

## **Affirmations and Assurances**

As the authorized representatives of the applicant, we, Kelli Ruley, Robert Cann and Marcia Worden, certify that the information submitted in this application for the renewal of Nord Country School (NCS) is true to the best of our knowledge and belief. We also certify that this application does not constitute the conversion of a private school to the status of a public charter school; and further, agree that the Charter School:

- Shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Sections 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(c)(1)]
- Shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of NCS for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O)]
- Shall be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- Shall not charge tuition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- Shall admit all students who wish to attend NCS, and who submit a timely application, unless the Charter School receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case each application will be given equal chance of admission through a random drawing process in accordance with 47605(d)(2).
- Shall not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, perceived sexual orientation, home language, or disability (Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(G))
- Shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004.

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**Kelli Ruley, NCS Board Chair**

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**Marcia Worden, NCS Board Secretary**

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**Robert Cann, NCS Board Vice Chair**

## **Charter School Intent and Charter Requirements**

In 1992, the California Legislature enacted the Charter Schools Act of 1992. Section 47601 of the California Education Code states that:

It is the intent of the Legislature, in enacting this part, to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure, as a method to accomplish all of the following:

- (a) Improve pupil learning.
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all pupils, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for pupils who are identified as academically low achieving.
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the 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.

The Charter Schools Act requires each charter school to have a “charter” that outlines at least the sixteen (16) mandatory items of the Act. The following provisions of this charter coincide with the requirements of Section 47605 of the Act.

### **Background**

Nord Country School is a California nonprofit public benefit corporation. The school was founded in 2005 by parents, teachers and community members. The school was first approved for a 2 year charter by Chico Unified School District (CUSD) on May 18, 2005. This charter covered the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 school years. The charter was renewed for a 5 year term in 2007 (2008-2012). NCS became an independent 501(c)(3) Corporation in September 2005.

### **School Location**

This charter authorizes the operation of Nord Country School, a public charter school, which shall operate within the geographic boundaries of Chico Unified School District, as authorized pursuant to Education Code Section 47605. NCS occupies the school site at 5554 California Street, Chico, CA as provided by the district under Proposition 39 and pursuant to the Charter Facilities Agreement dated October 12, 2006.

## **Nord Country School 2007 - Present**

### **2007/2008**

97 students

Added 2 portable classrooms

Class Configuration: K, 1, 2, 3/4, 5/6

### **2008/2009**

110 students

Added 2 portable classrooms

Class Configuration: K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5/6

Cathy Oviedo retired as Director

Kathy Dahlgren became Principal

### **2009/2010**

126 students

Class Configuration: K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5/6

Hired an ELD Coordinator

Hired an Intervention Coordinator

### **2010/2011**

142 students

Added 1 portable classroom

Class Configuration: K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Became our own LEA for Special Education Services

Extended the Intervention Program

### **2011/2012**

148 students

Implemented a Spanish program for students in grades K - 3

One grade per classroom

In 2010 Nord Country School finally accomplished our long-term goal of having one classroom for each grade level. This year our student body has grown to 150. We continue to maintain a 20:1 ration in Grades K - 3 and a 25:1 ratio in grades 4 - 6. With wonderful support from parents, staff and community members we continue to offer great educational experiences for our students. Our enrichment programs continue to flourish and grow. Below is a list of enrichment activities we currently provide:

- Classroom Music twice a month for K - 6 graders
- Recorders once a week for 3rd and 4th graders
- Violins once a week for 5th & 6th graders
- Chess Club every other Thursday
- Cribbage Club every other Thursday
- Running Club on Mondays and Wednesdays

- Art twice a month for K - 6 graders
- P.E. twice a week with "Coach" (Dr. Burleson) for K - 6 graders
- Soccer teams that play at Off the Wall Soccer
- Spanish Instruction twice a week for K - 3rd graders
- Garden work and lessons
- A week long environmental program for 6th graders every Spring
- An overnight sailing adventure on the Balclutha for 5th graders every Fall.

