our facility bear this out. So far this year, the agency has had between 20 and 30 incidents of defiant behavior each month that have been serious enough to warrant a Serious Incident Report (reportable to Department of Probation). However, numerous smaller acts of defiance and disrespect are seen daily and are addressed by the various programs. In the nonpublic school, behaviors such as these are addressed through the behavior management system and through discussion and interaction with staff. In addition, in spite of close supervision and a high staff to student ration, the facility still has an average of ten incidents a month of some type of physical violence (usually in the form of mutual combat), though intervention is quick and very few of these result in any type of containment.

However, these volatile behaviors that we deal with on a daily basis could create an unsafe environment at Eagle Rock High School if all these 99 young men from this residential site were to attend that school. Although some of the students who have been enrolled there during this school year are doing quite well, we have had a few incidents with some of them while they have been at Eagle Rock. Two were involved in a fight and suspended, one was suspended for a verbal altercation and defiance with the principal, two others were suspended for defiance and sexually acting out, and two were arrested, one after being seen choking another Optimist resident at school, and another for sexual battery of a female Eagle Rock student. In addition, other students have been referred to the counseling office after minor incidents of disrespect and defiance. In some cases Eagle Rock has requested that we not enroll a resident on their campus when that youth has shown defiant and disrespectful behaviors even in the enrollment process.

Up to twenty-one of the residents from the Optimist homes also attend the LAUSD Community Day School on our campus. Prior to placing students in that program, we academically test and compile and examine their school histories as well. We choose students for placement in that program whose test scores indicate they have reading comprehension skills close to, on, or above grade level. We also try to place students in that program who have shown success in other similar independent study type programs. Still, the CDS classroom teacher frequently contacts our residential staff for assistance with behavior problems on a daily basis. Generally, that program averages a partial-day

suspension rate of 5% of the population due to behaviors of defiance, disrespect, disruption, and work refusal on a daily basis.

Difficulty managing anger is only one of the many emotional concerns for residents in foster care homes. Youth in residential placements have a variety of other mental health issues, as well, including difficulty with attention, anxiety, depression, trauma, and suicidal ideation that make success in the general public school environment difficult. The 2003 SYRP addresses these concerns as well. “Nearly one-half of youth (45%) say they have a hard time paying attention at school or work. Almost as many (41%) report having a hard time staying organized or getting everything done. About one-third (32%) have a hard time staying in their seat or where they are supposed to stay.” Although our clients fit this description, only about 10% of the residents who report attentional difficulties have ever received any type of additional services to help remediate this problem. Since January of this year, an average per month of 14 students out of the approximately 95 who reside at the main campus, 15%, have been diagnosed with ADHD and are taking medication to assist them with difficulty focusing. There are others, however, who have less severe problems with attention who are not diagnosed but nevertheless struggle with focusing and completing work. These youths will also benefit significantly from the smaller class size and additional teacher attention we will be able to provide in the charter school.

In regard to depression, although it is in some manner to be expected that young people taken away from their home and living in residential treatment would feel some measure of depression, experiencing depression cannot be discounted in regard to educational success. Over the last year, a monthly average of 17% of our young men on our main campus take an antidepressant medication due to significant depressive symptoms, while an average of an additional 7% take a psychotropic medication due to a diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder. According to the SYRP, “more than half the youth in residential placement (52%) claim that they feel lonely too much of the time.” In relation to both depression and anxiety, many youth in residential placement have experienced significant trauma in their lives. “More than one-half of youth in custody (51%) indicate that, over the past few months, nervous or worried feelings have kept them from doing what they want to do, whereas 17% report having nightmares that are bad enough to make them afraid to go to sleep.” The SYRP indicates that many of youths report “having something very bad or terrifying happen to them (70%) or personally seeing someone severely injured or killed (67%).”

Likewise, many of the Optimist residents are involved in gangs and live in highly gang and/or crime-ridden areas. These young people have often witnessed and/or been involved in violence that is both frightening and traumatic. Others have witnessed domestic violence or have been the victims themselves of abuse. The statistics reported in the SYRP regarding abuse and children in custody are startling. “Nearly one-fifth (19%) of youth in custody report prior experiences of frequent physical abuse, while 18% of youth say they experienced injury from prior physical abuse.” Some youths reported both frequent and injurious abuse, so “one-fourth (25%) of youth disclose histories of physical abuse.” In

addition, “One-eighth of youth in custody (12%) report experiences of one or more types of prior sexual abuse.” This would include both molestation and assault. Not only do we have young men who have experienced sexual abuse, but at Optimist, we also have one dorm with a capacity for 12 clients specifically designed to work with sexual offenders, one of the few residential programs dealing with this population in the state of California.

Finally, the SYRP addresses two other issues of clinical concern, suicidality and hallucinations. In regard to suicidal ideation, the SYRP sites two studies of suicidality in the general population and found that “the lifetime prevalence of suicide attempts in the custody population is more than twice the highest rate found in local general population surveys and nearly quadruple the rate in national samples.” More specifically, of youths surveyed, “between 15% and 26% of the youths say that in the past few months they had suicidal feelings described in the question, with the greatest percentage reporting that they felt like life was not worth living (26%) and the fewest (15%) saying that they had felt like killing themselves. Nearly one-third of the youths (30%) affirm one or more of these recent suicidal feelings. with 11% affirming all four of them.”

At Optimist during the 2010 year, on both the main campus and the group homes combined, we had a total of 45 reported incidents of suicidal ideation. While only 15 of these resulted in a psychiatric hospitalization, this high number does speak to the level of depression that can be experienced by youth in residential placement. We can assume that other foster homes in the area have similar statistics to ours.

From our experiences, all these clinical concerns just described are clearly reflected in the clients placed at Optimist and continue to affect them in the educational setting. Students with attentional difficulties will likely continue to struggle in the general education setting on a public school campus. With class sizes at record highs and increasing numbers in the public school general education setting, students with histories of attention problems are likely to experience continued academic difficulties. Their histories indicate that they have struggled to succeed in the past, and experience tells us that they need a smaller more therapeutic environment for success to take place. Angry students who have a history of aggressive and argumentative behavior are likely to continue this pattern as well without educational intervention. Many of our current NPS and CDS students get involved in fights or verbal arguments that could lead to fights without intervention even on our campus. The likelihood of these students getting into fights on the public school campus where there are more students and less supervision is even greater. Some residents also struggle with academic skills that are far below grade level, which greatly exacerbates their problems in school ten-fold. Additional suspensions and or expulsions will not benefit these young men and women. Probation foster care youth who suffer from anxiety while in placement are likely to have anxiety levels increased by enrollment in the public school where help is not as easily accessed.

Optimist will also be able to serve similar students in the community who are placed by the Department of Probation in foster care homes and already have special education services or are in need of assessment. Currently, between 25 and 30% of the students in our residential treatment are receiving special education services, a small handful of which were referred for assessment for services by Optimist. Usually, about half of the students with special education services are eligible due to Specific Learning Disabilities. Of the other half, about two-thirds qualify due to an emotional disturbance and one-third qualify as Other Health Impaired due to a diagnosis of Attention Deficit.

B. Vision and Mission

Mission Statement

The mission of Optimist Charter School is to provide a motivating educational opportunity and integrated support services for young men and women, especially those experiencing challenging life circumstances who are placed by the Department of Probation in foster youth homes and placements. Our students include young men and women in the foster care and probation systems, who have experienced a lack of success in traditional educational environments. Our mission is to provide quality academics for foster youth in a safe, structured setting that also provides therapeutic behavioral intervention and social skills training to promote educational success.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to empower probation foster youth students to become self-reliant by helping them develop the academic and social skills, ambition, and self-confidence necessary for productive, successful lives. We intend to give them the tools for future academic success that will allow them to reach their potential.

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

No single school day defines the education process. Rather, it is the collective sum of one's life journey that helps us to understand what it means to be an educated person. It is not the same for any two students, and therefore the academic approach must be customized as well. The individual who is able to make connections between academia and life experience is the best possible example of becoming educated. Preparing our youth to handle "real life" experiences successfully means teaching them how to think "smart". This transformative process should begin very early in life. The educated person will possess the ability to master traditional academic content while simultaneously being able to demonstrate non academic skills and/or the desire to attain them. They will exhibit an innate desire to continue learning. This will come to define an educated person in the 21st century.

In his winning essay on this topic at Vermont Tech, Peter Clark, a computer information technology student, described the educated person in this way. "The more information they know, the more they realize they do not know. Everyday life and the workplace become playgrounds to learn and test their knowledge, not inhibit its growth. They develop a deep-rooted expectation of themselves to always strive to become more enlightened on the nature of the world and the people around them" (Clark). He sums it up by quoting the British author Thomas Hardy:

Try to learn something about everything and everything about something.

Optimist Charter School concludes that an educated person in the 21st century will:

- Demonstrate mastery of traditional academic content.
- Demonstrate ability to process complex questions, problems or challenges.
- Exhibit collaborative skills.
- Exhibit ability to communicate effectively with others and utilize critical thinking skills.
- Be self-directed and self-motivated.
- Demonstrate leadership and ethical responsibility.
- Build relationships that are culturally diverse and that will address their own preconceived notions of other cultures.
- Focus on healthy lifestyle skills/choices, personal responsibility and wellness.
- Will develop an educational and career life plan

Based on the foregoing factors and to enable students to become competent and lifelong learners, Optimist has established the following goals:

1. Optimist students will demonstrate competency in core academic subjects and will be technologically literate.
2. Optimist students will demonstrate the ability to interact in a collaborative and respectful fashion with all cultures.
3. Optimist students will exhibit initiative, creativity and innovation.

4. Optimist students will demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively and to apply problem solving skills to their academic and life challenges.
5. Optimist students will demonstrate the ability to show compassion, integrity, and a sense of social responsibility for their immediate environment and for our global society.
6. Optimist students will exhibit leadership skills and become positive role models for their peers.
7. Optimist students will leave us with a life plan (Individual Success Plan).

D. How Learning Best Occurs

Learning best occurs within a structured and consistent educational framework. This framework will have many important branches; but like a tree, the roots need to be cemented in the existence of a school's culture and climate. The school's learning climate should have a common goal of progress and a framework that supports this. Optimist Charter School prides itself on a framework whose roots include: caring and educated staff, small group instruction, multimodal instruction that appeals to all learning styles, project based learning, attention to the special education student, student team work, behavior/social skill intervention, vocational education training and work experience, and finally a customized graduation and transition plan.

Brief No. 31 of the Best Practices Briefs @ Michigan State University (2004) states that there are several aspect of a school's physical and social environment that comprise a conducive learning climate. They identified the following eight areas:

- Appearance and physical plant
- Faculty relations
- Student interactions
- Leadership/decision making
- Disciplined environment
- Learning environment
- Attitude and culture
- School-community relations

The Brief goes on to discuss research regarding the relationship of school climate to achievement:

Numerous studies document that students in schools with a better school climate have higher achievement and better socio-emotional health. Probably the most comprehensive work in this area is being done by the Search Institute, a nonprofit organization that encourages schools and communities to develop and empower young people. In a review of studies on the impact of support in school, the Search Institute found that a caring school climate is associated with:

- Higher grades, engagement, attendance, expectations and aspirations, a sense of scholastic competence, fewer school suspensions and on-time progression through grades (19 studies).
- Higher self-esteem and self-concept (5 studies).
- Less anxiety, depression and loneliness (3 studies)
- Less substance abuse (4 studies).

Optimist Charter School's best practices learning model ties together the framework described above with a learning environment that supports the following conditions:

1. Students' interest is stimulated by challenging and interesting problems.
2. Students are encouraged to seek solutions and answers and apply them to real world situations rather than memorizing ideas, concepts or facts.
3. The relationship between student and teacher is based on trust, mutual respect and the facilitation of problem solving.
4. Individual concept objectives or standards are woven into projects that combine learning across disciplines.
5. Scaffolding - Skills and ideas are not taught as isolated single visit concepts, but rather as a sequence of knowledge that builds to greater understanding and depth-what is learned in one unit is applied in subsequent units.
6. Technology serves to further the inquiry and knowledge of content area studies rather than as an end objective itself.
7. There is a close tie between current coursework and future goals.
8. The environment is supportive, caring, safe and therapeutic.
9. Success. Most of our students experience success in school in many years.

E. Goals of the Program

Optimist Charter School will offer a collaborative, experiential learning environment that emphasizes individual student achievement and inspires children to reach beyond themselves. Contemporary socio-cultural research tells us that knowledge is constructed as students and more capable others, such as teachers, work together toward common goals (Tharp). Rooted in the discourse of L.S. Vygotsky (1978), this constructivist theory of education believes that development occurs when the learner engages in the use of the tools of learning (e.g., language and skills) toward a meaningful outcome. Furthermore, research has shown that learning is most productive when new material is introduced in the context of the learner's life and values. This research supports the manner in which we structure our academic program to include the development of strong adult-student relationships and the integration of content area learning into real-life contexts. Using "scaffolding" as the basis for learning, this progressive or constructivist approach is at the center of our charter program.

One of the primary goals of using constructivist teaching is that students learn how to learn by giving them the training to take initiative for their own learning experiences. Constructivist approaches also allow students to engage in learning activities based on their learning styles. Howard Gardner, author of *Multiple Intelligences*, proposes that each person has a different intellectual composition and that we can improve education by addressing the multiple intelligences of our students, such as visual, verbal, logical, kinesthetic, rhythmic, intrapersonal, interpersonal, naturalist and existentialist.

Constructivist learning theory says that all knowledge is constructed from a base of prior knowledge. Children are not a blank slate, and knowledge cannot be imparted without the child making sense of it according to his or her current conceptions. Therefore, children learn best when they are allowed to construct a personal understanding based on experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences.

Students enrolled at Optimist Charter School will be following these prescribed learning techniques and will have the best chance of becoming self-motivated, competent, and life-long learners. To this end, Optimist Charter School will pursue the following goals:

Instructional Program

- The learners are actively involved
- The activities are interactive and student-centered
- The teacher facilitates a process of learning in which students are encouraged to be responsible and autonomous
- All curriculum design is aligned with the California state standards
- Standardized testing required by the state will be an integral part of our assessment
- Lessons will be taught across the disciplines through project-based curriculums and using differentiated instruction

- Provide a collaborative experiential learning environment for students to develop their interpersonal skills and nurture mutual respect, civic responsibility and life-long learning.
- Graduation and transition planning
- Involvement in music, art, and movement therapy for social skills development and as a method for therapeutic expression

Professional Development

- Provide monthly trainings for professional development that is job-embedded and is based on inquiry approach and research.
- Provide stipends for credentialed staff to pursue or maintain their credentialed status.
- Establish partnerships with institutions of higher education for professional growth.
- Provide teachers with opportunities to develop their leadership skills by serving as mentors and facilitators.
- Provide teachers with supervision, mentorship, and role modeling through weekly credentialed teacher meetings and all staff meetings, and provide individual supervision for all staff on a bi-monthly basis

Community and Family Participation

- Partner with community organizations to provide students with opportunities for field trips.
- Secure members of the community to serve as speakers, presenters and mentors.
- Partner with residential outreach programs that provide students with therapeutic and family services.
- Provide employment experiences in the facility and in the community

F. Instructional Program and Curriculum

The foundational precept for Optimist Charter’s Instructional Framework will focus on two main aspects important to successful learning, the learning environment and curriculum and instruction. To create a learning environment that enables students to progress, Optimist will have small classes with students grouped by age and ability, a school-wide positive behavior support system, social skills training woven throughout the program, and consistent therapeutic intervention. Within curriculum classes, teachers will use differentiated instruction to reach students of varying abilities, interests and learning styles.

Framework - Learning Environment

Numerous studies correlate the importance of appropriate behavior to academic success. Developing appropriate school behavior in our students is an essential part of their learning. Optimist will teach our students to be better learners by developing their ability to manage their own behaviors and resolve conflict in mature and responsible ways. We will provide educational services in a small structured setting with at least one teaching staff per ten students that incorporates behavior modification and social skills training to create better learners who will be engaged in their own education.

1. Behavior Modification and Social Skills Training

Research has indicated that many exceptional children, especially those with emotional disturbances, have social skill deficits and that these deficits are translated into their academic and personal lives. Research concludes that social skill training may be a necessary component of an exceptional child's education. The premise is that social skill training should be deemed as important as academic "training". The attempt is to teach students with ED social skills using Positive Behavior Support. Social skills can be defined as goal-oriented, rule-governed learned behaviors that are designed to elicit positive responses from others. They are behaviors that are seen as acceptable by the majority of the populace and can also reflect one's ability to problem solve.

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is a broad term that describes a comprehensive, research-based, proactive approach to behavioral support aimed at producing comprehensive change for students with challenging behavior. This approach explores why students exhibit challenging behavior, helps to determine when and why the behaviors occur, and suggests supports teachers can implement that will help replace these behaviors. For students with IEPs who exhibit problematic behaviors, Behavior Support Plans are implemented via the IEP. Although only 24% percent of students who will enroll at Optimist Charter will have been identified as needing special education services, the vast majority will have histories of many of the same problematic school behaviors, including: frustration, defiance, disrespect, withdrawal and/or work refusal, oppositional behavior, aggression, and failing grades. Optimist Charter will use PBS to affect change in challenging behaviors in all of our students in the same manner. We will do this through a school-wide positive behavior system.

In their article "Academic Achievement and the Implementation of School-wide Behavior Support," the authors discuss how instruction time is affected by engagement in the material, and engagement is affected by behavior. "If problem behavior and academics are linked, each affects the other, and if acceptable instruction is in place, then improving the behavioral climate of the school will allow that instruction to be more effective" (Putnam). They go on to identify five conditions necessary for a behaviorally competent school.

With full implementation of school-wide positive behavior support, a behaviorally competent school would have the following conditions: a) classroom management and curriculum variables would be adapted so academic tasks become less aversive; b) reduction in ODRs [office discipline referrals] would mean more minutes spent in academic instruction; c) the minutes spent in academic instruction would be more effective; d) there would be less peer support for academic failure, and; e) there would be an increase in the structured prompts, contingent feedback and support for academic behavior.

For the past 21 years, Optimist Youth Homes has operated a nonpublic school on its residential campus, and we have employed a school-wide behavior system that has been an effective means of modifying behavior and rewarding both behavioral and academic success. We will be implementing this program in the Charter School as well. This two-tiered token economy system awards points for work productivity, and levels are used to reinforce appropriate behavior. Points are exchanged at the end of each week for money, up to \$3.00 per week. Levels are earned each class period by exhibiting appropriate behavior and socialization skills. At the end of each day, levels convert to a percentage which translates into additional money (0, 15, 20, or 25 cents daily) which can be spent in our student store. All items in the school store are non food related and range from a 30¢ battery to a \$150 color TV/ DVD combo.

However, behavior modification alone cannot be effective in dealing with negative school behaviors. It must be accompanied by therapeutic intervention and social skills training. In an environment with students who are easily agitated, have difficulty managing anger, and exhibit learned responses of verbal and physical aggression, conflict and altercation is inevitable. To be able to handle such conflicts, all our teaching staff will be trained in de-escalation techniques with the Pro-Act Method, a two-and-a-half day workshop that given to all of our Charter School staff within several months of being hired and to be renewed every three years.

After de-escalation, students often need to discuss the situation and their feelings with an adult. At times a teacher or teaching assistant can intervene and listen. However, if a student needs more assistance, they will be able to meet with a behavior specialists or an administrator.

When students do meet with staff regarding problems, conflicts, and difficulties, staff will employ reflective listening and social skills training to use the incident as a means of learning and practicing new social skills techniques for the future. Usually, in conferencing with a student, we will be able to resolve issues and help the student redirect so they can quickly return to class. Given the availability of alternative types of behavioral and crisis intervention that we will be able to provide in a school with teachers trained in therapeutic intervention, Optimist Charter School will be able to reduce time lost for instruction due to suspensions and referrals that these same behaviors would incur on a public school campus.

2. Small Class Size

Although it is generally recognized that reduced class sizes produce better academic results in the elementary years, studies show that smaller classes also correlate to better academic achievement in high school as well (Deutsch 35). With students who have behavioral problems, attentional difficulties, and negative expectations for success in the classroom setting, the smaller class is an important means of engaging students, minimizing inappropriate behaviors, increasing work productivity, and monitoring success. At Optimist Charter HS, we will have a ratio of one credentialed teacher to every twenty students, with an additional full-time teacher assistant, 80% of whom will have at least a BA and some type of credential, permit, or waiver. Each student will be educationally tested and evaluated prior to entry into a classroom. Approximately 92% of the day will be departmentalized, where the following subjects will be taught: English, history, science, math, and electives. Students will be grouped according to their chronological age and functional ability level. Class sizes for group classes will be no more than ten students per teaching staff. In such a small learning environment, teachers will be able to meet the needs of all students, providing re-teaching as necessary for those who may have difficulty understanding the material, frequent prompting and encouragement for those who have difficulty starting and completing tasks, and quick intervention if conflict arises between students. The other 8% of the school day is self-contained where a minimum ratio of one teaching staff for every 10 students will assist them with individualized instruction. During this time, an individualized tutorial approach will address reading, writing, and arithmetic by choosing individualized appropriate curriculum for each student. This will also assist students in making up partial credits received from previous schools.

Educational services will be coordinated with the residential staff of the various foster homes where students will reside. Daily point sheets will be given to residential, group home and foster home staff which will assist with daily communication regarding students' progress. Report cards will be generated every 6 weeks, delineating grades, quiz and exam percentages, and teachers' comments.

Framework - Curriculum and Instruction

1. Differentiated Learning

Differentiated instruction is a teaching approach in which teachers adapt their instruction to the varying needs of their students rather than teaching to a middle ground. According to Carol Ann Tomlinson, a leading authority on differentiated classrooms:

In differentiated instruction, classroom teachers make vigorous attempts to meet students where they are in the learning process and move them along as quickly and as far as possible in the context of a mixed-ability classroom. It

promotes high-level and powerful curriculum for all students, but varies the level of teacher support, task complexity, pacing, and avenues to learning based on student readiness, interest, and learning profile. Differentiation seems a common-sense approach to addressing the needs of a wide variety of learners, promoting equity and excellence and focusing on best-practice instruction in mixed ability classrooms. This makes more sense than the timeworn method of aiming for students in the middle and hoping for the best for those on the upper and lower extremes (“Differentiated”).

Traditional teaching methods were based on an instructional model wherein the teacher delivered instruction, usually through lecture; the teacher modeled skills, often using dry erase boards and/or overhead projectors; the student practiced that work, usually in a workbook or with handouts; and the teacher provided assessment of instruction, usually in the form of graded work such as quizzes and tests. Although this method continues to be uniform and consistent and presents the required material to the student, it meets the needs of only about half the students. Traditional methods are not flexible, don’t engage students of diverse backgrounds, and, because they tend to focus on facts and memorization, they do not access higher level thinking skills. Differentiated instruction stimulates creativity and helps students understand ideas at higher levels of thinking than teaching through rote memorization alone.

Differentiated instruction understands that students of the same age differ in how they learn, their interests, and readiness in regard to skills mastered. Methods that differentiate instruction meet the needs of diverse students with a variety of learning styles and accommodate students with various educational concerns, such as learning disabilities, attentional difficulties, and behavioral and emotional problems. “Successful teaching requires two elements: student understanding and student engagement” (“Mapping”). Student become engaged in learning when lessons are relevant and meaningful, so teachers must first find ways to connect lessons to prior knowledge and student experience. Presenting information through the varying modalities of auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learning also helps keep students engaged.

Core to differentiated learning is the concept of scaffolding. Jerome Bruner, the "father of cognitive psychology," coined the term "scaffolding" to describe the support structure teachers and parents routinely provide children during the learning process. This theory states that learning takes place actively as children build new ideas upon their current and prior knowledge. It is also based on the Social Development Theory of Learning by Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky. Vygotsky's theory is that "social interaction plays a functional role in the process of cognitive development.” Scaffolding is a metaphor that describes the way a teacher provides assistance to the students during the learning process in much the same way that construction scaffolding serves as a temporary support until the building can stand on its own.

Scaffolding describes specialized teaching strategies geared to support learning when students are first introduced to a new subject. Scaffolding gives students a context, motivation, or foundation from which to understand the new information that will be introduced during the coming lesson. Scaffolding techniques should be considered fundamental to good, solid teaching for all students, not just those with learning disabilities or second language learners. In order for learning to progress, scaffolds should be gradually removed as instruction continues, so that students will eventually be able to demonstrate comprehension independently. Scaffolding instruction includes a wide variety of strategies, including:

- activating prior knowledge
- offering a motivational context to pique student interest or curiosity in the subject at hand
- breaking a complex task into easier, more "doable" steps to facilitate student achievement
- showing students an example of the desired outcome before they complete the task
- modeling the thought process for students through "think aloud" talk
- offering hints or partial solutions to problems
- using verbal cues to prompt student answers
- teaching students chants or mnemonic devices to ease memorization of key facts or procedures
- facilitating student engagement and participation
- displaying a historical timeline to offer a context for learning
- using graphic organizers to offer a visual framework for assimilating new information
- teaching key vocabulary terms before reading
- guiding the students in making predictions for what they expect will occur in a story, experiment, or other course of action
- asking questions while reading to encourage deeper investigation of concepts
- suggesting possible strategies for the students to use during independent practice
- modeling an activity for the students before they are asked to complete the same or similar activity
- asking students to contribute their own experiences that relate to the subject at hand

2. Graduation and Transition Planning

Optimist Charter School will focus on individual growth and development of students as they prepare to be self-motivated, competent, and life-long learners. Each student will have an Individual Success Plan (ISP) which will include current credits, their strategy for credit acquisition and graduation plan, test scores and individual academic goals, behavior goals, and their career or vocational path that includes a plan of action.

In order to assist students in preparing for the future, a strong emphasis will be placed on pre-vocational and career-oriented information, education and experience. Vocational skills will be threaded throughout the entire curriculum. There will be a computer class with 10 CD ROM computers and extensive software. Students each semester will be rotated

through this class and will be exposed to a variety of software and techniques to increase skills associated with computers. A graphic arts class will be taught for one period daily. In addition, each classroom will have two to four computers for student access for skill remediation, to develop technological skills, and for special projects for core classes. We also will have 8 laptops for use in group classes for projects and/or to improve reading, writing, and math skills.

A fully operational auto shop with a full-time auto mechanics instructor will provide additional vocational options. For 5 periods a day, up to 40 students will be rotated into the shop as one of the required technical arts courses. Students will learn skills from simple lube and oil changes, to more complex tasks including tire rotation and balancing, transmission repairs, engine rebuilding, and even some simple bodywork. We will also have a Basic Construction class where students learn various building related skills including: painting, dry-walling and plastering, fundamental framing, rudimentary electrical wiring, and basic plumbing.

In addition to these vocational classes, we will provide a “workability” experience available to students in our facility cafeteria, maintenance, auto shop, and recreational departments. Students will work and earn an hourly stipend. They will work from 5-20 hours a week. We will employ a part time Dean who is responsible for assisting all of our 12th graders regarding career information and future goals. All 12th graders will be given career inventories to assist with career choices. Field trips to community colleges, trade schools, and four-year colleges will also be taken throughout the year. The dean will assist all 12th graders with information regarding scholarships, entrance into the armed forces, necessary qualifications for trade schools and colleges, and an introduction to The Department of Rehabilitation for those who may qualify for their services.

G. Delineation of Core Subjects

Coursework offered for Credit at Optimist Charter School

Following is a chart delineating the requirements for high school graduation that includes the basic requirements as well as those required for admittance into either UC or CSU campuses:

High School Subject Area	State Mandated Requirements * (EC 51225.3) for High School Graduation	UC Requirements for Freshman Admissions	CSU Requirements for Freshman Admissions
English	Three Years	Four years of approved courses	Four years of approved courses
Mathematics	Two years, including Algebra I beginning in 2003-04. (EC 51224.5)	Three years, including algebra, geometry, and intermediate algebra. Four years recommended.	Three years, including algebra, intermediate algebra, and geometry.
Social Science	Three years of history/social science, including one year of U.S. history & geography; one year of world history, culture, and geography; and one semester each of American government and economics.	Two years of history/social science, including one year of U.S. history or one-half year of U.S. history and one-half year of civics or American government; and one year of world history, cultures, and geography.	Two years, including one year of U.S. history or U.S. history and government and one year of other approved social science.
Science	Two years, including biological and physical sciences.	Two years with lab required, chosen from biology, chemistry, and physics. Three years recommended.	Two years, including one year of biological and one year of physical science with lab.
Foreign Language	One year of either visual and performing arts or foreign language.	Two years in same language required. Three years recommended.	Two years in same language required.
Visual and Performing Arts		One year of visual and performing arts chosen from the following: dance, drama/theater, music, or visual art.	One year of visual and performing arts chosen from the following: dance, drama/theater, music, or visual art.
Physical Education	Two years		
Electives		One year**	One year**
Total	13	15 (7 in the last two years)	15

As discussed earlier, it has been our experience that the vast majority of students who will be entering Optimist and who should chronologically be in 10th to 12th grades will be

deficit credits. Because of this, our charter school will focus on the core courses necessary for the state mandated requirements for high school graduation. Those students entering in the 9th or 10th grades will be placed on the traditional graduation track requiring 230 credits. These students will be taking required 9th and 10th grade coursework as delineated by the state and LAUSD. With those who enter as chronologically 11th and 12th graders, Optimist will evaluate their credits and discuss graduation options which will then be delineated on their Individual Success Plan (ISP). For those students who are significantly deficit credits, graduating with 130 credits through AB167 or following the Diploma Plus track will be options.

A student will be able to obtain a high school diploma from Optimist Charter School in one of three ways:

1. Through completion of 230 credits as required and evaluated by LAUSD, demonstrating content area competency in all courses required by the California Education Code 51225.3, and receiving passing scores on both sections of the CAHSEE.
2. Through AB167 requirements for foster children as required by LAUSD: with 130 credits, demonstrating content area competency core curriculum classes and receiving passing scores on both sections of the CAHSEE
3. Through the GED Plus Program in conjunction with LAUSD adult school.

Traditional Diploma Subject Requirements

- Pass CAHSEE
- English (9-12)-----40 credits
- Social Studies (World History, U.S. History, U.S.Government(1 sem.), Economics (1 sem.)-----30 credits
- Science (includes 1yr. biological, 1 yr. physical)-----20 credits
- Mathematics (includes Algebra 1 and 1 year Geometry)-----20 credits
- Fine/ Foreign Language-----20 credits

No more than 10 credits in any one area may be used to satisfy this requirement.

- Health/Life Skills-----10 credits
- TechnicalArts (includes computers, auto mechanics, basic construction, graphic arts)-----10 credits
- Physical Education (Grades 9 and 10)-----20 credits
- Electives* (classes beyond the required courses)-----60 credits

MINIMUM CREDITS -----230 credits

AB167 Diploma (Eligible Foster Youth) Subject Requirements

- Pass CAHSEE
- English (9-12)----- 30 credits
- Social Studies (World History, U.S. History, U.S.Government(1 sem.), Economics (1 sem.)-----30 credits
- Science (includes 1yr. biological, 1 yr. physical)-----20 credits
- Mathematics (includes Algebra 1)-----20 credits
- Visual or Performing Arts/Foreign Language-----10 credits
- Physical Education -----20 credits
- MINIMUM CREDITS-----130 credits

Diploma Plus Track (must be 18 yrs)

- Pass CAHSEE
- Pass GED
- English – American Lit., Contemporary Comp.-----10 credits
- Social Studies (U.S. History, U.S.Gov’t(1 sem.), Economics (1 sem.)-----20 credits
- Health-----5 credits
- Mathematics (Algebra 1)-----10 credits
- Computers-----5 credits
- MINIMUM CREDITS-----50 credits

Scope and Sequence of Skills Taught and Curriculum

How the curriculum addresses the California Content Standards

All Optimist Charter courses will be designed in alignment with the mandatory California State Standards which can be found in the scope and sequence for each content area. Instruction will be delivered in departmentalized fashion rather than in self-contained classrooms. Students will be homogeneously grouped by grade level except where

acceleration or intervention for some students results in a heterogeneous class. Optimist Charter School will be committed to establishing high standards and expectations for all students including meeting California Content Standards and offering students the opportunity to complete the A-G coursework required for admission into the University of California and California State University systems. Through core skills mastery, students will be expected to demonstrate mastery in the core subject areas: language arts, social sciences, mathematics, science, and in elective courses of foreign language, technical arts, physical education, and visual and performing arts.

English/Language Arts Course Descriptions

7th and 8th Grades

Students will read and understand grade-level-appropriate material including classic and contemporary literature that is aligned with history, as well as magazines, newspapers, and online information. Students will use their knowledge of text structure, organization and purpose to describe and connect the essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of the text. In addition, students will build vocabulary, practice grammar and punctuation, and hone oral presentation skills. Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.

- Read and follow written directions and procedures to solve problems and accomplish tasks.
- Use workplace documents and technical manuals.
- Analyze and synthesize information from different sources, making connections and showing relationships to other texts, ideas, and subjects and to the world at large.
- Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.
- Read, view, and interpret texts and performances in every medium (e.g., short stories, novels, plays, film and video productions, poems, and essays) from a wide variety of authors, subjects, and genres.
- Build background by activating prior knowledge through questioning what they already know about the form in which the story is presented and the period in which it was written.
- Read, view, and respond independently to literary works that represent a range of social, historical, and cultural perspectives.
- Monitor their own comprehension by questioning, reviewing, revising, and rereading to enhance overall comprehension.
- Read literary criticism to increase comprehension and appreciation of literary texts.
- Use a variety of written responses, such as double-entry journals and reading logs, to integrate new concepts with existing knowledge.
- Read literary texts aloud to convey an interpretation of the work.

9TH and 10TH Grades

Students will read and understand grade-level-appropriate material including classic and contemporary literature that is aligned with history, as well as magazines, newspapers, and online information. Students will apply their knowledge of word origins to determine the meaning of new words encountered in reading materials and use those words accurately. Students will read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of literature that reflect and enhance their studies of history and social science. They will conduct in-depth analyses of recurrent patterns and themes. Students will write coherent and focused essays that convey a well-defined perspective and tightly reasoned argument. The writing will demonstrate students' awareness of the audience and purpose. Students will progress through the stages of the writing process as needed. Students will write narration, exposition, persuasion, and description texts of at least 1,500 words each. Student writing demonstrates a command of standard American English when writing and speaking. They will deliver both formal and extemporaneous presentations that are focused and coherent and that convey clear and distinct perspectives and solid reasoning. They will use gestures, tone, and vocabulary tailored to the audience and purpose.

11TH Grade – American Literature

Students will read and understand grade-level-appropriate material including classic and contemporary works from American literature with a historical perspective. Students will apply their knowledge of word origins to determine the meaning of new words encountered in reading materials and use those words accurately. They will read and understand grade-level-appropriate material and will be able to analyze the organizational patterns, arguments, and positions advanced. Students will read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of literature that reflect and enhance their studies of history and social science. They will conduct in-depth analyses of recurrent patterns and themes.

11TH Grade – Contemporary Composition

Students will write coherent and focused essays that convey a well-defined perspective and tightly reasoned argument. The writing demonstrates students' awareness of the audience and purpose. Students will progress through the stages of the writing process as needed. Students will write narration, exposition, persuasion, and description texts of at least 1,500 words each. Student writing demonstrates a command of standard American English when writing and speaking. They will deliver both formal and extemporaneous presentations that are focused and coherent and that convey clear and distinct perspectives and solid reasoning. They will use gestures, tone, and vocabulary tailored to the audience and purpose.

12th Grade – World Literature

Students will read and understand grade-level-appropriate material including classic and contemporary works from world literature with a historical perspective. Students will apply their knowledge of word origins to determine the meaning of new words encountered in reading materials and use those words accurately. They will read and understand grade-level-appropriate material and will be able to analyze the organizational patterns, arguments, and positions advanced. Students will read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of literature that reflect and enhance their studies of history and social science. They will conduct in-depth analyses of recurrent patterns and themes.

12th Grade – Expository Writing

Students will write coherent and focused essays that convey a well-defined perspective and tightly reasoned argument. The writing demonstrates students' awareness of the audience and purpose. Students will progress through the stages of the writing process as needed. Students will write narration, exposition, persuasion, and description texts of at least 1,500 words each. Student writing demonstrates a command of standard American English when writing and speaking. They will deliver both formal and extemporaneous presentations that are focused and coherent and that convey clear and distinct perspectives and solid reasoning. They will use gestures, tone, and vocabulary tailored to the audience and purpose.

Mathematics Course Descriptions

One of the most important goals of mathematics is to teach students logical reasoning. The logical reasoning inherent in the study of mathematics allows for applications to a broad range of situations in which answers to practical problems can be found with accuracy. At Optimist, mathematics courses will be organized, using the academic standards for achievement as put forth by the California State Department of Education. Basic courses in grade seven will incorporate the strands of the standards. For grade eight an integrated approach will be used for the disciplines of Algebra I and Geometry. However, students in grade seven may be allowed to participate based on their abilities. To assure proper placement, students will be assigned courses based on assessment results of tests given at Optimist prior to the beginning of classes. Project-based learning and technology will be incorporated into mathematics courses, particularly for the disciplines. However, students will be expected to master basic computational skills without the use of technological tools. Calculators, computers, and the Internet will be used to augment instruction and learning and will be related to the standards as appropriate.

Grade 7

By the end of grade seven, students will be adept at manipulating numbers and equations and understand the general principles at work. Students will understand and use factoring of numerator and denominators and properties of exponents. They will know the Pythagorean Theorem and solve problems in which they compute the length of an unknown side. Students will know how to compute the surface area and volume of basic three-dimensional objects and understand how area and volume change with a change in scale. Students will make conversions between different units of measurement. They will know and use different representations of fractional numbers (fractions, decimals, and percent) and are proficient at changing from one to another. They will increase their facility with ratio and proportion; compute percentages of increase and decrease, and simple compound interest. They will graph linear functions and understand the idea of slope and its relation to ratio.

Grade 8

By grade eight, students' mathematical sensitivity should be sharpened. As students progress in the study of mathematics, they will learn to distinguish between inductive and deductive reasoning; understand the meaning of logical implication; test general assertions; realize that one counterexample is enough to show that a general assertion is false; understand conceptually that although a general assertion is true in a few cases, it is not true in all cases; distinguish between something being proven and a mere plausibility argument; and identify logical errors in chains of reasoning.

Pre-Algebra

This course covers the topics needed to be successful in Algebra I with a strong emphasis on fundamentals as well as on a thorough understanding of math concepts and logic. Problem solving is also a key concept that is emphasized throughout the course.

Algebra

In Algebra, students learn to reason symbolically, and the complexity and types of equations and problems that they are able to solve increase dramatically as a consequence. The key content for the first course, Algebra I, involves understanding, writing, solving, and graphing linear and quadratic equations, including systems of two linear equations in two unknowns. Students should also become comfortable with operations on monomial and polynomial expressions. They learn to solve problems employing all of these techniques, and they extend their mathematical reasoning in many important ways, including justifying steps in an algebraic procedure and checking algebraic arguments for validity.

Geometry

The main purpose of the geometry curriculum is to develop geometric skills and concepts and the ability to construct formal logical arguments and proofs in a geometric setting. Although the curriculum is weighted heavily in favor of plane (synthetic) Euclidean geometry, there is room for placing special emphasis on coordinated geometry and its transformations. Some of the topics covered are deductive and inductive reasoning, writing coherent proofs, graphing lines, areas and volumes of plane figures and solids and transformational geometry.

Algebra 2

In this course students are expected to be able to solve equations and inequalities involving absolute value, solve systems of equations, become adept at the order of operations; factor simple and complex polynomials, and be able to do the four operations with complex numbers and rational expressions. Additionally, they need to be able to solve quadratic equations using the quadratic formula or completing the square method. Students are to be efficient working with logarithms and exponents to solve problems as well. Also, they need to determine whether or not an algebraic expression is true or false. Students must be able to work with and graph the conic sections as well as be able to compute permutations and combinations. Finally, students should be able to use inductive reasoning to prove statements, calculate both arithmetic and geometrical series and justify steps in simplifying equations.

Pre-Calculus

This course is composed of Trigonometry, Math Analysis, and Linear Algebra. These are described below.

Trigonometry

Students will be able to convert degrees to radians, use sine and cosine as x, y coordinates and identify identity equations from the Pythagorean Theorem. They will know the definitions of all trigonometric functions, be able to graph them and that the tangent line is equal to the slope relative to the x -axis. Next, students will understand the definition of inverses as well as the addition, double angle, and half-angle formulas for sine and cosine. Students will be able to determine the unknown sides of a right triangle and be able to effectively use the Law of Sines and Cosines. Finally, students will be able to convert rectangular coordinates to polar ones as well as being able to find the n th root by DeMoivre's Theorem. Students are expected to be able to use all of these skills to solve applications problems.

Math Analysis

Students will apply polar coordinates and vectors in the plane and be able to translate them. They will become adept with arithmetic of complex numbers and be able to prove statements by induction. Additionally, students should be able to apply the fundamental theorem of algebra, work with the conic sections and find roots/poles of rational functions. Finally, students are expected to understand parametric equations and become familiar with the concept of the limit of a sequence and a function as well as convergence and divergence.

Linear Algebra

Students are to be able to solve equations with the Gauss-Jordan Method, interpret linear systems as coefficient matrices, reduce these matrices to row echelon form and find solutions. They need to be able to perform addition and multiplication on matrices and vectors, and have an understanding of the 3 possible solution sets (none, one, infinitely many). Finally, students should have a geometric understanding of vector addition, know how to find the inverse of a matrix by several methods including Cramer's Rule and be able to compute the dot product.

Calculus

Students will understand definition and graphical interpretation of the limit of a function, convergence and divergence, and continuity of a function. They will understand the Intermediate Value Theorem and show a comprehension of the definition of the derivative and the notion of differentiability. Next, they will be able to use the chain rule, find derivatives of parametrically-defined functions and be able to use implicit differentiation. They will be able to apply Rolle's Theorem, the Mean Value Theorem, and use L'Hopital's Rule. Students are expected to be able to graph functions and identify maxima, minima, and inflection points and know Newton's Method for approximating zeros of a function. They must be able to use differentiation to solve optimization problems, rate problems and other applications.

Students know the definition of the integral and use it to solve model problems in science and other areas. They know the fundamental theorem of Calculus and can apply it. They use integrals to solve problems involving area, velocity, acceleration, volume, surface area, length of a curve, and work. Students know the definitions of the inverse trigonometric functions as are able to compute these along with the regular trigonometric functions. They can demonstrate a working knowledge of Simpson's Rule and Newton's Method and use calculators or computers to approximate them. They can calculate the convergence or divergence of a series using the appropriate tests. Students can compute the radius and convergence of a power series and can calculate Taylor Polynomials and Series.

History/Social Science Course Descriptions

Grade 7 - World History and Geography: Medieval and Early Modern Times

Students in grade seven will study the social, cultural, and technological changes that occurred in Europe, Africa, and Asia in the years A.D. 500-1789. After reviewing the ancient world and the ways in which archaeologists and historians uncover the past, students will study the history and geography of great civilizations that were developing concurrently throughout the world during medieval and early modern times. They will examine the growing economic interaction among civilizations as well as the exchange of ideas, beliefs, technologies, and commodities. They will learn about the resulting growth of Enlightenment philosophy and the new examination of the concepts of reason and authority, the natural rights of human beings and the divine right of kings, experimentalism in science, and the dogma of belief. Finally, students will assess the political forces let loose by the Enlightenment, particularly the rise of democratic ideas, and they learn about the continuing influence of these ideas in the world today.

Grade 8 - U.S. History and Geography: Growth and Conflict

Students in grade eight will study the ideas, issues, and events from the framing of the Constitution up to World War I, with an emphasis on America's role in the war. After reviewing the development of America's democratic institutions founded on the Judeo-Christian heritage and English parliamentary traditions, particularly the shaping of the Constitution, students will trace the development of American politics, society, culture, and economy and relate them to the emergence of major regional differences. They will learn about the challenges facing the new nation, with an emphasis on the causes, course, and consequences of the Civil War. They will make connections between the rise of industrialization and contemporary social and economic conditions.

Grade 10 - World History

World History seeks to examine major turning points in the shaping of the modern world from the late eighteenth century to the present. The course begins with an introduction to the current world issues and then continues with a focus on the expansion of the West spurred on by the Industrial Revolution, imperialism and colonization, World War I, World War II, and nationalism among modern nation states. The course also seeks to examine the role of women, minorities, and indigenous groups and their role on the world stage. Representative units include:

- The role of ancient philosophy, Judaism, and Christianity in the development of Western thought
- Compare and contrast the American Revolution, the French Revolution, and the Glorious Revolution in England
- Examine and chart the effects of industrialization on the West and East
- List and analyze the roots of WWI

- Define and examine the effects of nationalism
- Identify the effects of Imperialism of Latin America, Africa, and Asia
- Trace the rise of Communism in Eastern Europe and Asia and the effects of the Cold War
- Analyze nation building in Latin America, Africa, and Asia

Grade 11 - U.S. History

Modern United States History surveys the major turning points in American history of the twentieth century. The course begins with a selective review emphasizing two major themes—the nation’s beginnings and the industrial transformation to the new nation. Topics covered are the expanding role of the federal government and the federal courts; the continuing tensions between the individual and the state and between minority rights and majority power; the emergence of a modern corporate economy; and the impact of technology on American society. The course investigates the movements toward equal rights for diverse groups such as racial minorities, gays and lesbians, people with disabilities, and women. The rise to prominence of the United States on the world stage is also charted. Representative units include:

- Examining the nation’s beginnings
- Tracing the rise of the US as a Nation to 1877
- Analyzing the relationships among the rise of industrialization, large-scale rural to urban migration, and immigration from Europe
- Examining the role of religion in the founding of America
- Tracing the rise of the US in its role as a world power
- Listing and analyzing the major technological developments of the twentieth century
- Analyzing the different explanations for the Great Depression
- Examining the US participation in WWII
- Charting the economic boom and social transformation of the US following WWII
- Examining US foreign policy since WWII
- Analyzing the development of federal civil and voting rights

Grade 12 – Government

Principle of American Democracy is a senior level course which analyzes the system of government and historical background and fundamental concepts and principles that underlie American democracy. The course covers the development of the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and Federalism. It also includes a study of political parties, voting and voting behavior, and elections at the national, state, and local levels. The course also analyzes the influence of special interest groups and the role of the media in shaping public opinion. The roles and responsibilities of the three branches of government at the national, state, and local levels are examined and compared. Principles of American Democracy also examines complex contemporary issues that confront national, state, and local

governments, such as immigration, race, abortion, gender, sexual orientation, and disabilities. Representative units include:

- Explain features of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights
- Evaluate positions regarding the fundamental values and principles of civil society
- Analyze the unique roles and responsibilities of the three branches of government as established by the Constitution
- Summarize landmark US Supreme Court Interpretations of the Constitution
- Analyze the origins, characteristics, and development of different political systems across time and space

Grade 12 – Economics

The major purpose of this course is to provide a comprehensive study of the basic institutions, concepts, principles, and practices of economics. Instruction covers basic economic concepts that underlie the United States market system and its operations. Instructional units apply these concepts at both the micro and macro levels. In addition, the course investigates the complex political and economic issues confronting national, state, and local governments. The course also includes an analysis of the American free enterprise system through a study of comparative economics. Included is instruction on the international dimensions of economics and the global economy. Representative units include:

- Fundamental economic principles
- Comparative economic systems
- Concepts in international economics
- Microeconomics
- Macroeconomics

Science Course Descriptions

At Optimist Charter, science courses will be organized using the academic standards for achievement as set forth by the California State Department of Education. The study of science at Optimist will include project based learning and an emphasis on the latest technology at every grade level. An Investigation and Experimentation strand describes a progressive set of expectations for each grade. The science standards will be organized in sets under broad concepts. Optimist will organize science in order to help the students move between topics and follow them as the content systematically increases in depth, breadth, and complexity through the grade levels.

Grade 7

The focus of science in the seventh grade is life science. One reason for a focus on life science in grade seven is the students' own biological and behavioral transition into

early adolescence. Young adolescents make decisions that may have an enormous influence on their lives. The study of life science provides a knowledge base on which adolescents can make well-informed and wise decisions about their health and behavior. The relevance of the curriculum to students' lives helps students to maintain an interest in science and to expand their knowledge of the natural sciences.

Grade 8

Students in grade eight study topics in physical sciences, such as motion, forces, and the structure of matter, by using a quantitative, mathematically based approach similar to the procedures they will use in high school. Earth, the solar system, chemical reactions, the chemistry of biological processes, the periodic table, and density and buoyancy are additional topics that will be treated with increased mathematical rigor, again in anticipation of high school courses. Students should begin to grasp four concepts that help to unify physical sciences: force and energy; the laws of conservation; atoms, molecules, and the atomic theory; and kinetic theory. Those concepts serve as important organizers that will be required as students continue to learn science.

Grade 9 or 10 - Biology

Students will understand cell biology concerning the following subjects: cell membranes, the role of enzymes and proteins, the differences in prokaryotic, eukaryotic cells and viruses. They will understand the "central dogma of molecular biology", the role of the endoplasmic reticulum and the process of photosynthesis. Additionally, students will learn about the role of the mitochondria and be able to identify most macro-molecules.

In the area of genetics students will understand how mutation and sexual reproduction lead to genetic variation. They must be able to describe how a multi cellular organism develops from a single zygote in addition to being able to describe the process of building proteins by DNA sequence of amino acids. Finally, students should be able to elaborate on the alterability of the composition of cells by incorporation of exogenous DNA into them.

Students will comprehend that stability in an ecosystem is a balance between competing effects and the frequency of an allele in a gene pool of a population depends on many factors and may be stable or unstable over time. They will understand that evolution is the result of genetic changes that occur in constantly changing environments.

Finally, students will be exposed to human and animal physiology and have an understanding of homeostasis and a basic understanding of the human immune response.

Grade 11 - Physical Science - Either Chemistry or Physics will fill this requirement.

Chemistry

Students will know how to read and interpret the periodic table of the elements and be able to find the atomic number, mass number, and relate chemical properties of each element based on the period or column that it occupies. They will understand that the biological, chemical, and physical properties of matter result from atoms bonding and the electrostatic forces that hold them together. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the conservation of matter and compute the masses of products and reactants as well as understand the kinetic molecular theory and resulting gas laws. They should understand and be able to identify the three compounds that form ions in water solutions: acids, bases, and salts and the definition of homo/heterogeneous solutions. Finally, students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of chemical thermodynamics, reaction rates, and chemical equilibrium. Time permitting, more advanced students should be exposed to organic chemistry, biochemistry, and nuclear processes.

Physics

In this class students should be able to comprehend and use Newton's laws to predict the motion of objects in 2-dimensional space. They should understand the laws of conservation of energy and momentum and use them to describe the basic movement of objects. Next, they should be able to define the laws of thermodynamics and conservation of heat and be able to compute the heat flow and work done when energy is transferred between systems. Additionally, they should be able to elaborate on the characteristics of waves (both compression and transverse) and be able to identify the frequency, wavelength, and amplitude. Finally, students should understand the relationship between electricity and magnetism, and be able to compute the potential difference, amperage, and resistance in a DC and AC circuit.

H. Adopted Textbooks for Instruction

<i>Course</i>	<i>Textbook(s)</i>
<u>Mathematics</u>	
Algebra Readiness	Algebra Readiness CA ed. (Glencoe 2008)
Algebra I	Algebra 1- CA ed.(Glencoe 2008)
Geometry	Geometry CA ed. (Glencoe 2001/2007)
7 th or 8 th Grade Math (Glencoe, 2001)	Mathematics: Concepts, Skills, and Problems
<u>Science</u>	
Life Science (7 th)	Focus on Life Science (Glencoe 2007)
Physical Science (8 th)	Focus on Physical Science (Glencoe 2007)
Biology	Biology (Prentice-Hall 2008)
Physics	Conceptual Physics (Prentice-Hall 2006)
<u>Social Science</u>	
MS Social Studies (7 th)	World History: Medieval and Early Modern Times (McDougal-Littell 2006)
MS Social Studies (8 th)	Creating America: A History of the U.S. Beginnings to Reconstruction (McDougal-Littell 2007)
World History	World History: The Modern World (Pearson Prentice- Hall 2007)
American History	The Americans: Reconstruction to the Present (CA ed. Mc-Dougal Littell 2006)
Government	Magruder’s American Government (Pren-Hall 2006)
Economics	Economics: Today and Tomorrow (Glencoe 2005)

English

English 7AB	Language of Literature—7 (McDougal Littell 2002)
English 8AB	Language of Literature—8 (McDougal Littell 2002)
English 9AB	Language of Literature—9 (McDougal Littell 2006)
English 10AB	Language of Literature—10 (McDougal Littell 2002)
American Lit.	Language of Literature—Am. Lit. (Mc-Dougal Littell 2002)
Contemporary Composition/ English 11B	Writer’s Choice—11 (Glencoe 2005)
Senior Lit.	Language of Literature—World Lit. (McDougal Littell 2006)
Expository Composition/	Writer’s Choice—12 (Glencoe 2005)

Electives

Health (9 th)	Lifetime Health (Holt, Rinehart, Winston 2007)
Life Skills (9 th)	Understanding Careers (Glencoe 2000)
Spanish	Realidades I (Pren-Hall 2008)

I. A Typical Day At Optimist Charter High School

Tuesday, March 7th, 2011.

7:55 – 8:15 am

Manuel arrived at school, has eaten cereal, and has now arrived at homeroom. While here, he will work independently with teacher supervision on reading and writing skills. Also, he will learn from his teachers about any happenings that are scheduled for that day. He says good morning to 2 friends, sharpens his pencil, and sits down to work. There are 20 students with one teacher and one teacher assistance in his homeroom, room 108.

8:16 – 9:11

The bell rings and Manuel is off to first period. He has 6 curriculum classes including Algebra 1B, English 10B, World History B, Biology B, Auto Shop, and Life Skills. Elective choices at Optimist include music, art, PE, computers, auto mechanics, Spanish, and Basic Construction. Manuel has not had great success so far in his life in school, especially in math and English. He was out of school for a time and his skills have lapsed. He feels most at home in the auto shop. Manuel is learning the basics of auto care and his confidence is building. Also, he is realizing the importance of reading, writing and math skills in reference to working effectively in the shop. He thinks that he might want to be a mechanic some day. His first period is math, Algebra 1B. He is trying harder now with an eye toward its use in the real-world. He likes his teacher Ms. Arroyo, because she emphasizes basic skills and algebra concepts through the use of projects and real-world examples. She is a stickler for detail. Since he still struggles with multiple digit multiplication and division, he gets to use a calculator to check his work, and this is making the class more real for him. Although he is challenged, he is beginning to appreciate math more and more. He earns 100 points for work productivity and a 2.5 for behavior for this class.

9:12 – 10:07

Manuel arrives at his English class and turns in his behavior point sheet to his teacher, Ms. Smith. The point sheet is carried by each student from class to class throughout the day to monitor behavior, work completion, and homework, and it is totaled at the end of the day in homeroom. It is part of a two-tiered token economy system (for behavior and work production) used by the school for positive reinforcement of behaviors and habits that are conducive to academic and life success. In return students can earn token money to buy items at the school store. Although Manuel had a rough start in school just 2 months ago with behavior problems, lack of interest in school and low scores in testing, he is now becoming more invested since earning small amounts of money in his student store account and using them to purchase desired items. He is seeing the fruits of his work played out in real success and learning the cause and effect nature of his behavior patterns. He still finds

writing difficult, but is now more open to learning. He is just beginning to enjoy reading. Manuel earns 100 points, 25 bonus points for helping the teacher pass out books and supplies before and after class, and a level 3 for his behavior in this class.

10:08 – 11:03

Manuel now moves to his third period class, Biology. Manuel is confronted by another student about something that happened yesterday and becomes upset and unable to do work. He approaches his teacher Ms. Campos and asks to talk to one of the behavior specialists who is outside the classroom monitoring for any between-class activity. He has a good relationship with her and feels he can talk to her when he is upset. He is able to calm down and re-enter the homeroom 20 minutes later. If the issues had been so serious that it needed to be dealt with immediately, then both Manuel and the other student would have been brought by the behavior specialists to one of the administrators for a conference. Due to the problem with the other student, Manuel did not complete all his work, so he only earned 50 points. He earned a 1.5 for his behavior.

11:14 – 12:00

The next period passes without incident. Manuel is back in stride and completing work in his World History class. He gets homework checked off on his point sheet for this class, as well. He earns 100 points for work productivity and a 3 for behavior. Manuel completes 4th period and then returns to homeroom for Independent Studies.

12:01-12:30

Manuel is schedule for second lunch, since only about half of the residential population can fit in the cafeteria at one time. He has an Independent Studies class at this time where he is doing coursework to complete credits for English 9A having received 3 credits for that class in a previous placement. He is also working in this class to improve his basic math skills. Manuel needs to be prompted to complete work since he likes to socialize with a friend during this class. However, he still earns a 2.5 for behavior and then lines up with his assigned group to go up to the cafeteria for lunch.

12:30-1:00

Students and staff eat lunch from an on-campus vender who prepares a wide variety of weekly.

1:00 – 1:29

Manuel continues working on Independent Studies work during this time period. He is working to improve some his basic math skills, addition and subtraction of fractions. Fractions have always been difficult for Manuel, but he has now mastered both addition and subtraction with unlike denominators and is beginning to work with mixed numbers. Sandra, one of the other math teachers, is in his homeroom, so she is able to give him additional assistance when he is struggling. Today she sits with him and shows him how to

the steps to convert a mixed number to an improper fraction. After writing down the steps, he is able to do five simple conversions correctly. It takes him only 10 minutes to complete the math work, then he begins on his Life Skills class work. He is learning checkbook use and record keeping, so today, following the assignment given, he records his expenditures from the checks he wrote yesterday and balances his checking account. Manuel enjoys this work and earns a 3.0 for behavior in this class.

1:30-2:25

Manuel's 6th period is Auto Mechanics in the auto shop. This is Manuel's favorite part of the day. Here he is in his element. He puts on his smock, gloves and shoe covers to protect his clothes and gets to work. Today's assignment is to change the oil on Optimist Van #8. This will involve putting in a new oil filter, replacing a dirty air filter, and disposing of the old oil. Manuel is learning these skills from his favorite teacher Mr. Martin. Mr. Martin outlines the process on the board, delineating the steps and describing the procedure. Manuel and the other students take notes. They then begin working as a team doing the actual oil change under Mr. Martin's supervision and direction. In addition, he is learning how to fill out order forms and order supplies. He has also learned how to rotate tires, use the automatic tire removing machine, and to help with a tune-up. Upcoming activities will include front and rear brake jobs, lube jobs, and general mechanical work. Once he has completed his first term in the shop, Manuel is hoping that Mr. Martin and the VP will place him in the workability program in the auto shop to work part-time. In the future, after completing his high school education at Optimist, he would like to also take courses at Abram-Friedman Occupational Center in other auto areas and eventually earn a certificate in transmissions. Since this is his favorite class, Manuel earns a 3 and 100 points.

2:26 – 2:35

Manuel returns to homeroom where his point sheet will be scored by his teachers for the day. He will also fill out his weekly tracking sheet where he records his scores and points so he knows how much money he has earned for the school store this week. Manuel did very well today and earned a 90% with 475 points. He thinks that he will be able to make it through high school at Optimist, because of all the help he gets with his behavior, social skills and academics from the staff in addition to having a solid future goal. He feels less alone and more in control of his life and is beginning to realize that his efforts can be realized. He can finally see a positive future for himself.

J. Meeting Needs of Identified Populations

Optimist Charter School will be a place of inclusion for all manner of learners. Almost every student who enrolls at the charter school comes with a specific and challenging set of circumstances placing them at-risk for academic failure. We celebrate the diversity each student brings to our community while recognizing that all students bring barriers to effective learning with them to school. Some groups of students (i.e., English Language Learners, low socio-economic status, resource and special education, remedial, and gifted) are identified as needing specific targeted services to support their educational achievement. We believe the key to addressing each student's needs is a school in which students are individually known and attended to. All students have special needs.

When students are first enrolled in school, they will be assessed in reading, spelling, math, and writing to determine the level of their basic skills. We will immediately begin requesting records and compiling comprehensive transcripts since at least middle school. Based on the findings, a determination will be made about student placement and the Individual Success Plan (ISP) will be developed. The ISP will be updated at each reporting period or as needed. Parents/guardians/facility representatives, will have access to their child's plan and will receive personal notification if changes are to be made.

English Language Learners

Optimist Charter School will meet the needs of English Language Learners through diagnostic assessment and placement, through targeted instructional strategies by credentialed teachers and through other educational and social supports. Optimist will administer the Home Language Survey upon a student's initial enrollment into the school. For students who enter with previous CELDT testing, the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) will be administered annually based on LAUSD's testing cycle until students are reclassified as fluent English proficient. Students with disabilities who are identified as English Learners will also be tested based on modifications specified in their IEPs or 504 Plans or by an alternate assessment if the need is determined by their IEP team.

Optimist will notify all parent/guardian/facility representatives of its responsibility for CELDT testing, of the reasons their child's identification as an English Learner, and of CELDT results within thirty days of receiving results. The CELDT shall be used to fulfill the requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act for annual English proficiency testing. The results of all testing will be reported and submitted to the District on the R-30 survey annually. Accommodations for EL students on STAR assessments will be made according to State Board of Education guidelines each year.

Optimist will hire CLAD and BCLAD credentialed teachers who have the skills and expertise to accelerate English Learners' academic and linguistic development. The teachers

will utilize specific instructional strategies to develop initial communicative competence in English and the development of disciplinary academic registers in their second language. The Optimist philosophy honors individual learning needs and the classroom will be designed to create an environment of acceptance of diverse learners. Teachers will be trained in and use Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies in the classroom and encourage peer tutoring and cooperative learning, which are recommended strategies for English Language Learners. The small size of the school and low student to teacher ratio will allow for more focused instruction for English Language Learners and more opportunities for intensive interventions where appropriate, including increased opportunities for varied types of grouping. EL Learners will be included in the regular Optimist classroom which will incorporate multiple supports for them. A diversity of materials and concrete lessons will provide many opportunities for support strategies such as Sheltered English in addition to labeled items and leveled materials.

English Learners' Supplemental Materials

Teachers of EL students and the Resource Specialist will confer at least monthly to discuss progress and challenges. Based on regular classroom assessments, the specifications of the Individual Success Plan (ISP) and teacher conferences, students who are not making expected progress will be served by Response to Intervention (RTI) which is discussed later in this Element. Parent/guardian/facility representatives will be personally notified when expected progress is not being achieved and will be invited to participate in any decisions to modify the ISP. The ISP will be used throughout the year to document and monitor student progress. Using CELDT results from annual assessment, student performance on basic skills, teacher evaluation, parent/guardian input, and following the District guidelines, it will be determined when a student should be reclassified as fluent English proficient.

Socio-economically Disadvantaged Students

Socio-economically disadvantaged students typically comprise 90 - 100% of the student population we expect to work with. Because we expect most of our students will be coming from home situations that are impoverished, the environment and educational program at Optimist Charter will be specifically designed to address the needs of a low-SES population. The physical environment at the school is intimate, welcoming and safe. Optimist will offer a supportive and targeted curriculum in a small school environment that supports the academic progress of our students. Small secondary school models have been shown to be particularly successful with socio-economically disadvantaged students because they allow teachers to know and understand their students very well, thus allowing for student needs to be quickly identified and targeted interventions to be put in place, something not possible in a school with thousands of students.

Students of low socioeconomic status are not necessarily less academically competent than other students. However, they often have limited access to resources at home that would augment their instruction at school. In addition, their parents may be less capable of assisting or supporting them because of work schedules or limited education. As with all students, the instructional strategies will be differentiated based on the student's academic needs and learning style.

Gifted Students

High expectations and academic rigor are at the heart of the Optimist educational model. Because of the size of the school and the high rate of turnover in our population, Optimist will probably not have a gifted and talented program as defined by LAUSD. However, because we will test all students upon entry and group students according to their skill levels, academically advanced students will be challenged by more rigorous classroom experiences and expectations. Students who are designated as gifted will be provided differentiated instruction and enrichment based on their demonstrated or potential ability, and some may be sent to public school. Some students who remain with us after graduating from the residential program and who show behavioral and academic maturity may be concurrently enrolled at Eagle Rock HS or in junior college to provide more advanced studies.

Optimist's approach to course assignments will be to allow a student who has demonstrated mastery of content standards (based on assessments such as CST and/or course content) to engage in the next highest course no matter their grade level. At the core of Optimist Charter is a fundamental belief that students will rise to meet challenges presented to them if given ample support and instruction. Therefore, students will be challenged to pursue and achieve beyond the normal expectations. The ISP will be used to monitor student goals and progress and to provide information to parents.

Students Achieving Below Grade Level

Given the targeted population, we expect that many students enrolling at Optimist will be achieving below or significantly below grade level in at least one content area. This is one of the primary reasons that small group instruction is not only appropriate, but essential for our student population. For students who come to Optimist having dropped out and/or had a variety of other difficulties both academically and behaviorally in school, a nurturing and supportive school environment is critical. Students at Optimist will not be stigmatized because of their past educational histories. Rather, all students will develop individualized plans toward high academic standards that start from where each student is at the moment.

All students will be given baseline assessments when they enter Optimist to determine their ability to read, write, and utilize basic math functions. The assessment information will be

recorded in the student's Individual Success Plan. This will allow teachers to modify and supplement the grade level pacing and assessment plan to match the students' readiness to engage grade level standards and curriculum. Any student determined to need additional support in these areas will be guided to work with credentialed ELA and Mathematics instructors who will support the development of foundational skills in these areas. This support will be provided within the structure of the content area classes as well as through individualized independent study skill intervention. Progress in basic skill development will be assessed frequently by teachers and with standardized tests at least every five months. We recognize that without the ability to read, write, and manipulate numbers fluently, students will struggle with all other academic content.

Examples of interventions available for students achieving below grade level will include one-on-one instruction with a teacher or qualified tutor, covering remedial content, and the use of technology (e.g., computer programs designed to support remedial skill development). Administrators and teachers will work with each student achieving below grade level to determine the most appropriate course for remediation and then monitor each student's progress carefully. Students who require credit recovery will have the opportunity to complete the courses through independent study and in summer school courses.

Response to Intervention

To support students who are performing below grade level in reading and math, Optimist will have interventions that are built into the educational system. Interventions will be in use for both academic and behavioral difficulties which are often intertwined with this population. We will use adapted curriculum as supplemental to our general education curriculum to make material more accessible to struggling learners. Because class sizes will be small, we will also be able to provide additional one-to-one assistance during classroom instruction. Differentiated instruction that provides scaffolding strategies will also enhance the learning environment. In addition, our behavior management system will encourage productivity and work completion, which are frequently historical deterrents to success for our students, as well.

Special Education Services and Assessment for Special Education

About 25% of the clients placed in the Optimist residential program have IEPs upon enrollment in school. Most of the students with special education services entering our program are receiving special education due to one of three eligibilities: a Specific Learning Disability, Other Health Impairment (usually due to ADD or ADHD), or an Emotional Disability. Of those who do have IEPs when they arrive, about half are eligible for RSP services and the other half have been placed in a Special Day Program. Given our experience in working with this population, we expect to see the same percentage of special

education students with the targeted population. Optimist Charter will be able to provide a full spectrum of special education services. Optimist Charter will have from one to two classrooms that are Special Day Classes, each with a certified special education teacher and one teacher assistant for up to 12 students. We will also have at least one certified Resource Teacher to provide resource services as designated by the IEP

Some of the students at Optimist Charter will have as yet unidentified special education needs. With each of our students, Optimist administration will address whether or not the student should be referred to LAUSD for possible assessment for special education services. This is determined according to test scores and previous school records.

***Special Education Program**

All charter schools must adhere to all terms and conditions of the Chanda Smith Modified Consent Decree (“MCD”) and any other court orders and/or consent decrees imposed upon the LAUSD as they pertain to special education. Charter schools must ensure that no student otherwise eligible to enroll in their charter school will be denied enrollment due to a disability or to the charter school’s inability to provide necessary services. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure the recruitment, enrollment and retention of students with disabilities at charter schools.

Prior to Los Angeles Unified School District (“LAUSD” or “District”) Governing Board approval Optimist Charter will execute a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) by and between LAUSD and Optimist Charter School regarding the provision and funding of special education services consistent with the requirements of the LAUSD Special Education Local Plan Area (“SELPA”) Local Plan for Special Education.

***SELPA Reorganization**

The Los Angeles Unified School District is approved to operate as a single-District SELPA under the provisions of Education Code § 56195.1(a) and intends to continue operating as a single District SELPA as in the current structure but will now create two school sections (District operated Programs and Charter-operated Programs) under the administration of one single Administrative Unit pursuant to a reorganization plan approved by the Board of Education on January 4, 2011 (149/10-11). The Charter-operated schools will not have a LEA status but will function in a similar role in that each charter school will be responsible for all special education issues including services, placement, due process, related services, special education classes, and special education supports. Charter schools may apply for membership in the Charter-operated Program section of the SELPA. These schools will receive support from a Special Education Director for the Charter-operated Programs.

***Compliance with Child Find Activities for Conversion Schools**

District-authorized conversion charter schools must conduct Child Find activities for students residing in its pre-charter attendance areas (including private school students), so that students who have or are suspected of having a disability and needing special education and related services are appropriately identified and, if necessary, referred for evaluation in accordance with state and federal law. Conversion charter schools must distribute the District’s brochure, “Are you Puzzled by Your Child’s Special Needs,” prominently display the Parent Resource Network poster and use other District materials to address the search and serve requirement of the law, (e.g., “The IEP and You”).

***Modified Consent Decree Requirements**

All charter schools chartered by LAUSD Board of Education are bound by and must adhere to the terms, conditions and requirements of the *Chanda Smith Modified Consent Decree* (“MCD”) and other court orders imposed upon District pertaining to special education. The MCD is a consent decree entered in a federal court class action lawsuit initially brought on behalf of students with disabilities in LAUSD. It is an agreement of the parties approved by the federal court and monitored by a court-appointed independent monitor. The MCD includes eighteen statistically measurable outcomes and facilities obligations that the District has to achieve to disengage from the MCD and federal court oversight. All charter schools are required to use the District’s Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual and Welligent, the District-wide web-based software system used for online Individualized Education Programs (“IEPs”) and tracking of related services provided to students during the course of their education.

As part of fulfilling the District’s obligations under the Modified Consent Decree, data requests from charter schools that are not connected to the District’s current Student Information Systems (“SIS”) are made on a regular basis. The requested data must be submitted in the Office of the Independent Monitor’s required format and are as follows:

- # The Independent Charter School Suspension/Expulsion Report, due monthly throughout the school year.
- # Paper SESAC Report and Welligent Student Listing Verification, due monthly throughout the school year.
- # CBEDS, which is due at the end of October of Each School Year.
- # All Students Enrolled December 1 of Each School Year, due at the end of December every school year. Doc# 197677v110105

- # Graduation Status of 12th Grade Students Enrolled on December 1, due at the end of June every school year.

The District is currently in the process of developing an Integrated Student Information System (“ISIS”) as required by the MCD. Although most charter schools are not currently utilizing the District’s current SIS, the MCD requires all charter schools to implement the use of ISIS once it is developed.

K. Implementation Plan and Timeline

March 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Charter Application
April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore applying for necessary credentials for some of our existing staff.
May 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimist representative to meet with LAUSD Charter School Division staff for capacity interview • Begin community outreach. • Revise student materials such as handbook, forms, and policies. • Final date for authorization for Fall 2012 opening. • Update Website.
June 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize and order textbooks and other instructional materials. • Provide updated, complete textbook list to LAUSD
July 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire necessary teachers and other personnel. • Hold enrollment lottery (if needed)

August 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct staff development and trainings for teaching staff. • Hold final registration and enrollment • Begin classes on August 15th • Begin WASC Accreditation
-------------	--

L. Teachers

Recruitment

Optimist seeks to employ dedicated, talented educators with a positive spirit and a talent for working with young people in difficult circumstances. A successful Optimist teacher will be creative and flexible but also persistent in demanding the highest possible standards from each student.

Teaching at Optimist will be an intense and engaging experience for any professional educator. We are interested in talented educators representing the diversity of our students and our city. We recruit teachers from all over Los Angeles. Teachers will be required to hold a multiple or single-subject Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in public schools would be required to hold and must meet all qualifications of highly qualified teachers as defined in NCLB. Teachers will hold appropriate credentials authorizing them to teach in content area coursework in grades 9-12. We look for teachers with BCLAD certification to support our English Language Learner population.

At full enrollment, Optimist Teaching Staff will include at least 5 qualified teachers. Since we already operate an NPS, we expect to fill 50% of our positions with existing staff. We will recruit the other staff prior to opening. As teachers are hired, the Principal will work to ensure that a teacher properly authorized to teach in that subject area teaches all coursework. Optimist recruitment and selection procedures and practices include notifying Optimist staff in order to elicit internal recommendations for the position, posting the position on recruiting websites (e.g., EdJoin) and in relevant periodicals (e.g., L.A. Times), and attending job fairs.

Teachers will be expected to be competent in a given subject area(s), in individualized and differentiated instruction, behavioral intervention, and implementing a team and interactive approach. Although extensive professional development will be provided to assist selected teachers in implementing the Optimist model, candidates with the ability to present a demonstration lesson that is results-driven, with real world application are preferred. Given equality of pedagogical ability, preference will be given to candidates who have successful teaching experiences with low achieving students and skills in partnering with parents of the demographic population for academic success of their children.

Professional Development

It is our policy to have well trained, professional staff working as a team. In order to ensure that teachers have the skills to effectively implement the proposed instructional program, a total of ten (10) professional development minimum days will be planned. In addition, two full pupil-free days of training will be provided before our Charter School opens this year and at the beginning of each subsequent year. Throughout the year, the ten minimum day trainings will include the following topics:

- Curriculum Development and incorporating State Standards in lesson planning
- Writing appropriate semester goals and breaking them into 6 week modules
- Behavioral Management Theory and Application
- Lesson Planning and use of manipulatives in instruction
- Child Abuse/Sexual Harassment/Oath of Confidentiality and Incident Report Writing (trained twice a year)
- DSM IV Diagnosis and implications on behavior and learning in the classroom environment
- Diversity Training
- Safety Awareness/Disaster Training
- Scaffolding techniques and Portfolio Assessment
- Team strategies and infusing consistent positive reinforcement

All staff will be trained in Pro-Act, a two and a half day training which focuses on de-escalating students' behaviors, being aware of triggers, and learning how to safely contain students when necessary. All staff will have this training every three years.

CPR and Safety Trainings will be available to appropriate staff. Trainings will be provided by school administration, agency representatives, and outside trainers.

Topics may include the following:

- Gang behaviors and how they impact the school environment
- Universal Precautions
- Procedures to ensure safe driving when transporting students
- Learning disabilities and appropriate strategies for intervention
- IEPs and how to write and interpret them

Staff meetings will occur regularly. Credentialed teachers will meet weekly for at least an hour with administrators. All school staff meetings will occur weekly for at least one hour. Each staff will have at least bi-weekly supervision meetings with their direct supervisor. All staff will have initial 6 month written evaluations and then yearly written evaluations.

M. Academic Calendar and Bell Schedule

The state of California requires that public schools deliver at least 64,800 instructional minutes for grades 9-12 over at least 180 instructional days annually. Optimist Charter School will follow the LAUSD calendar for single track schools as adopted by the LAUSD board of education. We will also offer a four week summer program with 240 daily instructional minutes.

Optimist Instructional Calendar 2011 - 2012

Teacher Professional Development Days	TBD
Labor Day	Monday, September 5, 2011
First Day of Instruction	Tuesday, September 6, 2011
School Closure - LAUSD	Thursday & Friday, September 29, 30, 2011
Veteran's Day	Friday, November 11, 2011
Thanksgiving Holiday	Thursday, November 24 – Friday, November 25, 2011
Winter Recess	Monday, December 19, 2011 – Friday, January 6, 2012
Dr. Martin L. King, Jr.'s Birthday Observed	Monday, January 16, 2012
Last day of first semester	Tuesday, February 7, 2012
President's Day	Monday, February 20, 2012
Cesar E. Chavez Day Observed	Friday, March 30, 2012
Spring Recess	Monday, April 2 – Friday, April 6, 2012
Memorial Day Observed	Monday, May 28, 2012
Last Day of Instruction	Friday, June 22, 2012
Summer Program	Monday, July 9, 2013 – Friday, August 3, 2013
Total Instructional Days	180

Bell Schedules

Optimist Charter School will use two different bell schedules described below. The significant majority of our days operate on a regular school day schedule. These schedules allow us to meet the state requirements for instructional minutes for grades 9-12. Pursuant to California Education Code 47612.5(a)(1). Optimist will require students to be in attendance at the school site at least 80% of the minimum instructional time for secondary students.

- **Regular School Days**

On all regular school days, 380 minutes of instructional time will be offered to students in grades 9-12. There will be at least 170 regular days of instruction every 180-day school year offering at least 60,800 instructional minutes. If the school year is extended by any amount of days, the number of regular days may be less than 160 as long as the sum total instructional minutes of all instructional days meets the minimum requirements as set by California Education Code. Optimist Charter School will use the following bell schedule on regular school days.

<i>Bell Schedule</i>		
Homeroom	7:55 – 8:15	20
1 st Period	8:16 – 9:11	55
2 nd Period	9:12 – 10:07	55
3 rd Period	10:08 – 11:03	55
4 th Period	11:04 – 12:00	56
5A Period– Ind. Studies/Life Skills	12:01 – 12:30	29
Lunch	12:30 – 1:00	
5B Period – Ind. Studies/Life Skills	1:00 – 1:29	29
6 th Period	1:30 – 2:25	55
Life Skills	2:26 – 2:35	9
		363

- **Minimum School Days**

Optimist Charter School will use a minimum day schedule for professional development, family and community meetings, and exhibitions. The following bell schedule is used on minimum school days.

On all minimum school days, 240 minutes of instructional time will be offered to students in grades 9-12. There will be no more than 20 minimum days in any 180-day school year offering at least 5,000 instructional minutes. If the school year is extended by any amount of days, the amount of minimum days may increase as long as the sum total instructional minutes of all instructional days meets the minimum requirements as set by California Education Code. Optimist Charter School will use the following bell schedule on minimum school days.

<i>Bell Schedule</i>		
Homeroom	7:55 – 8:15	20
1 st Period	8:16 – 9:00	44
2 nd Period	9:01 – 9:45	44
3 rd Period	9:46 – 10:30	44
4 th Period	10:31 – 11:15	44
6 th Period	11:16 – 12:00	44
Homeroom	12:01 – 12:05	---
		240

- **Total Instructional Minutes**

The minimum total amount of minutes offered during a 180-day school year at Optimist Charter School is 64,800. This is equivalent to the minimum requirements for instructional minutes for students in Grades 9-12.

N. The Research and Conclusion

In 2009, the Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) at Stanford University wrote an analysis of the study they had conducted in partnership with 16 states on charter school performance in comparison to traditional public schools. The results of this study documented in “Multiple Choice: Charter School Performance in 16 States” indicate that only a relatively small portion of charter schools (17%) provide a superior education to that received by students in the traditional public schools (TPS). The majority of charters

studied, 47%, provided equivalent educational results as their TPS counterparts, and 36% were shown to have inferior results to comparable students in the traditional settings. Although overall this is not a particularly positive result for charter schools as a whole, some interesting positives did surface. The researchers state that “two subgroups fare better in charters than in the traditional system: students in poverty and ELL students.” Students who fall into these categories “have clearly been well served by the introduction of charters into the education landscape.” Further, they state: “Charter schools that are organized around a mission to teach the most economically disadvantaged students in particular seem to have developed expertise in serving these communities” (CREDO 7).

We believe Optimist Charter School will fall squarely into this category of truly successful and innovative charter school programs. As discussed earlier, the vast majority of our targeted population will be considered socio-economically disadvantaged and at least 25% of our students will be identified as ELL in their school histories. In addition to those disadvantages, the students we will enroll in the Optimist Charter School have the added difficulties of being in the foster care system as probation clients.

Over the last 21.5 years, Optimist NPS has developed a program targeted for success. We will use the experience and expertise developed in this program to create comparable success in the new charter school where we will be working with a similar population. Research shows that facilities with school-wide behavior supports develop atmospheres conducive to learning (Putnam). Our staff will be well trained in working with this difficult population and will create a safe and structured environment. Optimist Charter School will implement a two-tiered positive token economy system that has been shown to be effective in modifying the behavior of similar students in our nonpublic school. The use of small class size has also been shown to correlate to better academic achievement for high school students as well (Deutsch 35). Optimist nonpublic has been operating with small classes and has had great success. Although the class size in the Optimist Charter School will be somewhat larger than those in our NPS, we will still have core curriculum classes of about ten students per staff in order to facilitate more differentiated learning and assistance to students who may need more help.

Data and research indicate that foster children have lower graduation rates and are more likely to drop out of school than their general population counterparts, and Optimist seeks to help change that. With the experience and expertise developed over the last 21 years, we feel confident that Optimist Charter School will be able to affect change in the lives of these foster students by helping them develop the skills and the desire to succeed.

The Charter School Act of 1992 states that:

It is the intent of the Legislature to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the

existing school district structure, as a method to accomplish the following;

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

-California Education Code Section 47601 (a)-(g)

Optimist Charter School requests we be granted a charter for a full 5-year term in accordance with the legislative goals and intentions outlined above. By granting this charter school petition, LAUSD helps fulfill the intent of the Charter Schools Act of 1992.

ELEMENT 2 – MEASUREABLE 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.” Ed. Code 47605 (b)(5)(B)

Student achievement

Student academic and personal progress will be of the highest priority at Optimist Charter School. While each young man and woman who enrolls at Optimist will come with a different set of past achievements and current obstacles, each student will be capable of developing rigorous personal goals and achieving those goals in the supportive environment at Optimist. Because our foster care student population will be highly-mobile (expected enrollment will be less than 6 months for many) and will have several high-risk factors (e.g., juvenile delinquency, school failures, emotional and behavior problems, etc), Optimist Charter is considering participation in the Alternative School Accountability Model (ASAM) beginning in the 2012-2013 school year. Standardized measures of student and school achievement alone are not well-suited to this small and highly mobile student population, most of whom enter the school with a high degree of remediation needs. The intent of the ASAM system to evaluate a schools progress in terms of 1) student readiness to learn, 2) school appropriate contextual indicators, and 3) a school’s progress over time compared to itself rather than to other schools could potentially contribute more meaningful data for self-reflection to students attending our school.

Academic Performance Index

The Academic Performance Index (API) is a single number between 200-1000 assigned to a school in order to provide a comprehensive picture of student achievement as measured by state mandated standardized tests (e.g., CST, Cat/6). Schools are each given annual API targets designed to move all students toward proficiency in Math and English Language Arts as required by state and federal mandates (NCLB). API Schools are determined to have made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) by the state of California if they have met the criteria for 1) participation rate in standardized tests, 2) achieving the target “percent proficient” as designated by the annual measurable objectives (AMOs), 3) API growth, and 4) graduation rates. Schools that do not meet their AYP can be put into “Program Improvement” (PI) and face consequences from the state.

California Standards Test

The California Standards Test (CST) is a series of standardized tests designed to measure student achievement of the California State Standards. Students at Optimist Charter

School take the California Standards Tests in grades 9, 10, and 11 in applicable content areas. The state has set as a goal for all students to score at or above proficiency on the CST. Currently, that means a minimum scaled score of 350 on a range of 150-600. Given the transient nature of our population, most students will not be here long enough to take CST more than once during their enrollment. For those who are here long enough, we expect to see a positive growth rate of 5 %.

California High School Exit Examination

The California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) is a state mandated standardized test in reading, writing, and mathematics which public school students are required to pass in order to earn a high school diploma. Optimist Charter School students will be prepared for and take the CAHSEE beginning in 10th grade. Given the transient nature of our students, most of our 10th – 12th graders may only take the CAHSEE once during the time they are enrolled. For those students able to take the CAHSEE more than once, it is our goal that at least 80% of the students will improve their scores by 5%, each time they take/re-take this test. For those students who take the CAHSEE who have been with us for 6 months or longer, 20% will pass at least one section of the CAHSEE.

Other Student Outcomes

Optimist Charter School recognizes that student academic achievement and growth are significantly influenced by attendance, life skills, and the stability of a student's life circumstances. The school's principal is responsible for implementing measures of students' assessment, using data from these assessments with staff to make evidence-based decisions on educational programs, and is, ultimately, accountable for student progress as it relates to student achievement.

One of our yearly goals will be to have at least 85% attendance for all students on a daily basis. Achieving this goal should have a positive impact on all of our other goals for our students. By the end of our first charter term, Optimist has the following goals with regard to its unique program qualities:

- At least 75% of Seniors and 50% of Juniors who attend for 6 months or longer will participate in at least one part-time internship/workability experience on our campus for at least one month.
- At least 50% of Sophomores and 25% of Freshmen who attend 4 months or longer will participate in a mock interview
- At least 90% of all seniors and 50% of the rest of our student body who attend for 6 months or longer will complete the COPs inventory and will have a career of interest defined for them.
- At least 90% of our student body who stay at least 4 months or longer, will complete

job related forms at least at the 80% level or above.

- At least 80% of all Seniors who have been here for 6 months or longer will have a resume and will have a completed Individual Success Transition Plan.
- At least 80% of those students enrolled for at least 5 months or longer will increase at least one academic score by 5 months on the Wide Range Achievement Test.
- At least 70% of the students will pass all of their classes on each of the reporting periods, and 30% will pass with C's or above.
- At least 10% of our 11-12th grade students who stay with us for 6 months or longer will graduate high school via the standard diploma track, AB 167, or GED plus programs.
- At least 80% of students who attend our school for 3 years or longer will graduate high school via the standard diploma track

Individual Success Plans (ISP)

Students at Optimist Charter will complete Individual Success Plans (ISP) to provide individual guidance and goals for each student. ISPs will contain both academic and behavioral/social-emotional goals. The academic portion will include a total of credits earned, compiled from previous schools, credits currently in progress, and a graduation plan. Academic goals will also include growth in test scores for reading and math in comparison to scores earned upon entrance. The behavior segment of the ISP will include goals for behavior and work productivity. To achieve these academic goals, our students will need to improve behavior and work productivity, as well. Students at Optimist Charter will show improved behavior by demonstrating age appropriate behaviors for handling anger and frustration and will exhibit work productivity by completing required assignments with at least the 75% accuracy. Improvement in these areas will be determined by daily and weekly scores on behavior sheets and the level system and by behavior reports from teachers on progress reports and report cards.

ELEMENT 3 – Method by Which Student Outcomes will be Measured

“The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured.” Ed. Code 47605 (b)(5)(C)

At Optimist Charter School, we understand that assessment practices drive decisions about what and how we teach and what and how students learn. We will utilize a variety of assessment measures consistent with the educational program outlined in Element I to ensure that students are making regular progress toward achievement of academic goals. We will employ multiple measures of assessment ranging from publisher made tests to student created portfolios in order to ensure that teachers and students have a holistic picture of academic progress and achievement. This information, then, will be used to inform our instructional practice in order to improve student achievement. Optimist Charter School not only will evaluate its own school’s data but it will also use district identified comparison schools’ data in order to evaluate its performance.

Methods for Assessing Student Outcomes

Testing and Assessment

All students will be tested on the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT4) before entering the classroom and every five months after this initial test. Additionally, the Gates-MacGinitie test will also be utilized to ascertain an independent comprehension and vocabulary grade equivalent score. We will also administer a writing sample. Segments of the Woodcock Johnson 3 will also be administered to those students who require additional testing. It is one of our goals that 80% of our students will demonstrate at least five months progress in at least one academic area for every five months attendance.

Students who will be enrolled for at least six weeks will complete an Independent Success Plan with both academic and behavior goals. Academic goals will include a graduation plan, projected number of credits they will earn per month/semester, and desired improvement on academic testing. Of those students who remain for four months or more, 80% will complete at least 30 credits toward graduation. Students will also complete behavior goals for their ISP. It is our goal that 80% of the students who remain for at least four months will demonstrate improved behavior and work productivity as determined by daily/weekly behavior sheet averages. Students will be scored hourly on a behavior sheet on our two-tiered token economy system. Points will be given for work productivity and levels for behaviors. Levels will be added and transformed into a percentage daily. These percentages will be recorded daily and weekly. Behavior trends and improvements can be seen over time by comparing average behavior scores over time. Increased work productivity will be reflected by a greater number of points being earned on a daily basis.

Students will be given report cards every six weeks with grades, behavior scores, and written comments. It is our goal that 70% of our students will pass all of their classes on each of the six week reporting cycles.

Benchmark Assessments

Content area and school-based assessments will also be used to monitor student achievement and inform instructional practice. There will be a school-wide percentage based semester grading system which will include homework, class work, quizzes and tests, participation, two tri-terms, and one final exam. Content area teachers will use publisher-made and teacher-made tests to check for understanding of content. Quizzes and/or tests will be given in each class weekly. Homework, class work, and class participation grades will be given on a daily and weekly basis. Comprehensive Tri-term exams will be given every six weeks. Critical to tracking student progress will be student generated portfolios containing evidence of and reflection on progress toward goals created for Individualized Success Plans.

***Testing – State Mandated Assessments**

The Charter School agrees to comply with and adhere to the State requirements for participation and administration of all state mandated tests. If the Charter School does not test (i.e., STAR, CELDT, CAHSEE) with the District, the Charter School hereby grants authority to the state of California to provide a copy of all test results directly to the District as well as the Charter School.

Evidence Based Program Development

Optimist Charter School understands that in order to best service our students we must engage in a continuous cycle of examining meaningful data collected about student progress and the overall health of our school community. As such, Optimist administration will facilitate the bi-annual process of staff examination of student data collected from all available sources, including the above described “in house” assessments as well as scores from standardized tests. Staff and administration will make decisions on how to modify, change, or enhance the existing educational program based on these evaluations.

ELEMENT 4 – Governance

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

The Optimist Charter School will be affiliated with and operated by Optimist Boys Home and Ranch Inc., dba Optimist Youth Homes and Family Services, a 501-c-3 nonprofit organization that has been operating since 1906 and was incorporated as Optimist in 1931.

*Optimist and/or its non-profit corporation is a separate legal entity and will be solely responsible for all debts and obligations of it and of its charter school.

*Optimist will comply with the Brown Act. All board meetings, including teleconference meetings, will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Brown Act. Optimist will post meeting notices and agendas at the entry to the school office in advance of all Board meetings in accordance with the Brown Act. The school will notify parent/guardian/facility representatives about upcoming board meetings. A scribe will record all meeting minutes and place them in the school office for all stakeholders to view. The Optimist Board will meet every other month at the school at 6957 North Figueroa St, LA 90042. Board meetings will be held within LAUSD boundaries.

Optimist will comply with all laws applicable to charter schools. Optimist will be nonsectarian in its admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations, shall not charge tuition, and shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of race or ethnicity, nationality, gender, religion, disability, 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.

***LAUSD Charter Policy**

Optimist will comply with the District policy related to Charter Schools, as it may be changed from time to time after notice and reasonable opportunity for input from the Charter School Collaborative.

Board of Directors

*Members of Optimist Charter School’s executive board, any administrators, managers or employees, and any other committees of the School shall comply with federal and state laws, nonprofit integrity standards and LAUSD’s Charter School policies and regulations regarding ethics and conflicts of interest.

*The District reserves the right to appoint a single representative to the charter school board pursuant to Education Code section 47604(b).

Optimist attests that it is operated by a non-profit corporation in good standing with the State of California. Optimist operates in accordance with the California Public Benefit Nonprofit Corporation Law, its Articles of Incorporation and its By-Laws. The activities and affairs of Optimist are managed by or under the direction of the board of Directors. Among its duties the Board will approve plans and budgets for the school, employee compensation and benefits, fiscal, employment and other policies and procedures, and significant transactions and expenditures not contemplated by the budget. The Board shall also be responsible for the selection and evaluation of the Director of Education and will monitor the success of the educational program.

The number of board members shall not be less than fifteen. All management powers not specifically designated to the Board are delegated to the Director of Education and the Principal. LAUSD will be provided with an annual financial audit.

The voting Board Members shall serve three year renewable terms. Board members will be selected according to the by-laws.

Board meetings will be held monthly on the school site. Minutes will be recorded and available for public viewing. Meeting notices will be posted on the OYHFS website and on bulletin boards.

The Board has adopted policies and procedures regarding self-dealing transactions and conflicts of interest.

Board Members:

OPTIMIST YOUTH HOMES & FAMILY SERVICES

6957 No. Figueroa St.
P.O. Box 41-1076
Los Angeles, CA 90041-1076
(323) 341-7810

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2011-12

(Revised 08-01-11)

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT Retired Police Officer	McWEENEY, TERRY 10538 Stonybrook Avenue South Gate, CA 90280	Res: (562) 869-4202 Fax: (562) 869-7852
--	--	--

VICE PRESIDENT Computer	SNYDER, BILL	Res: (310) 454-2732
-----------------------------------	--------------	---------------------

Engineering	930 Jacon Way Pacific Palisades, CA 90272	Cell: (310) 259-7596 Fax: (310) 230-1306
VICE PRESIDENT	MONIZ, NORBERT	Res: (661)263-6677
Retired VP, Furniture Sales	27976 Red Pine Ct. Valencia, CA 91354	Fax: (661) 263-1789 Cell: (661) 678-3637
TREASURER	LAU, LELAND	Bus: (626) 458-528/8528
Certified Public Accountant	3056 West Main Street Alhambra, CA 91801	Fax: (626) 458-532 Cell: (213)479-3308
SECRETARY	GADBURY, DOLORES "Dee"	Res: (661) 252-7313
Advertising Business	28109 Tenda Drive Canyon Country, CA 91351	Cell: (661) 713-6642

DIRECTORS

Councilman Huizar Field Deputy	ANDALON, DANIEL S. 6428 La Riba Way Los Angeles, CA 90042	Res (323) 258-6010 Cell (323) 376-0011
New Truck Sales	ANDOLSEK, DENNIS 7245 Magruder Street La Mesa, CA 91942	Bus: (858) 222-8330 Res: (619) 463-4906 Fax: (858) 222-8339 Cell: (619) 861-9472
Attorney	AUSTIN, GARY S. 1923 W. 81 st St Los Angeles, CA 90047	Bus: (310) 277-9595 Cell: (310) 292-6435
Retired	BINCH, FRANK P.O. Box 4066 Diamond Bar, CA 91765	Res: (909) 861-6745
Commercial Real Estate	BROWN, LARRY 1010 No. Bundy Drive Los Angeles, CA 90049	Res: (310) 476-5739 Fax: (310) 471-7500
Retired Eligibility Worker PSE District Representative	CARTER, TED 2561 Oregon Avenue Long Beach, CA 90806	Res: (562) 427-4211 Fax: (562) 427-4211

US Bank, Vice President	DIAZ, CARLOS US Bank 1153 Fair Oaks Ave. South Pasadena, CA 91030	Bus: 626-403-7900 Cell: 626-523-0900
Retired Staff Assistant to County Supervisor	DUBEN, PAMELA 30535 Hasley Canyon Road Castaic, CA 91384	Res: (661) 257-6867
Retired Contractor	FOX, JESSE 820 E. Verdugo Avenue Burbank, CA 91501	Res: (818) 845-5255
Retired Contractor	HUNT, ED 1538 Bellefontaine Riverside, CA 92506	Res: (951) 682-0327 Cell: (951) 522-2549
Chief of Police, LB	McDONNELL, JIM 400 W. Broadway Long Beach, CA 90802	Bus: (562) 570-7301 Fax: (562) 570-7114
Attorney	NIEDERBERG, RICHARD Esq. P. O. Box 1883 Studio City, CA 91614-0883	Bus: (323) 650-9600 Fax: (323) 654-3210 TDD: (323) 654-2700
Semi-Retired Business Owner	VILLACHICA, RON 10754 Burbank Blvd, #B North Hollywood, CA 91601	Bus: (818)763-1283

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT (and Current Board Member)

Retired High School Administrator	BERTRAND, BILL 10025 Roscoe Blvd. Sun Valley, CA 91352	Res: (818) 767-5113
--------------------------------------	--	---------------------

The Director of Education:

The Director of Education will work full time for Optimist Youth Homes and Family Services but will supervise the operations of both the nonpublic and charter schools. Up to 20 percent of his/her salary will be assigned to the charter school's budget; however, he will be available to assist the Principal of our Charter School 40 hours a week.

Her/His duties will be to assist the Principal with the entire operation of the Charter School and will include the following:

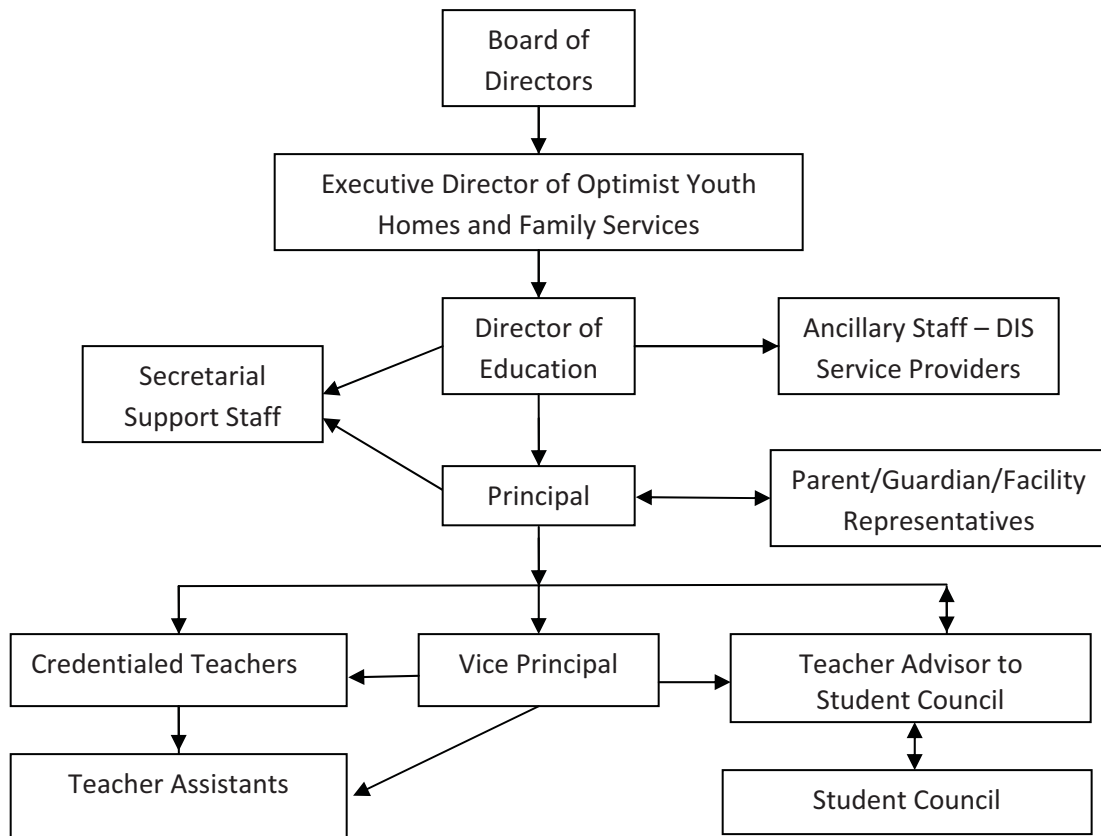
- Implements policies of the Board and ensures compliance with provisions identified in the Charter and applicable law
- Supervises and directs the faculty, staff and volunteers of the school
- Supervises and coordinates the implementation of school policies and student discipline
- Participates and provides leadership for preparing for WASC accreditation
- Recommends approval of contracts to Board of Directors (facilities, Independent contractors, organizations)
- Participates in the preparation of annual budgets, plans and schedules for the school
- Represents the school to the community, LAUSD, funders, student families, volunteers, collaborating organizations and others comprising the school community
- Supervises and directs the preparation and submission of required reports to the State of California, LAUSD and other applicable agencies

The Principal

The Principal will be responsible for supervising and directing the day-to-day operations of the Charter School in accordance with the policies and directions of the Board of Directors, the Charter and applicable legal requirements. The following is a non-exclusive list of the Principal's responsibilities:

- Supervises and directs the faculty, staff and volunteers of the school
- Supervises and provides oversight of curriculum and instruction
- May teach several classes
- Supervises and coordinates the implementation of school policies and student discipline
- Participates and provides leadership for preparing for WASC accreditation.
- Assist with observation and evaluation of staff
- Supervises and directs professional development for faculty and staff
- Participates in the preparation of annual budgets, plans and schedules for the school.
- Meets regularly with parent/guardian/facility representative/student representatives.
- Supervises designated advisor to Student Council.
- Represents the school to the community, LAUSD, funders, student families, volunteers, collaborating organizations and others comprising the school community
- Supervises and directs the preparation and submission of required reports to the State of California, LAUSD and other applicable agencies

Governance Organizational Chart



Parent/Guardian/Facility Representative Involvement

Since our student population will be placed in probation foster youth settings, the majority of our communication will be with those facility representatives, as well as the students' legal guardians. With our students in foster youth settings, there will be direct communication with youth care counselors, dorm supervisor, and therapists. Behavior Sheets will be given to students to share their daily work performance and productivity with the parent/guardian/facility representatives. These facility representatives will have direct communication with the students' parent/guardians and probation officers and will communicate school information on a regular basis. School administration and teaching staff will be encouraged to also have direct communication with parent/guardians as well. Report cards, ISP's, and state testing results will be sent directly to the parents/guardians.

Optimist will seek the active and meaningful involvement of parents in the education of students. Where parent participation is not achievable in the case of students who do not live with a parent, students whose parent/guardian's rights have been terminated by the court or other circumstances, Optimist will work with foster youth representative.

Optimist will seek to have parent/guardian's regular involvement with students and their facility representatives to participate in and discuss the formulation of the student's Individual Success Plan, student progress in implementing the plan and long-term planning for the student's education. Optimist will also seek to have parent/guardians visit the school in order that they may feel that they are valued and welcome participants in the school community.

Parent/guardians will be guaranteed access to the school, school administration, and classroom teachers to support their children's education. Parent/guardians will be provided multiple opportunities to develop awareness of college and career readiness benchmarks and what their children must achieve to be successful. Parents will be supported in their participation in monitoring their child's Individual Success Plan toward college and career readiness.

Student Leadership

Students may participate in a student council which may meet on a regular basis.

Community Participation

Optimist actively will seek input and participation of individuals, businesses and organizations from the community through meetings with school administration and faculty, participation in service projects and volunteer opportunities at the school. Optimist will collaborate with other organizations to enhance student opportunities.

***Grievance Procedure for Parents and Students**

Optimist Charter School will designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) including any investigation of any complaint filed with Optimist alleging its noncompliance with these laws or alleging any actions which would be prohibited by these laws. Optimist will notify all its students and employees of the name, office address, and telephone number of the designated employee or employees. Optimist will adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging any action, which would be prohibited by Title IX, or Section 504.

Optimist will implement specific and continuing steps to notify applicants for admission and employment, students and parents of elementary and secondary school students, employees,

sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the recipient, that it does not discriminate on the basis of sex or mental or physical disability in the educational program or activity which it operates, and that it is required by Title IX and Section 504 not to discriminate in such a manner.

***Responding to Inquiries**

Optimist shall promptly respond to all inquiries, including but not limited to, inquiries regarding financial records, from the District and shall consult with the District regarding any inquiries. Optimist acknowledges that it is subject to audit by LAUSD including, without limitation, audit by the LAUSD Office of the Inspector General.

If an allegation of waste, fraud or abuse related to the Charter School operations is received by the District, the Charter School shall be expected to cooperate with any investigation undertaken by the District and/or the Office of the Inspector General, Investigations Unit.

***Notifications**

Notification is to be made to the Innovation Charter Schools Division in writing of any notices of workplace hazards, investigations by outside regulatory agencies, lawsuits, or other formal complaints, within one week of receipt of such notices by Optimist Charter School.

Audit and Inspection of Records

Optimist agrees to observe and abide by the following terms and conditions as a requirement for receiving and maintaining their charter authorization:

- Optimist is subject to LAUSD oversight.
- LAUSD’s statutory oversight responsibility will continue throughout the life of the Charter and requires that it, among other things, monitor the fiscal condition of Optimist.
- LAUSD is authorized to revoke this charter for, among other reasons, the failure of Optimist to meet generally accepted accounting principals or if it engages in fiscal mismanagement.

Accordingly, LAUSD hereby reserves the right, pursuant to its oversight responsibility, to audit Optimist’s books, records, data, processes and procedures through the District Office of the Inspector General or other means. The audit may include, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Compliance with terms and conditions prescribed in the Charter agreement,
- Internal controls, both financial and operational in nature,

- The accuracy, recording and/or reporting of school financial information,
- The school's debt structure,
- Governance policies, procedures and history,
- The recording and reporting of attendance data,
- The school's enrollment process,
- Compliance with safety plans and procedures, and
- Compliance with applicable grant requirements.

Optimist shall cooperate fully with such audits and to make available any and all records necessary for the performance of the audit upon 30 days notice to Optimist. When 30 days notice may defeat the purpose of the audit, LAUSD may conduct the audit upon 24 hours notice.

Ethical Standards

Members of the Optimist's executive board, any administrators, managers or employees, and any other committees of the school shall comply with federal and state laws, nonprofit integrity standards and LAUSD's Charter School policies and regulations regarding ethics and conflicts of interest.

ELEMENT 5 – Employee Qualifications

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

*Optimist Charter School believes that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity. Optimist Charter will not discriminate against qualified applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, or any other characteristic protected by California or federal law. Equal employment opportunity shall be extended to all aspects of the employer-employee relationship, including recruitment, hiring, upgrading, training, promotion, transfer, discipline, layoff, recall, and dismissal from employment. Optimist will not require any employee to work at the Charter School.

Optimist will adhere to California laws, including fingerprinting, drug testing, and prohibitions regarding the employment of any person who has been convicted of a serious or violent felony.

Optimist will maintain a professional staff who share the educational philosophy of the school and are committed to the education of all children. Regardless of their role in the school, every person hired by Optimist will actively help to promote the mission, instructional program and the organizational core values.

Hiring/Selection Process

Optimist Charter School will select employees on the basis of a written application, background and reference check and one or more personal interviews. Individuals who wish to apply for a position will be required to submit an Optimist employment application, including employment and education history. Optimist will review all submissions and determine which candidates are best suited for the school based on their qualifications. Following interviews, a determination will be made which candidate or candidates are best suited for open positions at the school based on their qualifications. Candidates who are offered employment will receive written notice from Optimist.

Optimist will perform all the required background checks and fingerprinting according to existing California state law. Prior to the first day of work for every employee, Optimist will process all background checks through LiveScan, administered by the Department of Justice.

All employees must furnish or be able to provide:

- Medical clearance of communicable diseases and tuberculosis (TB).
- Fingerprinting and the service fee to the Department of Justice for a

criminal record check. Applicants will be required to provide a full disclosure statement regarding their prior criminal record.

- Documents establishing legal status.

Director of Education and Principal

An administrative credential is preferred, but is not an absolute requirement for an otherwise well-qualified individual. Selection for both positions is based on:

- Experience and ability in educational leadership, program design and development
- Management skills and ability to work on a collegial and collaborative basis with the Board, faculty, staff, students, parents and other stakeholders in the school
- Understanding of and ability to implement various modes of assessment
- Communication ability
- Ability to support teachers and provide staff development
- Ability to synthesize vision, goals and objectives into an operational plan
- Commitment to the Optimist mission

The Director of Education will be a 20% position and he/she will oversee the Principal.

The Principal will oversee the day-to-day operations of all school operations and academic programs, including, but not limited to:

- Instructional leadership and accountability for implementation of curriculum and instruction.
- Overseeing the development and implementation of all programs.
- May teach several classes
- Supervising the implementation of all school policies
- Facilitating communication between all school stakeholders.
- Hiring and terminating all other employees according to the mission, philosophy, and obligations defined in the charter petition.
- Organizing professional development.
- Reporting to the Board of Directors on the progress of the school in achieving educational success.
- Assisting in the preparation of the annual budget and assuring that operations are conducted in accordance with the budget.
- Monitoring processing of credentialing paperwork
- Representing Optimist in its dealings with LAUSD, funders, volunteers, parents and the community.

Assistant Principal

Selection of the Assistant Principal, if there is one, shall be based on:

- Experience and ability in teaching and school administration
- Management skills and ability to work on a collegial and collaborative basis with the Board, faculty, staff, students, parents and other stakeholders in the school
- Communication ability
- Ability to support teachers and provide staff development
- Ability to synthesize vision, goals and objectives into an operational plan
- Commitment to the Optimist mission

The Assistant Principal, will be responsible for such aspects of the day-to-day operations of the school as the Principal and Board may determine. Such responsibilities may include:

- Instructional leadership and implementation of curriculum and instruction. Development and implementation of programs.
- Implementation of attendance, discipline and other school policies
- May teach up to half time
- Facilitating communication between all school stakeholders.
- Organizing professional development.
- Academic counseling for students
- Assisting in the preparation of the annual budget and assuring that operations are conducted in accordance with the budget.
- Monitoring processing of credentialing paperwork
- Developing and coordinating relationships with collaborating organizations, volunteers and other individuals and organizations in the community

Teachers

Teachers will meet the requirements for employment as stipulated by the California Education Code section 47605(1) and the applicable provisions of *No Child Left Behind*. All core subject Teachers will be “highly qualified” as that term is defined under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), and further defined by California state regulations implementing the NCLB requirements, unless such requirements are not deemed by the federal or state government to apply to charter schools such as Optimist. Primary teachers of core, college preparatory subjects (English language arts, language, mathematics, science, history, special education) will hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in a public school would be required to hold. These documents will be maintained on file at

Optimist Charter School and will be reviewed monthly to ensure that credentials remain current. These documents will be subject to periodic inspection by LAUSD.

The Principal will select the teachers on an application and interview basis. Selection of teachers will be based on their teaching experience, the degree of subject matter expertise, and their ability to demonstrate classroom instructional capabilities.

Responsibilities for the teachers will include:

- Preparing and implementing lesson plans and providing effective instruction in conformity with California standards
- Assessing student progress and maintaining accurate records.
- Participating regularly in, and contributing to, professional development opportunities.
- Acting as student advisor in accordance with Optimist's Advisory program
- Working with students, parents and mentors in developing individual learning plans
- Supervising and supporting students in the implementation of their individual learning plans.
- Contributing to the establishment and maintenance of a strong school culture
- Maintaining regular, punctual attendance.

Classified Employees

Classified personnel may include the academic counselor, maintenance personnel, instructional support staff, and office personnel. All such persons will be selected by the Principal on an application and interview basis. Selection will be based on experience, training and the ability to perform the job duties for that position.

Office personnel duties will include, but not be limited to:

- Answering telephones
- Maintaining financial, attendance and other records
- Filing reports
- Enrolling students
- Managing/monitoring office operations
- Ordering and purchasing office and classroom supplies and vendor management
- Developing and implementing clerical and administrative procedures for daily school operations
- Preparing correspondence, reports, bulletins, files, forms, memorandums,

- and performing other clerical and administrative duties as assigned
- Working with ExED in the maintenance and preparation of financial records and the conduct of audits
- Bilingual translation and communication with parents and community.

All personnel must commit to the mission and vision of the school. Employees' job descriptions and work schedules will be reviewed and modified as necessary to meet the needs of the school and its students. The comprehensive job descriptions and compensation will be based on the job duties and work basis as outlined in individual employee contracts.

Evaluation

Evaluations will be performed annually for all personnel, and more frequently when appropriate. Performance measures based on demonstrated skill and effectiveness, contributions to the school community, meeting expectations for duties assigned and outcomes achieved will be used to evaluate all school personnel.

The Director of Education will be evaluated by the Executive Director and Board of Directors based on:

- Overall successful implementation of school academic program and achievement of educational goals
- Successful recruitment, retention and development of faculty and staff
- Quality of parent/mentor and community involvement
- Maintaining a fiscally sound charter school and adherence to budget
- Completion of required job duties
- Creation of a welcoming school atmosphere of enthusiasm, student support and cooperation among all parties.

The Principal will be evaluated by the Director of Education. Administrative and classified staff will be evaluated by the Principal or Assistant Principal, if there is one, as described in the Employee Handbook. Criteria will include success in completing assigned tasks, skill and efficiency, positive contribution to the school culture, initiative, diligence and quality of work.

Termination

Employees with Optimist shall serve on an at-will basis which means the employee may be released without cause or advance notice any time during that period of employment. All employees, including employees whose employment is governed by a written contract for a specified term, may be terminated for “cause” as defined in the applicable agreement, Employee Handbook or other applicable law.

Due Process

The Optimist Employee Handbook will set forth a complaint/grievance procedure to ensure that employees always have the right to engage in due process. Employees first send their complaint to the Principal in writing within 10 calendar days of the event. If the complaint includes the principal, the employee submits it to the Board of Directors. The Principal or Board will make a determination within 14 calendar days of receipt of the complaint. If the complaint/grievance is not resolved within that time, the employee may request mediation unless the parties agree otherwise. Mediation will be held within 35 calendar days of receipt of the request for mediation. The mediation panel will issue a decision within 10 calendar days.

Compensation

Staff salaries will be based on educational back-round, credentials held, and years of experience. Salaries will be competitive with other private schools. Specifics regarding benefit package will be listed in the employee handbook.

ELEMENT 6 - Health and Safety

“The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described in 44237.” Ed. Code (b)(5)(F)

*Optimist Charter School will have a Health, Safety and Emergency Plan in place prior to beginning the operation of the Charter School. Optimist Charter will ensure that staff has been trained in health, safety, and emergency procedures and will maintain a calendar and conduct emergency response drills for students and staff. Such policies, as currently in effect are set forth in the Emergency Preparedness Plan (Appendix 4) the Employee Handbook (Appendix 5) and elsewhere herein.. These policies at minimum address the following topics:

- The requirement that all enrolling students and staff provide records documenting immunizations to the extent required for enrollment in non- charter public schools. Records of student immunizations shall be maintained, and staff shall honor County requirements for periodic Mantoux Tuberculosis (TB) tests.
- Policies and procedures for response to natural disasters and emergencies, including fires and earthquakes.
- A policy requiring that instructional and administrative staff receive training in emergency response, including appropriate "first responder" training or its equivalent.
- Policies relating to the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines.
- A policy that the school will be housed in facilities that have received state Fire Marshal approval and that have been evaluated by a qualified structural engineer who has determined that the facilities present no substantial seismic safety hazard. Periodic inspections shall be undertaken, as necessary, to ensure such safety standards are met.
- A policy establishing that the school functions as a drug, alcohol, and tobacco free workplace.
- A requirement that each employee of the School to submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Section 44237.
- A policy for reporting child abuse, acts of violence, and other improprieties as mandated by federal, state, and local agencies.
- Compliance with all health and safety laws and regulations that apply to non charter public schools, including those required by CAL/OSHA, the California Health and Safety Code, and EPA.
- “Policy for complying with Healthy Schools Act – California Education Code Section 17608, which details pest management requirements for schools”.

These policies will be incorporated as appropriate into the School's student and staff handbooks and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in the School's staff development efforts and governing board policies. The safety plan will be kept on file for review and school staff will be trained annually on the safety procedures outlined in the plan.

The school will follow all safety laws and regulations applicable to non-charter public schools, including those regarding auxiliary services (food services, transportation, custodial services, hazardous materials, pest management, etc.) those required by CAL/OSHA, the California Health and Safety Code, and the EPA. Optimist will operate as a drug, alcohol, and tobacco free workplace.

Criminal Background Checks

*Charter School shall require all employees of the Charter School, and all volunteers who will be performing services that are not under the direct supervision of a Charter School employee, and any onsite vendors having unsupervised contact with students to submit to criminal background checks and fingerprinting. The Charter School will maintain on file and available for inspection evidence that the Charter School has performed criminal background checks for all employees and documentation that vendors have conducted required criminal background checks for their employees prior to any unsupervised contact with students. The Charter School shall also ensure that it receives subsequent arrest notifications from the Department of Justice to ensure the ongoing safety of its students.

Immunizations and Tuberculosis Testing

All enrolling students and staff shall provide records documenting immunizations to the extent required for enrollment in non-charter public schools. Records of student immunizations will be maintained, and Optimist will honor County requirements for periodic Tuberculosis (TB) tests as described in Education Code section 49406. All enrolling students will have screening vision, hearing, and scoliosis to the same extent as would be required if the pupils attended a non-charter public school.

Prescription Medications

Optimist will maintain and implement policies and procedures to safely accommodate students' needs for prescription drugs and other medications.

Child Abuse Reporting

Each employee will understand that they will be mandated for reporting child abuse, acts of violence and other improprieties will be adhered to as mandated by federal state and local laws and regulations. The employee that learns of the suspected abuse is responsible for reporting the incident to the Department of Child Family Services or

to the appropriate law enforcement agency and writing the report. The employee will inform the Principal that a report has been made.

Facilities

Optimist currently maintains and operates a nonpublic school which is state certified by the State Department of Education and has a current Fire Inspection Clearance. Our current nonpublic school building will be used for the charter school. Optimist will continue to maintain a school facility that complies with state and federal building codes, federal Americans with Disabilities Act access requirements, and other applicable fire, health and structural safety requirements. Readily accessible records documenting such compliance will be maintained on file at the school.

FERPA

*Optimist Charter School, its employees and officers will comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) at all times. The school maintains the confidentiality of student records by maintaining student records in a secure location accessible to authorized school personnel.

Health & Safety

The school will comply with the Healthy Schools Act California Education Code Section 17608, which details pest management requirements for schools. Developers may find additional information at: www.laschools.org/employee/mo/ipm.

Asbestos Management

The charter school will comply with the asbestos requirement as cited in the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), 40CFR part 763. AHERA requires that any building leased or acquired that is to be used as a school or administrative building shall maintain an asbestos management plan.

If District facilities are used during the term of this charter, the charter shall abide by and adhere to all LAUSD standards and established policies relating to Maintenance & Operations.

Emergency Situations

- **Fire Drills**

Fire drills will be held at least twice a semester. Office personnel will maintain a record of fire drills held and total required time for complete evacuation. When the fire drill signal sounds, teachers will lead the students in their room along the route indicated on the evacuation map posted for that purpose. Before leaving the room,

teachers will see that all windows and doors are closed and that they have their class attendance roster with them. Students who are not in a classroom at the time the fire drill signal is given will attach themselves to the nearest teacher exiting the building for purposes of getting to the designated evacuation site.

Once at the designated evacuation site, teachers and other staff will ensure that all students find their respective teachers. Teachers will then take roll to ensure that all students are accounted for. The names of any missing students will be given to the Principal, or such other person as has been designated for the purpose, and the Principal or such other person will attempt to locate missing students.

Students will remain with their teachers at the designated evacuation site until the Principal or such other person who has been designated for the purpose gives the “all clear” signal.

- **Disaster Drills**

Disaster drills will be conducted at least once every two months. Students will be made familiar with the “duck and cover” routine. A disaster drill would commence with the “duck and cover” routine will be initiated by an announcement over the intercom. Staff and students will hear “This is an emergency drill. Duck and cover.” During the “duck and cover” routine in the classroom, teachers will turn off the lights and have students get under a desk or table or against the wall away from the windows. Students must remain quiet and orderly so they will be able to hear additional instructions when given. All drills will be concluded with an “all clear” announcement on the intercom, or a visible signal from the Principal or such other person who has been designated for the purpose. In the case of a real earthquake, everyone must engage in the “duck and cover” routine immediately and remain in position until the teacher determines that it is safe to leave the building. If remaining in the room becomes dangerous, or when the shaking stops, teachers will proceed with their students to the evacuation site or another safety zone. If students are on the playground or other outdoor area when a disaster drill is called or during an actual earthquake, students are to drop immediately to the ground, away from trees and power lines, and cover their heads with their hands. They are to remain in that position until given additional instructions.

In the case of disasters other than earthquakes, the principal or such person as has been designated for the purpose will contact each room, advise staff of potential dangers, and give further directions or orders. Teachers and students will remain in their classrooms until instructions are received for an all clear or an evacuation. For safety purposes, no one is to leave the rooms. If there has been a chemical spill, the teacher must make sure that all doors, windows, and vents remain closed. The school site maintenance staff will turn off the gas. All unassigned staff will report to the office for assignments such as searching offices, bathrooms, and all other common areas, including outdoor facilities.

Teachers will stay with their classes for the duration of the emergency. In the event of an earthquake or other national disaster, all school employees are immediately designated “Civil Defense Workers” and are not allowed to leave school until they are given official clearance to do so by the Principal or designee.

- **Bomb Threats**

The person receiving the call or letter will note the time of day, wording of the message, background noises, and quality of the voice to try to determine if it is a young child or an adult. This person will delay the caller as long as possible, while they alert another adult to the crisis. That adult will immediately notify the telephone company to trace the call and immediately thereafter, notify the police using 911.

Based on the information at hand, the Principal or such other person who has been designated for the purpose will make a decision whether an immediate evacuation is warranted. If so, the evacuation code word “safe school drill” will be given over the intercom and evacuation procedures will be followed. The office personnel will coordinate information requests to and/or from law enforcement, the telephone company, and parents.

If an immediate evacuation is not warranted, the Principal or such other person who has been designated for the purpose will notify teachers to inspect their room for any suspicious materials or unknown packages, without alarming students. All unassigned staff will report to the office for assignments such as searching offices, bathrooms, and all other common areas, including outdoor facilities.

- **Evacuation Plan**

A disaster of a significant nature may require the evacuation of the school. Immediately upon notification by outside authorities that the school must be evacuated, the Principal or such other person who has been designated for the purpose will verify the name and position of the person placing the alert. Once the source is confirmed, the Principal or such other person who has been designated for the purpose will give the evacuation code word “safe school drill” over the intercom. Teachers will proceed with their students to the nearest school exit indicated on the evacuation map posted for this purpose. Before leaving the room, teachers will make sure they have their class attendance roster with them. Students who are not in a classroom at the time the intercom signal is given will attach themselves to the nearest teacher exiting the building for purposes of getting to the designated evacuation site.

Prior to evacuation, offices, bathrooms, and all other common areas, including outdoor facilities, will be searched by designated Principal or such other person who has been designated for the purpose.

Once at the designated evacuation site, teachers and other staff will ensure that all students find their respective teachers. Teachers will then take roll to ensure that all students are accounted for. The names of any missing students will be given to the office personnel and an individual will be assigned the task of finding any missing students. Teachers will work together to take care of students with injuries, respiratory problems, or other medical conditions.

Teachers will stay with their classes for the duration of the emergency. In the event of an evacuation, all school employees are immediately designated “Civil Defense Workers” and are not allowed to leave school until they are given official clearance to do so by the Principal or such other person who has been designated for the purpose.

Students will remain with their teachers at the designated evacuation site until the Principal or such other person who has been designated for the purpose gives the “all clear” signal. In the event students cannot return to the school site, the Principal or such other person who has been designated for the purpose will notify parents and/or the media as to where students can be picked up. The office personnel will sign out students as they are being picked up by a parent or other adult listed on the emergency information card. Parents will be asked to remain in a designated area, and students will be escorted to the designated area for release.

***Insurance Requirements**

No coverage shall be provided to the Charter School by the District under any of the District’s self-insured programs or commercial insurance policies. The Charter School shall secure and maintain, at a minimum, insurance as set forth below with insurance companies acceptable to the District [A.M. Best A-, VII or better] to protect the charter school from claims which may arise from its operations. Each Charter School location shall meet the below insurance requirements individually.

It shall be the Charter School’s responsibility, not the District’s, to monitor its vendors, contractors, partners or sponsors for compliance with the insurance requirements.

The following insurance policies are required:

1. Commercial General Liability, including Fire Legal Liability, coverage of \$5,000,000 per Occurrence and in the Aggregate. The policy shall be endorsed to name the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles as named additional insured and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and the Charter School's insurance primary despite any conflicting provisions in the Charter School's policy. Coverage shall be

maintained with no Self-Insured Retention above \$15,000 without the prior written approval of the Office of Risk Management for the LAUSD.

2. Workers' Compensation Insurance in accordance with provisions of the California Labor Code adequate to protect the Charter School from claims that may arise from its operations pursuant to the Workers' Compensation Act (Statutory Coverage). The Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage must also include Employers Liability coverage with limits of \$1,000,000/\$1,000,000/\$1,000,000.
3. Commercial Auto Liability, including Owned, Leased, Hired, and Non-owned, coverage with limits of \$1,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence if the Charter School does not operate a student bus service. If the Charter School provides student bus services, the required coverage limit is \$5,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence.
4. Fidelity Bond coverage shall be maintained by the Charter School to cover all Charter School employees who handle, process or otherwise have responsibility for Charter School funds, supplies, equipment or other assets. Minimum amount of coverage shall be \$50,000 per occurrence, with no self-insured retention.
5. Professional Educators Errors and Omissions liability coverage with minimum limits of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 general aggregate.
6. Sexual Molestation and Abuse coverage with minimum limits of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 general aggregate. Coverage may be held as a separate policy or included by endorsement in the Commercial General Liability or the Errors and Omissions Policy.
7. Employment Practices Legal Liability coverage limits of \$3,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 general aggregate.
8. Excess/umbrella insurance with limits of not less than \$10,000,000 is required of all high schools and any other school that participates in competitive interscholastic or intramural sports programs.

*Coverages and limits of insurance may be accomplished through individual primary policies or through a combination of primary and excess policies. *The policy shall be endorsed to name the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles as named additional insured and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and the charter school's insurance primary despite any conflicting provisions in the charter school's policy.*

***Evidence of Insurance**

The Charter School shall furnish to the District’s Office of Risk Management and Insurance Services located at 333 S. Beaudry Ave, 28th Floor, Los Angeles CA 90017 within 30 days of all new policies inceptions, renewals or changes, certificates or such insurance signed by authorized representatives of the insurance carrier. Certificates shall be endorsed as follows:

“The insurance afforded by this policy shall not be suspended, cancelled, reduced in coverage or limits or non-renewed except after thirty (30) days prior written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, has been given to the District.”

Facsimile or reproduced signatures may be acceptable upon review by the Office of Risk Management and Insurance Services. However, the District reserves the right to require certified copies of any required insurance policies.

Should the Charter School deem it prudent and/or desirable to have insurance coverage for damage or theft to school, employee or student property, for student accident, or any other type of insurance coverage not listed above, such insurance shall not be provided by the District and its purchase shall be the responsibility of the Charter School.

Additionally, the charter will at all times maintain a funds balance (reserve) of its expenditures as required by section 15450, Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. Currently, the required reserve is 5% of total operational expenditures.

***Hold Harmless/Indemnification Provision**

To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Charter School does hereby agree, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses including but not limited to attorney’s fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever, arising out of, or relating to this Charter agreement. The Charter School further agrees to the fullest extent permitted by law, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses including but not limited to attorney’s fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever for claims, damages, losses and expenses arising from or relating to acts or omission of acts committed by the Charter School, and their officers, directors, employees or volunteers. Moreover, the Charter School agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the District for any contractual liability resulting from third party contracts with its vendors, contractors, partners or sponsors.

ELEMENT 7 – Racial and Ethnic Balance

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

Optimist Charter School recruits students of diverse racial and ethnic background to achieve a balance that is reflective of the general population in the school district. Recruitment through soliciting enrollment inquiries on a year-round basis fliers, local newspaper advertising, booths at community events such as Central American Independence Day, Mexican Independence Day and the annual Filipino festival in neighborhoods near Optimist, visits to nearby churches and community organizations, school website, frequent tours of the school for representatives of community organizations, presentations concerning Optimist during April and May at nearby middle schools, billboards advertising the school in the nearby neighborhood, a school open house in April open to prospective students and their parents and speaking to interested parents. Materials concerning the school and most information on the school website are provided in Spanish and English, and personnel at the school who deal with enrollment inquiries are fluent in Spanish and English.

Optimist makes particular efforts to publicize the school to representatives of the Los Angeles County Departments of Probation and Children and Family Services, and to nonprofit organizations dealing with pregnant and parenting adolescents and girls having extraordinary educational issues.

Optimist will maintain an accurate accounting of ethnic and racial balance of students enrolled in the school. It will also keep on file documentation of the school’s efforts to achieve racial and ethnic balance.

Optimist NPS has previously been successful in enrolling a racial and ethnic demographic that is representative of the surrounding neighborhood. Approximately 76% of our students have been Hispanic and approximately 13% are African-American. All qualify for free and reduced lunches under Federal guidelines and 60% are English language learners. We anticipate we will have a similar population in the Optimist Charter School.

***Court-ordered Integration**

The Charter School shall comply with all requirements of the Crawford v. Board of Education, City of Los Angeles court order and the LAUSD Integration Policy adopted and maintained pursuant to the Crawford court order, by the Office of Student Integration Services (collectively the “Court-ordered Integration Program”). The Court-ordered Integration Program applies to all schools within or chartered through LAUSD. The

school will provide a written plan to achieve and maintain the District's ethnic balance goal which is within a 70:30 or 30:70 ratio.

The District receives neither average daily attendance allocations nor Court-ordered Integration Program cost reimbursements for charter school students. Instead, the District now receives the Targeted Instruction Improvement Grant (TIIG) for its Court-ordered Integration Program. The District retains sole discretion over the allocation of TIIG funding, where available, and cannot guarantee the availability of this Funding.

The plan includes:

- use of English and Spanish in publicity concerning the school and the availability of fluent English and Spanish speakers in the school office to deal with parents and enrollment inquiries
- clear statements of Optimist's non-discrimination policy on the school website and in publicity concerning the school
- year-round distribution of flyers inviting enrollment at Optimist at the school, in nearby neighborhood stores and businesses, and at community events in neighborhoods near the school, such as Central American Independence Day, Mexican Independence Day and the annual Filipino festival;
- targeted recruitment presentations in April and May at nearby middle schools
- enrollment information on the school website
- advertisements in neighborhood newspapers

***No Child Left Behind-Public School Choice (NCLB-PSC) Traveling Students**

The District and Optimist Charter School are committed to providing all students with quality educational alternatives in compliance with all federal and state laws, including students who are enrolled in schools of the District identified by the California Department of Education as in need of Program Improvement. Public School Choice ("NCLB-PSC") placement with charter schools is an alternative strongly encouraged by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 ("NCLB").

Optimist agrees to discuss with the District the possibility of accepting for enrollment District students participating in the District's NCLB-PSC program. The parties agree to memorialize separately any agreed-to number of NCLB-PSC placements of District students at the school.

As required under NCLB, all NCLB-PSC students attending Optimist shall have the right to continue attending Optimist until the highest grade level of the charter. However, the obligation of the District to provide transportation for a NCLB- PSC student to Optimist shall end in the event the NCLB-PSC student's resident District school exits Program Improvement status.

Optimist will ensure that all of its NCLB-PSC students are treated in the same manner as other students attending the school. NCLB-PSC students are and will be eligible for

all applicable instructional and extra-curricular activities at the school. Optimist will make reasonable efforts to invite and encourage the participation of the parents of NCLB-PSC students in the activities and meetings at the school.

Determination of student eligibility for this NCLB-PSC option, including the grade level of eligibility, will be made solely by the District, based on the District's NCLB-PSC process, guidelines, policies and the requirements of NCLB. In the event demand for places at Optimist under the NCLB-PSC program increases in subsequent years, Optimist agrees to discuss with the District the possibility of increasing the number of NCLB-PSC places available at the school.

***Federal Compliance**

As a recipient of federal funds, including federal Title I, Part A funds, Optimist Charter has agreed to meet all of the programmatic, fiscal and other regulatory requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) and other applicable federal grant programs. Optimist understands that it is a local educational agency [LEA] for purposes of federal compliance and reporting purposes. Optimist agrees that it will keep and make available to the District any documentation necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of NCLB and other applicable federal programs, including, but not limited to, documentation related to funding, required parental notifications, appropriate credentialing of teaching and paraprofessional staff, the implementation of Public School Choice and Supplemental Educational Services, where applicable, or any other mandated federal program requirement. The mandated requirements of NCLB, Title I, Part A include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Notify parents at the beginning of each school year of their “right to know” the professional qualifications of their child’s classroom teacher including a timely notice to each individual parent that the parent’s child has been assigned, or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified.
- Develop jointly with, and distribute to, parents of participating children, a school- parent compact.
- Hold an annual Title I meeting for parents of participating Title I students.
- Develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parent involvement policy.
- Submit biannual Consolidated Application to California Department of Education (CDE)
- requesting federal funds
- Complete and submit Local Education Agency (LEA) Plan to CDE
- Complete reform planning process with stakeholders and submit to CDE all appropriate documents for Title I school wide status, if applicable; otherwise, identify and maintain roster of eligible students for the Title I Targeted Assistance School Program
- Maintain inventory of equipment purchased with categorical funds, where applicable; and

- Maintain appropriate time-reporting documentation, including semi-annual certification and personnel activity report, for staff funded with categorical resources, where applicable

Optimist also understands that as part of its oversight of the school, the Charter School Office may conduct program review of federal and state compliance issues.

ELEMENT 8 – Admission Requirements

“Admission requirements, if applicable” Ed. Code 47605 (d)(2)(A)

Since our focus is to work with students who are foster youth and are placed by the Department of Probation in foster youth facilities, the majority of these students will have histories of low achievement and fall in the category of economically disadvantaged students. In addition, it has been our experience that approximately 25% of our students have previously been identified as special education students.

Optimist will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. Optimist will not charge tuition. Optimist Charter School is requesting authorization to restrict admission to only Department of Probation Foster Youth students who reside in foster, group, or residential homes. We will enroll students who reside in foster placements within the vicinity. In all respects Optimist will not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of race or ethnicity, nationality, gender, disability, 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. Optimist will not enroll pupils over 19 years of age unless continuously enrolled in public school and making satisfactory progress toward high school diploma requirements. Pupils should not be more than 22 years of age. Optimist Charter School will admit all students as previously described, as outlined in Education Code 47605 (d)(2)(A).

***McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act**

Optimist Charter School will adhere to the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure that 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. The Charter School will include specific information in their outreach materials, websites, at community meetings, open forums, and regional center meetings notifying parents that the school is open to enroll and provide services for all students which shall include a District standard contact number to access additional information regarding enrollment. A student’s IEP will never be required prior to participation in any attendance lottery or as a condition for enrollment.

Public Random Drawing

Should the number of students wishing to attend Optimist exceed the enrollment limit, a public random drawing will be held for probation foster youth students who live in the vicinity, in accordance with Education Code section 47605 (d)(2)(B). Preference will be given to students who reside within LAUSD attendance boundaries.

Optimist will designate a lottery application deadline and only applications received prior to the deadline will be considered for the public random drawing. If a drawing is required, parent/guardian/facility representative(s) intending to enroll children at the

school will be notified in writing regarding the date and time of the public drawing.

The Optimist Principal and at least one other school employee will conduct the Admission Lottery as a public event to ensure that lottery procedures are fairly executed. Procedures include announcing each applicant's name and lottery number; recording the number on paper; and entering the number in the school's database.

The Optimist lottery will occur when and if openings exist. If a lottery needs to be held, it will be open to the public and details will be provided on the Lottery Application and on the Optimist website. The school will inform parents of all applicants and all interested parties of the rules to be followed during the lottery process, location, date and time of the lottery via mail at least two weeks prior to the lottery date. The school will choose dates and times for the lottery (preferably after 6:00 p.m.) so that most interested parties will be able to attend. The lottery will be held at the school site.

Those selected in the lottery will be contacted by mail, while any subsequent notifications are made through contacting applicants by phone. The student/parent/guardian will receive an enrollment application after being accepted through the lottery. Those students not selected in the lottery are placed on a waitlist. When a student is selected in the lottery, Optimist will typically request that applicants notify the school within two days to indicate whether or not they will accept; if offers are declined or applicants do not respond, the spot is then offered to the next applicant on the waitlist.

The waitlist for the current school year remains active until Optimist's admissions period commences for the following year. The waitlist is only valid for the current year. Students must reapply for the lottery annually if we are unable to offer them admission for the current year.

The Optimist administration will record all dates and dialogue regarding admissions activity for each applicant within the database. The manual record of all lottery participants and their assigned lottery numbers will also be physically filed on campus. Each applicant's Lottery Application is kept on file for the academic year with his or her assigned lottery number in the school database and for those accepted through the lottery on her Enrollment Application.

Optimist will invite LAUSD representatives and respected members of the community as official observers of the lottery to verify lottery procedures are fairly executed.

A waiting list will be developed from the applications that do not receive admission and will be considered should a vacancy occur during the year.

ELEMENT 9 – Financial Audits

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

Each fiscal year an independent auditor will conduct an audit of the financial affairs of Optimist Charter School to verify the accuracy of the school’s financial statements, attendance and enrollment accounting practices, and internal controls.

Optimist will engage an independent public accountant with school accounting experience, certified by the State of California, to audit the school’s financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing standards (GAAP) and the audit guide issued by the Controller of the State of California. The Optimist Board of Directors will be responsible for contracting and overseeing the independent audit. The school’s plan for providing information is to gather, prepare, and organize documents, materials, and other information as requested by the independent auditor. Financial statements audited by the Certified Public Accountant will be submitted to the District within four months following the close of the fiscal year. Audit exceptions and deficiencies will be resolved in conference with the auditor to the satisfaction of the auditing agency and the LAUSD. Optimist agrees to resolve outstanding issue from the audit prior to the completion of the auditor’s final report.

Optimist will transmit a copy of its annual independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year to the District. Los Angeles County Board of Education, and California Department of Education by December 15 of each year.

Pursuant to SB 1137, Optimist will provide any necessary financial statements to LAUSD, the Los Angeles County Offices of Education (LACOE), and California Department of Education. Additionally, the following reports will be submitted to LAUSD, in the required format and within timelines to be specified by LAUSD each year:

- Provisional Budget – due in Spring prior to operating fiscal year
- Final Budget – due July of the budget fiscal year
- First Interim Projections – due in November of operating fiscal year
- Second Interim Projections – due in February of operating fiscal year
- Unaudited Actuals – due in July following the end of the fiscal year
- Audited Actuals – due in November following the end of the fiscal year
- Bell Schedule – due annually by November
- Classification Report – due monthly, the Monday after close of the last day of the school month

- Statistical Report – due monthly, the Friday after the last day of the school month. In addition:
 - P1 – First week of January
 - P2 – First week of May
- A weekly attendance report up to the fourth week prior to the norm day submitted by new and existing charter schools – due in September
- Other financial information needed by LAUSD to assess the fiscal condition of the charter school

***District Oversight Costs**

The District may charge for the actual costs of supervisory oversight of the Charter School not to exceed 1% of the Charter School’s revenue, or the District may charge for the actual costs of supervisory oversight of the Charter School not to exceed 3% if the Charter School is able to obtain substantially rent free facilities from the District. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District may charge the maximum supervisory oversight fee allowed under the law as it may change from time to time. The supervisory oversight fee provided herein is separate and distinct from the charges arising under the charter school/facilities use agreement.

***Balance Reserves**

Additionally, the Charter School will at all times maintain a funds balance (reserve) of its expenditures as required by section 15450, Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

***Special Education Revenue Adjustment/Payment for Services**

In the event that the Charter School owes funds to the District for the provision of agreed upon or fee for service or special education services or as a result of the State’s adjustment to allocation of special education revenues from the Charter School, the Charter School authorizes the District to deduct any and all of the in lieu property taxes that the Charter School otherwise would be eligible to receive under section 47635 of the Education Code to cover such owed amounts. The Charter School further understands and agrees that the District shall make appropriate deductions from the in lieu property tax amounts otherwise owed to the Charter School. Should this revenue stream be insufficient in any fiscal year to cover any such costs, the Charter School agrees that it will reimburse the District for the additional costs within forty-five (45) business days of being notified of the amounts owed.

***Audit and Inspection of Records**

Optimist Charter School agrees to observe and abide by the following terms and conditions as a requirement for receiving and maintaining their charter authorization:

- Charter School is subject to District oversight.
- The District’s statutory oversight responsibility continues throughout the life of the Charter and requires that it, among other things, monitors the fiscal condition of the Charter School.
- The District is authorized to revoke this Charter for, among other reasons, the failure of the Charter School to meet generally accepted accounting principles or if it engages in fiscal mismanagement.

Accordingly, the District hereby reserves the right, pursuant to its oversight responsibility, to audit Charter School books, records, data, processes and procedures through the District Office of the Inspector General or other means. The audit may include, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Compliance with terms and conditions prescribed in the Charter agreement,
- Internal controls, both financial and operational in nature,
- The accuracy, recording and/or reporting of the Charter School’s financial information,
- The Charter School’s debt structure,
- Governance policies, procedures and history,
- The recording and reporting of attendance data,
- The Charter School’s enrollment process,
- Compliance with safety plans and procedures, and
- Compliance with applicable grant requirements.

The Charter School shall cooperate fully with such audits and shall make available any and all records necessary for the performance of the audit upon 30 days notice to Charter School. When 30 days notice may defeat the purpose of the audit, the District may conduct the audit upon 24- hours notice.

Optimist Charter School will develop and maintain internal fiscal control policies governing all financial activities.

ELEMENT 10 – Student Expulsions

*“The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled.” Ed. Code 47605
(b)(5)(J)*

Many Optimist Charter School students have previously been suspended and expelled from school, often on numerous occasions, and are indifferent to whether it occurs again. Optimist does not consider that suspension and expulsion are effective means of improving school behavior and compliance with school rules and policies. While either or both may become necessary in extraordinary circumstances, disciplinary issues at Optimist will be dealt with through a variety of other strategies. These include, among other things, counseling, airing of the issue with faculty and other students, discussion with the student and his or her parent/guardian/facility representative, social worker or probation officer, and consequences that may include ineligibility for particular privileges in the school and/or their individual residential setting.

Discipline

Optimist will maintain a comprehensive student discipline policy which will include the students’ rights and responsibilities and the school’s suspension and expulsion policies. The discipline policy will not be discriminatory, arbitrary, or capricious, and will provide all students will an opportunity for due process. The discipline policy will be reviewed not less often than every two years, with the participation of faculty, student council, and parent/guardian/facility representatives.

The discipline policy will clearly describe progressive discipline measures, grounds for suspension and expulsion, minimum/maximum number of consecutive days of suspension, notification process to parent/guardian/facility representative of suspension, reason for suspension, appeal process, length of suspension, and provision for student’s education while suspended.

Any student who engages in repeated violations of the school's behavioral expectations which cannot be dealt with through counseling and other strategies will be required to attend a meeting with appropriate school staff and the student's parent/guardian/facility representative. The school will prepare a specific, written remediation agreement outlining future student conduct expectations, timelines, and consequences for failure to meet the expectations which may include, but are not limited to, suspension or expulsion.

Students who present an immediate threat to the health and safety of others may be immediately suspended and later expelled. Additionally, a student may be suspended or expelled for any of the acts enumerated in Education Code sections 48900 et seq. related to school activity or school attendance that occur at any time including, but not limited to:

- While on school grounds
- While going to or coming from school
- During the lunch period whether on or off campus
- During, or while going to or coming from, a school-sponsored activity

***Suspensions and Expulsions**

Optimist Charter School shall provide due process for all students, including adequate notice to parents/guardians and students regarding the grounds for suspension and expulsion and their due process rights regarding suspension and expulsion, including rights to appeal.

Optimist Charter School shall ensure that its policies and procedures regarding suspension and expulsion will be periodically reviewed, and modified as necessary, including, for example, any modification of the lists of offenses for which students are subject to suspension or expulsion.

Optimist Charter School shall ensure the appropriate interim placement of students during and pending the completion of the Charter School's student expulsion process.

Charter Schools will implement operational and procedural guidelines ensuring federal and state laws and regulations regarding the discipline of students with disabilities are met. Charter Schools will also ensure staff is knowledgeable about and complies with the District's Discipline Foundation Policy. If the student receives or is eligible for special education, the Charter School shall identify and provide special education programs and services at the appropriate interim educational placement, pending the completion of the expulsion process, to be coordinated with the LAUSD Support Unit, Division of Special Education.

Optimist Charter School shall utilize alternatives to suspension and expulsion with students who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from compulsory school activities.

If a student is expelled from the Charter School, the Charter School shall forward student records upon request of the receiving school district in a timely fashion. Charter School shall also submit an expulsion packet to the Innovation and Charter Schools Division immediately or as soon as practically possible, containing:

- pupil's last known address
- a copy of the cumulative record
- transcript of grades or report card
- health information
- documentation of the expulsion proceeding, including specific facts supporting the expulsion
- student's current educational placement
- copy of parental notice expulsion

- copy of documentation of expulsion provided to parent stating reason for expulsion, term of expulsion, rehabilitation plan, reinstatement notice with eligibility date and instructions for providing proof of student’s compliance for reinstatement, appeal process and options for enrollment; and
- if the Student is eligible for Special Education, the Charter School must provide documentation related to expulsion pursuant to IDEA including conducting a manifestation determination IEP prior to expulsion. If the student is eligible for Section 504 Accommodations, the Charter School must provide evidence that it convened a Link Determination meeting to address two questions: A) Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the students disability: B) Was the misconduct a direct result of the Charter School’s failure to implement 504 Plan?

***Outcome Data**

Charter School shall maintain all data involving placement, tracking, and monitoring of student suspensions, expulsions, and reinstatements, and make such outcome data readily available to the District upon request.

***Rehabilitation Plans**

Any student expelled from Optimist is no longer an enrolled student. Pupils who are expelled from the Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Charter School’s governing board at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may reapply to the Charter School for readmission.

***Readmission**

The Charter School’s governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for the filing and processing of requests for readmission and the process for the required review of all expelled pupils for readmission. Upon completion of the readmission process, the Charter School’s governing board shall readmit the pupil, unless the Charter School’s governing board makes a finding that the pupil has not met the conditions of the rehabilitation plan or continues to pose a danger to campus safety. A description of the procedure shall be made available to the pupil and the pupil’s parent or guardian at the time the expulsion order is entered. The Charter School is responsible for reinstating the student upon the conclusion of the expulsion period.

***Special Education Discipline**

In the case of a student who has an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”), or a student who has a 504 Plan, the Charter School will ensure that it follows the correct disciplinary procedures to comply with the mandates of state and federal laws, including the IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973. As set forth in the MOU regarding special education between the District and the Charter School an IEP team,

including a district representative, will meet to conduct a manifestation determination and to discuss alternative placement utilizing the District's Policies and Procedures Manual. Prior to recommending expulsion for a student with a 504 Plan, the Charter School's administrator will convene a Link Determination meeting to ask the following two questions: A) Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student's disability? B) Was the misconduct a direct result of the Charter's failure to implement the 504 Plan?

Reasons for Suspension and Expulsion

A student may be recommended for suspension or expulsion for any of the following reasons, as specified in Education Code Section 48900: Discretionary offenses are as follows:

- Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person
- Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense
- Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object, unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the pupil had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, which is concurred in by the principal or the designee of the principal
- Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind
- Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind and then either sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid, substance, or material and represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant
- Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion
- Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property (includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases)
- Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property (includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases)
- Possessed or used tobacco, or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel (exception made for use or possession by a pupil of her own prescription products)
- Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity

- Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Section 11014.5 of the Health and Safety Code
- Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties
- Knowingly received stolen school property or private property (includes, but is not limited to, electronic files and databases)
- Possessed an imitation firearm
- Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Section 261,266c, 286, 288, 288a, or 289 of the Penal Code or committed a sexual battery as defined in Section 243.4 of the Penal Code
- Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a pupil who is a complaining witness or a witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of either preventing that pupil from being a witness or retaliating against that pupil for being a witness, or both
- Engaged in, or attempted to engage in, hazing as defined in Section 32050
- Aided or abetted, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person (suspension only)
- Committed sexual harassment (grades 4-12)
- Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in the act of hate violence (grades 4-12)
- Engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation directed against school district personnel or pupils that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder, and invading the rights of either school personnel or pupils by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment (grades 4-12)
- Made terrorist threats against school officials, school property or both.
- Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act, as defined in subdivision (f) and (g) of Section 32261, directed specifically toward a pupil or school personnel.

Mandatory Expulsion: In terms of mandatory expulsion, federal laws state that a school must expel, for a period of not less than one year (except on a case-by-case basis), any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school. In addition, students shall be expelled upon determination that the student has committed one of the acts listed below:

- Possession of a firearm
- Brandishing a knife at another person
- Unlawfully selling a controlled substance
- Committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a

- sexual battery
- Possession of an explosive

***Gun Free Schools Act**

Violation of The Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 also mandates the expulsion of any student who takes a firearm onto a school campus.

Process for Suspension and/or Expulsion

Informal Conference

The Principal has the authority to suspend. Suspension shall be preceded by an informal conference conducted by the principal, with the student and the student's parent/guardian/facility representative. The conference may be omitted if the principal determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If the student is suspended without a conference, the parent/guardian/facility representative will be notified of the suspension and a conference will be conducted as soon as possible.

Notice to Parent/guardian/facility representative

At the time of a student's suspension, a school employee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian/facility representative by telephone or in person. Initial contact will be followed by written notice stating the specific offense committed by the student. Such notice may also state the date and time the student may return to school. If school officials wish to confer with the parent/guardian/facility representative regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may note that the parent/guardian/facility representative is required to respond without delay, and that student violations of school rules can result in expulsion from the school.

Length of Suspension

The length of a suspension, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive days per suspension and no more than 20 days in any school year. Upon recommendation by the principal for expulsion, the student and the student's parent/guardian/facility representative will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the student should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. The principal, upon either of the following findings, will make this determination:

- The student's presence will be disruptive to the educational process
- The student poses a threat or danger to others

Upon this determination, the student's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

Suspension Appeal

If a parent wishes to appeal the suspension, they may appeal in writing to the Board President within 3 days of the suspension notice. The Board President will appoint 3 board members to hear the appeal and make a determination.

Expulsion Hearing

An administrative panel and the Board of Directors have the authority to expel. Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. If requested, the hearing will be held within 30 days after the school principal determines that an act subject to expulsion has occurred. The hearing may be presided over by an administrative hearing panel appointed by the Board. The panel will consist of one Board member and two Principals from other schools. Interim assignments will be provided by the school to the student pending the expulsion hearing. Written notice of the hearing will be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian/facility representative at least 10 calendar days before the date of the hearing. This notice will include:

- The date and place of the hearing
- A statement of the specific facts and charges upon which the proposed expulsion is based
- A copy of the disciplinary rules that relate to the alleged violation
- The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian/facility representative to appear in person at the hearing
- The opportunity for the student to be represented by counsel
- The right to examine and acquire copies of all documents to be used at the hearing
- The opportunity to cross-examine all witnesses that testify at the hearing
- The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

Hearing Procedures

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

Presentation of Evidence (Procedures for Ensuring Rights of Student)

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A decision by the Administrative Panel to expel must be supported by substantial evidence that the pupil committed the expellable offense.

While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay, and sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the Administrative Panel or Board of Directors determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

If, due to a written request by the expelled pupil, the hearing is held at a public meeting, and the charge is committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in Education Code Section 48900, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a session closed to the public.

The principal's recommendation to expel a student shall be made in the form of a written recommendation to the Administrative Panel, who will make a final decision regarding the expulsion. The final decision by the Administrative Panel shall be made within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing and will include Findings of Fact.

The principal will send written notice of a student's expulsion to the parent/guardian/facility representative of any student who is expelled. This notice will include the following:

- The specific offense committed by the student for any of the acts listed in "Reasons for Suspension and/or Expulsion."
- Notice of the student's or parent/guardian/facility representative's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with Optimist.
- Notice that the pupil may have a right to appeal and the date and process by which an appeal may be filed.
- Notice of the pupil's or parent/guardian/facility representative's obligation to inform any new district in which the pupil seeks to enroll of the pupil's status with Optimist Charter
- Effective date of expulsion.
- Date the student to be reviewed for readmission.
- A copy of the rehabilitation plan
- The type of educational placement during the period of expulsion

Appeal of Expulsion

A parent can appeal the expulsion decision of the Administrative panel within 5 working days in writing to the Board of Directors. The full board will hear the appeal except for the board member who was on the Administrative Panel for the original expulsion hearing. The Board of Directors will hold the appeal within 10 days of

receiving the request from the parent. The Board will consider all information and evidence from the expulsion hearing and the parent's appeal to make a decision. The decision of the Board of Directors is final.

Alternative procedures for removing pupils from the school

Students will be advised about all classroom suspensions and expulsion policies. Optimist will act proactively. Students will be forewarned in instances in which they appear to be headed towards activities that result in suspension. In addition, meetings with parents or guardians will examine alternative placements (e.g., day treatment programs).

Educational Alternatives for students who are suspended or expelled

Suspended students will still be responsible for all classroom assignments, projects etc. Suspended students will work with their Advisor, and other school personnel in maintaining currency. In the event of a decision to expel a student, the school will work cooperatively with the district of residence, county, and/or private schools to assist with appropriate educational placement of the expelled student. Any incident of violent and/or serious student behavior shall be communicated to the district/school to which the student matriculates.

ELEMENT 11 – Retirement Programs

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

All Optimist Charter School employees will Not participate in STRS or participate in LAUSD collective bargaining.

Mandatory benefits such as workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, Medicare, and social security will be provided by Optimist Charter School. Life, health, dental, vision, and related benefits will also be provided to all full-time employees. Employees on charter school leave from LAUSD will elect to give up district-offered coverage during the term of their employment with Optimist.

Retirement

Social Security payments will be contributed for all certificated employees in accordance with Federal and State law. The Optimist Board of Directors retains the option to consider any other public or private retirement plans and to coordinate such participation with existing programs, as it deems appropriate.

Optimist contributes to a 401-k retirement plan for full-time employees.

Optimist will maintain an Employee Handbook, describing in detail Optimist’s policies regarding employment matters, including work schedules, time off, termination, grievance procedures and appeals. The current Employee Handbook is attached hereto as Appendix 5.

ELEMENT 12 – Attendance Alternatives

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

*Pupils who choose not to attend Optimist may choose to attend other public schools in their district of residence or pursue an inter-district transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of the district.

No student is required to attend Optimist Charter School. The parent or guardian of each student enrolled in the charter school shall be informed that the students have no right to admission in a particular school of any local education agency (or program of any local education agency) as a consequence of enrollment in the charter school, except to the extent that such right is extended by the local education agency.

ELEMENT 13 – Employee Rights

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

Job applicants for positions at Optimist Charter School will be considered through an open process, and if hired, will enter into a contractual agreement with the school. Any district union employee who is offered employment and chooses to work at Optimist will not be covered by his or her respective collective bargaining unit agreement, although Optimist may extend the same protections and benefits in individual employee contracts.

*Leave and return rights for union-represented employees who accept employment with the Charter School will be administered in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements between the employee’s union and the District and also in accordance with any applicable judicial rulings.

Optimist Charter school employees will be employees of Optimist Youth Homes and Family Services. In the event that Optimist Charter Schools ceases or in the event that an employee seeks employment in the district or county, they are free to do so and they will be subject to the applicable bargaining agreements of the District.

ELEMENT 14 – Dispute Resolution

“The process to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter.” Ed. Code 47605 (b)(5)(N)

*The staff and governing board members of Optimist Charter School agree to resolve any claim, controversy or dispute arising out of or relating to the Charter agreement between the District and Optimist Charter, except any controversy or claim that is in any way related to revocation of this Charter, (“Dispute”) pursuant to the terms of this Element 14.

Any Dispute between the District and Optimist Charter School shall be resolved in accordance with the procedures set forth below:

1. Any Dispute shall be made in writing (“Written Notification”). The Written Notification must identify the nature of the Dispute and any supporting facts. The Written Notification shall be tendered to the other party by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Notification shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 PM or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail. All Written Notifications shall be addressed as follows:

To Charter School:

Optimist Charter School
c/o School Director or Principal
6957 N. Figueroa St.
Los Angeles, CA 90042

To Director of Charter Schools:

Director of Charter Schools
Los Angeles Unified School District
333 South Beaudry Avenue, 25th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90017

2. A written response (“Written Response”) shall be tendered to the other party within twenty (20) business days from the date of receipt of the Written Notification. The parties agree to schedule a conference to discuss the Dispute identified in the Written Notice (“Issue Conference”). The Issue Conference shall take place within fifteen (15) business days from the date the Written Response is received by the other party. The Written Response may be tendered

by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.

3. If the Dispute cannot be resolved by mutual agreement at the Issue Conference, either party may then request that the Dispute be resolved by mediation. Each party shall bear its own attorneys' fees, costs and expenses associated with the mediation. The mediator's fees and the administrative fees of the mediation shall be shared equally among the parties. Mediation proceedings shall commence within 120 days from the date of either party's request for mediation following the Issue Conference. The parties shall mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator to resolve the Dispute. The mediator may be selected from the approved list of mediators prepared by the American Arbitration Association. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, mediation proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial mediation procedures of the American Arbitration Association.

4. If the mediation is not successful, then the parties agree to resolve the Dispute by binding arbitration conducted by a single arbitrator. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, arbitration proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial arbitration rules of the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator must be an active member of the State Bar of California or a retired judge of the state or federal judiciary of California. Each party shall bear its own attorney's fees, costs and expenses associated with the arbitration. The arbitrator's fees and the administrative fees of the arbitration shall be shared equally among the parties. However, any party who fails or refuses to submit to arbitration as set forth herein shall bear all attorney's fees, costs and expenses incurred by such other party in compelling arbitration of any controversy or claim.

Amendments

Any amendments to this charter will be requested by the governing board of Optimist and submitted to the LAUSD board for approval . Material revisions and amendments shall be made pursuant to the standards, criteria, and timelines in Education Code Section 46705.

ELEMENT 15 – Employer Status and Collective Bargaining

“A declaration whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act (Chapter 10.7, commencing with Section 3540, of division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code).” Ed. Code 47605 (b)(5)(O)

*Optimist Charter School will be deemed the exclusive public employer of all employees of the Charter School for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act (EERA).

All certificated and classified employees of the Charter School will be employees of Optimist Charter School.

ELEMENT 16 – Procedures to be Used if Optimist Charter School Closes

“A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the 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 (b)(5)(P)

***Revocation**

The District may revoke the charter if Optimist Charter commits a breach of any provision set forth in a policy related to charter schools adopted by the District Board of Education and/or any provisions set forth in the Charter School Act of 1992. The District may revoke the charter of Optimist Charter School if the District finds, through a showing of substantial evidence, that the Charter School did any of the following:

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

Prior to revocation, and in accordance with Cal. Educ. Code section 47607(d) and State regulations, the LAUSD Board of Education will notify the Optimist Charter in writing of the specific violation, and give Optimist a reasonable opportunity to cure the violation, unless the LAUSD Board of Education determines, in writing, that the violation constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of the pupils. Revocation proceedings are not subject to the dispute resolution clause set forth in this charter.

***Closure Action (LAUSD Specific Language)**

The decision to close Optimist either by the Optimist governing Board or by the LAUSD Board of Education will be documented in a Closure Action. The Closure Action shall be deemed to have been automatically made when any of the following occur: the charter is revoked or non renewed by the LAUSD Board of Education; the Charter School board votes to close the school; the Charter School Board votes to close the Charter School or the Charter lapses.

***Closure Procedures**

The procedures for charter school closure are guided by California *Education Code* sections 47604.32, 47605, 47605.6, and 47607 as well as *California Code of Regulations*, Title 5 (5CCR), sections 11962 and 11962.1. A closed charter school must designate a responsible entity to conduct closure activities and identify how these activities will be funded. The procedures outlined below are based on “Charter School Closure

Requirements and Recommendations (Revised 08/2009)” as posted on the California Department of Education website. References to “Charter School” applies to the charter school’s nonprofit corporation and/or governing board.

Documentation of Closure Action

The revocation or non-renewal of a charter school must be documented by an official action of the authorizing entity. Notice of a charter school’s closure for any reason must be provided by the authorizing entity to the California Department of Education (CDE). In addition, the charter school must send notice of its closure to:

1. Parents or guardians of students. Written notification to parents/guardians/caregivers of the enrolled students of Optimist Charter School will be issued by Optimist within 72 hours after the determination of a Closure Action and the effective date of closure. A copy of the written notifications to parents is also to be sent to LAUSD within the same time frames.
2. The authorizing entity
3. The county office of education. Written notification to the Los Angeles County Office of Education of the Closure Action shall be made by Optimist Charter School by registered mail within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the ICSD.
4. The special education local plan area in which the school participates. Written notification to the Special Education Local Planning Area (SELPA) in which the Charter School participates of the Closure Action shall be made by Optimist Charter School by registered mail within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the ICSD.
5. The retirement systems in which the school’s employees participate. The Charter School will within fourteen (14) calendar days of closure action contact the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS), Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), and the Los Angeles County office of Education and follow their procedures for dissolving contracts and reporting. Optimist shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the ICSD.
6. The CDE. Written notification to the California Department of Education of the Closure Action shall be made by Optimist Charter School by registered mail within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action. Optimist shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the ICSD.

Notice must be received by the CDE within ten calendar days of any official action taken by the chartering authority. Notification of all the parties above must include at least the following:

1. The effective date of the closure
2. The name(s) of and contact information for the person(s) handling inquiries regarding the closure
3. The students’ school districts of residence
4. How parents or guardians may obtain copies of student records, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements

In addition to the four required items above, notification to the CDE must also include:

1. A description of the circumstances of the closure
2. The location of student and personnel records

In addition to the four required items above, notification to parents, guardians, and students should also include:

1. Information on how to transfer the student to an appropriate school
2. A certified packet of student information that includes closure notice, a copy of their child's cumulative record which will include grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, completed coursework, credits that meet graduation requirements, a transcript, and State testing results.
3. Information on student completion of college entrance requirements for all high school students affected by the closure

The charter school shall announce the closure to any school districts that may be responsible for providing education services to the former students of the charter school within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action. This notice will include a list of returning students and their home schools. Charter school closures should occur at the end of an academic year if it is feasible to maintain a legally compliant program until then. If a conversion charter school is reverting to non-charter status, notification of this change should be made to all parties listed in this section.

School and Student Records Retention and Transfer

Optimist Charter School shall observe the following in the transfer and maintenance of school and student records:

1. The Charter School will provide the District with original cumulative files pursuant to District policy and applicable handbook(s) regarding cumulative records for secondary and elementary schools for all students both active and inactive at the Charter School. Transfer of the complete and organized original student records to the District will occur within seven calendar days of the effective date of closure.
2. The process for transferring student records to the receiving schools shall be in accordance with LAUSD procedures for students moving from one school to another.
3. The Charter School will prepare an electronic master list of all students to the Innovation and Charter Schools Division. This list will include the student's identification number, Statewide Student Identifier (SSID), birthdate, grade, full name, address, home school, enrollment date, exit code, exit date, parent/guardian name(s), and phone number(s). If the Charter School closure occurs before the end of the school year, the list should also indicate the name of the school that each student is transferring to, if known. This electronic master list will be delivered in the form of a CD.

4. The original cumulative files should be organized for delivery to the District in two categories: active students and inactive students. The ICSD will coordinate with the Charter School for the delivery and/or pickup of the student records.
5. The Charter School must update all student records in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) prior to closing.
6. The Charter School will provide to the ICSD a copy of student attendance records, teacher grade books, school payroll records, and Title I records (if applicable). Submission of personnel records must include any employee records the charter school has. These include, but are not limited to, records related to performance and grievance.
7. All records are to be boxed and labeled by classification of documents and the required duration of storage.

Financial Close-Out

After receiving notification of closure, the CDE will notify the charter school and the authorizing entity if it is aware of any liabilities the charter school owes the state. These may include overpayment of apportionments, unpaid revolving fund loans or grants, or other liabilities. The CDE may ask the county office of education to conduct an audit of the charter school if it has reason to believe that the school received state funding for which it was not eligible.

Optimist Charter School shall ensure completion of an independent final audit within six months after the closure of the school that includes:

1. An accounting of all financial assets. These may include cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value.
2. An accounting of all liabilities. These may include accounts payable or reduction in apportionments due to loans, unpaid staff compensation, audit findings, or other investigations.
3. An assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to the charter school.

This audit may serve as the school's annual audit.

The financial closeout audit of the Charter School will be paid for by Optimist Charter School. This audit will be conducted by a neutral, independent licensed CPA who will employ generally accepted accounting principles. Any liability or debt incurred by Optimist Charter School will be the responsibility of Optimist and not LAUSD. Optimist Charter School understands and acknowledges that Optimist Charter will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of Optimist Charter School. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source. Optimist Charter understands and acknowledges that only unrestricted funds will be used to pay creditors. Any unused AB 602 funds will be returned to the District SELPA or the SELPA in which

the Optimist Charter School participates, and other categorical funds will be returned to the source of funds.

Optimist Charter shall ensure the completion and filing of any annual reports required. This includes:

1. Preliminary budgets
2. Interim financial reports
3. Second interim financial reports
4. Final unaudited reports

These reports must be submitted to the CDE and the authorizing entity in the form required. If the charter school chooses to submit this information before the forms and software are available for the fiscal year, alternative forms can be used if they are approved in advance by the CDE. These reports should be submitted as soon as possible after the closure action, but no later than the required deadline for reporting for the fiscal year.

For apportionment of categorical programs, the CDE will count the prior year average daily attendance (ADA) or enrollment data of the closed charter school with the data of the authorizing entity. This practice will occur in the first year after the closure and will continue until CDE data collection processes reflect ADA or enrollment adjustments for all affected LEAs due to the charter closure.

Disposition of Liabilities and Assets

The closeout audit must determine the disposition of all liabilities of the charter school. Charter school closure procedures must also ensure disposal of any net assets remaining after all liabilities of the charter school have been paid or otherwise addressed. Such disposal includes, but is not limited to:

1. The return of any donated materials and property according to any conditions set when the donations were accepted.
2. The return of any grant and restricted categorical funds to their source according to the terms of the grant or state and federal law.
3. The submission of final expenditure reports for any entitlement grants and the filing of Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as appropriate.

Net assets of the charter school may be transferred to the authorizing entity. If the Charter School is operated by a nonprofit corporation, and if the corporation does not have any other functions than operation of the Charter School, the corporation will be dissolved according to its bylaws.

- a. The corporation's bylaws will address how assets are to be distributed at the closure of the corporation.
- b. A copy of the corporations bylaws containing the information on how assets are to be distributed at the closure of the corporation, are to be provided to LAUSD prior to approval of this Charter.

For six (6) calendar months from the Closure Action or until budget allows, whichever comes first, sufficient staff as deemed appropriate by the [Charter School] Board, will maintain employment to take care of all necessary tasks and procedures required for a smooth closing of the school and student transfers.

The Optimist Charter School Board shall adopt a plan for wind-up of the school and, if necessary, the corporation, in accordance with the requirements of the Corporations Code.

The Charter School shall provide LAUSD within fourteen (14) calendar days of closure action prior written notice of any outstanding payments to staff and the method by which the school will make the payments.

Prior to final closure, the Charter School shall do all of the following on behalf of the school's employees, and anything else required by applicable law:

- a. File all final federal, state, and local employer payroll tax returns and issue final W-2s and Form 1099s by the statutory deadlines.
- b. File the Federal Notice of Discontinuance with the Department of Treasury (Treasury Form 63).
- c. Make final federal tax payments (employee taxes, etc.)
- d. File the final withholding tax return (Treasury Form 165).
- e. File the final return with the IRS (Form 990 and Schedule).

This Element 16 shall survive the revocation, expiration, termination, cancellation of this charter or any other act of event that would end Optimist Charter School's right to operate as a charter school or cause Optimist to cease operation. Optimist and District agree that, due to the nature of the property and activities that are the subject of this petition, the District and public shall suffer irreparable harm should Optimist Charter School breach any obligation under this Element 16. The District, therefore, shall have the right to seek equitable relief to enforce any right arising under this Element 16 or any provision of this Element 16 or to prevent or cure any breach of any obligation undertaken, without in any way prejudicing any other legal remedy available to the District. Such legal relief shall include, without limitation, the seeking of a temporary or permanent injunction, restraining order, or order for specific performance, and may be sought in any appropriate court.

***Facilities**

Proposed Charter School Location 6957 N. Figueroa St., Los Angeles, 90042

Names of District school sites near proposed location: Eagle Rock High School, Franklin High School, Burbank Middle School

Proposed Charter School to be located within the boundaries of LAUSD.

***District-Owned Facilities:** If Charter School is using LAUSD facilities as of the date of the submittal of this charter petition or takes occupancy of LAUSD facilities prior to the approval of this charter petition, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by LAUSD for the use of the LAUSD facilities as a condition of the approval of the charter petition. If at any time after the approval of this charter petition Charter School will occupy and use any LAUSD facilities, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by LAUSD for the use of LAUSD facilities prior to occupancy and commencing use.

Charter School agrees that occupancy and use of LAUSD facilities shall be in compliance with applicable laws and LAUSD policies for the operation and maintenance of LAUSD facilities and furnishings and equipment. All LAUSD facilities (i.e., schools) will remain subject to those laws applicable to public schools which LAUSD observes.

In the event of an emergency, all LAUSD facilities (i.e., schools) are available for use by the American Red Cross and public agencies as emergency locations which may disrupt or prevent Charter School from conducting its educational programs. If Charter School will share the use of LAUSD facilities with other LAUSD user groups, Charter School agrees it will participate in and observe all LAUSD safety policies (e.g., emergency chain of information, participate in safety drills).

The use agreements provided by LAUSD for LAUSD facilities shall contain terms and conditions addressing issues such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Use. Charter School will be restricted to using the LAUSD facilities for the operation of a public school providing educational instruction to public school students consistent with the terms of the charter petition and incidental related uses. LAUSD shall have the right to inspect LAUSD facilities upon reasonable notice to Charter School.
- Furnishings and Equipment. LAUSD shall retain ownership of any furnishings and equipment, including technology, (“F&E”) that it provides to Charter School for use. Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, shall provide maintenance and other services for the good and safe operation of the F&E.
- Leasing; Licensing. Use of the LAUSD facilities by any person or entity other than Charter School shall be administered by LAUSD. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement in the use agreement.
- Minimum Payments or Charges to be Paid to LAUSD Arising From the Facilities.
 - (i) Pro Rata Share. LAUSD shall collect and Charter School shall pay a Pro Rata Share for facilities costs as provided in the Charter School Act of 1992 and its regulations. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding facilities costs in the use agreement; and

(ii) Taxes; Assessments. Generally, Charter School shall pay any assessment or fee imposed upon or levied on the LAUSD facilities that it is occupying or Charter School's legal or equitable interest created by the use agreement.

- Maintenance & Operations Services. In the event LAUSD agrees to allow Charter School to perform any of the operation and maintenance services, LAUSD shall have the right to inspect the LAUSD facilities and the costs incurred in such inspection shall be paid by Charter School.

(i) Co-Location. If Charter School is co-locating or sharing the LAUSD facilities with another user, LAUSD shall provide the operations and maintenance services for the LAUSD facilities and Charter School shall pay the Pro Rata Share. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such in the use agreement.

(ii) Sole Occupant. If Charter School is a sole occupant of LAUSD facilities, LAUSD shall allow the Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, to provide some operations and maintenance services for the LAUSD facilities in accordance with applicable laws and LAUSD's policies on operations and maintenance services for facilities and F&E. NOTWITHSTANDING THE FOREGOING, LAUSD shall provide all services for regulatory inspections, which as the owner of the real property is required to submit, and deferred maintenance and Charter School shall pay LAUSD for the cost and expense of providing those services. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such services in the use agreement.

- Real Property Insurance. Prior to occupancy, Charter School shall satisfy those requirements to participate in LAUSD's property insurance or, if Charter School is the sole occupant of LAUSD facilities, obtain and maintain separate property insurance for the LAUSD facilities. Charter School shall **not** have the option of obtaining and maintaining separate property insurance for the LAUSD facility IF Charter School is co-locating or sharing the LAUSD facility with another user.

***Facility status**

The charter petitioner must demonstrate control of a facility such as a commitment from the landlord, to ensure that the property is actually available to the charter developer, and that the facility is usable with or without conditions (such as a conditional code permit.) The charter school facility shall comply with all applicable building codes, standards and regulations adopted by the city and/or county agencies responsible for building and safety standards for the city in which the charter school is to be located, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Applicable codes and ADA requirements shall also apply to the construction, reconstruction, alteration of or addition to the proposed charter school facility. The Charter School cannot exempt itself from applicable building and zoning

codes, ordinances, and ADA requirements. Charter schools are required to adhere to the program accessibility requirements of Federal law (Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504). We currently operate an NPS at our facility, and this same building will be used for Optimist Charter School. The building meets all required fire and safety regulations for a school.

Optimist currently maintains and operates a nonpublic school which is state certified by the State Department of Education and has a current Fire Inspection Clearance. Our current nonpublic school building will be used for the charter school. Optimist will continue to maintain a school facility that complies with state and federal building codes, federal Americans with Disabilities Act access requirements, and other applicable fire, health and structural safety requirements. Readily accessible records documenting such compliance will be maintained on file at the school.

***Occupancy of the Site**

The charter petitioner or developer shall provide the District with a final Certificate of Occupancy issued by the applicable permitting agency, allowing the petitioner to use and occupy the site. The Charter School may not open without providing a copy of the Certificate of Occupancy for the designated use of the facility. If the Charter School moves or expands to another facility during the term of this charter, the Charter School shall provide a Certificate of Occupancy to the District for each facility before the school is scheduled to open or operate in the facility or facilities. Notwithstanding any language to the contrary in this charter, the interpretation, application, and enforcement of this provision are not subject to the Dispute Resolution Process outlined in Element 14.

Optimist nonpublic school has maintained an appropriate occupancy and fire clearance for our current school. We are state certified by the State Department of Education and have a current fire clearance for 300 students.

***Health & Safety:** The school will comply with the Healthy Schools Act, California Education Code Section 17608, which details pest management requirements for schools. Developers may find additional information at: www.laschools.org/employee/mo/ipm

***Asbestos Management:** The charter school will comply with the asbestos requirement as cited in the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), 40CFR part 763. AHERA requires that any building leased or acquired that is to be used as a school or administrative building shall maintain an asbestos management plan.

Term and Charter Renewal

The proposed term of the charter will be for a period of five years from August 15, 2012 until June 30, 2017. The Charter School must submit its renewal petition to the District's Charter Schools Division no earlier than September of the year before the charter expires.

Works Cited

- Barriga, Alvaro Q., et al. "Relationships Between Problem Behaviors and Academic Achievement in Adolescents: the Unique Role of Attention Problems." *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders* 22 Dec. 2002: n. pag. Web. 16 Aug. 2011.
- Clark, Peter. "To Be Educated." *Vermont Tech Academic Affairs Office*. Dec. 2005. Web. 30 Sept. 2011.
- The California Education Collaborative for Children in Foster Care. (2008). "Ready to Succeed: Changing Systems to Give California's Foster Children the Opportunities They Deserve to be Ready for and Succeed in School." *The Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning and Mental Health Advocacy Services, Inc.* 3-10. Web. 16 Aug. 2011.
- California Foster Youth Education Task Force. (2010). "AB 167: Frequently Asked Questions." Web. 16 Aug. 2011.
- Delak, A. J. and McPherson, K. (2010). "Survey of Youth in Residential Placement: Youth's Needs and Services." SYRP Report. Rockville, MD: Westat.
- Deutsch, Francine M. "How Small Classes Benefit High School Students." *NAASP Bulletin* 87.635, 35-44. Web. 23 Sept. 2011.
- Putnam, R. H., Horner, R., & Algozzine, R. "Academic Achievement and the Implementation of School-wide Behavior Support." *Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Newsletter, Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports* 3.2 (2006): n. pag. Web. 16 Aug. 2011.
- Shea, N. M. & Zetlin, A. "Improving School Stability: An Exploratory Study of the Work Of The AB 490 Liaisons In California." *Children and Youth Services Review*, Elsevier, vol. 32.1, 74-79, January. Web. 16 Aug. 2011.

Tableman, Betty and Herron, Adreinne. “Best Practice Briefs: School Climate and Learning.”

University-Community Partnerships @ Michigan State University, December 2004.

Tomlinson, Carol Ann. “Differentiated Instruction: Can It Work?” *Education Digest* 65.2

Academic Search Premier. Web. 28 Oct. 2011.

Tomlinson, Carol Ann. “Mapping a Route Toward Differentiated Instruction.” *Educational*

Leadership Sept. 1999. *EBSCOhost*. Web. 28 Oct. 2011.

An excerpt from: Tharp, R. G., P. Estrada, S. S. Dalton, and L. A. Yamauchi, 2000. **Teaching**

Transformed. Achieving Excellence, Fairness, Inclusion, and Harmony. Boulder,

Colorado: Westview Press, 30-31.