We continue to maintain our small school atmosphere. Each morning our students and staff meet to salute the flag and sing a patriotic song. We then have a morning assembly where we can talk about upcoming events, school rules or sing happy birthday to a student. Starting each day in such a caring, positive way helps the students know that they are in a safe, nurturing environment.

Our students support each other. Six of our classes have buddies in another class. It is inspiring to see the 4th graders helping their kindergarten buddies create projects 1st and 3rd graders work in the garden together and help plant different vegetables with Ernie's guidance. Last year the 5th and 2nd graders helped write and illustrate a book that the 2nd graders then shared with the folks at Sycamore Glen Retirement Home. These students form strong bonds with their buddies.

We promote family unity at our different events throughout the year. Some of our on-campus events include: Back to School Night; Mexican Independence Day; Harvest Festival; Halloween Carnival; Stone Soup Day; Loved Ones Day; Pie Auction; Open House; and Carnitas dinner. Many family and community members come to our events held in the evenings or on the weekend.

Parents and Community members volunteer countless hours at our school. The number of volunteers working to help our students and school succeed keep growing. Whether they help in the classroom, in the garden, on the playground or at special events, their support helps convey the message to students of how important school is. We invited over 100 people to our Volunteer Tea last year. This year we have even more volunteers.

Another unique aspect of Nord Country School is our garden. It continues to grow under the care of Ernie Dalton and other volunteers. Students work in the garden at recess weeding, planting and harvesting vegetables and fruit. Ernie also works in the afternoon with several classes teaching lessons on planting, how crops grow and nutrition. We even cultivate our own 1/4 acre pumpkin patch that provides each student with their own pumpkin in October.

## **Term of Charter**

The renewal of the charter must be for five (5) years. Education Code Section 47607(b) states that a charter school shall meet at least one of four criteria prior to receiving a charter renewal. Nord Country School has met the following criteria:

Ranked in deciles 4 to 10 on the API in the prior year or in two of the last three years.

## **Mission**

The mission of Nord Country School is to educate students in a small school environment where they are in close association with caring teachers, staff, parents and community members. Students will receive a quality academic foundation based on core curriculum standards. Students will become self-motivated, life-long learners who are tolerant of differences, and cooperative with others. They will acquire the technological skills and global awareness necessary to succeed in a changing world.

## **Educational Vision**

Nord Country School provides high quality, standards based learning experiences that build character, community and global awareness.

## **Our Philosophy**

We believe that learning is a life-long adventure. We believe in the freedom to wonder, to ask, to explore, to imagine, and to create. We believe that success means doing our best, being our best, and feeling proud of our effort. We believe that every one of us has special talents, and that the talents of each of us help all of us. We believe that learning best occurs in a safe and nurturing environment where the school forms close ties with the students, parents and community members.

## **Calendar and Instructional Minutes**

On a yearly basis Nord Country School's Board of Directors will determine the number of school days in the school calendar. This number will vary between 175 and 180 days depending on funding. Instructional minutes will exceed those required by the State of California.

Grade Level	CA State Requirement	NCS Instructional Minutes Offered	Exceed Requirement by
K	36,000	59,730	23,730
1	50,400	56,130	5,730
2	50,400	56,130	5,730
3	50,400	59,610	9,210
4	54,000	59,610	5,610
5	54,000	59,610	5,610
6	54,000	59,610	5,610

## **ELEMENT 1: Educational Philosophy and Program Governing Law CA Education Code 47605(b)(5)(A)**

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*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 21<sup>st</sup> century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in the program must include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent and lifelong learners.*

### **We value**

- Literate, life-long learners who respect diversity of people and beliefs.
- Academic excellence.
- Self-confidence and compassion.
- Appreciation and respect for the natural world.
- Imagination, personal expression, intrinsic motivation and self direction.
- The use and understanding of modern-day technology.
- The development of creative talents and skills.
- A unifying school, parent and community effort.

### **Target Population**

Nord Country School currently attracts a wide variety of students from all over the city of Chico and surrounding communities. The school seeks ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic diversity and welcomes applicants with a wide range of talents, learning styles and abilities.

The following table demonstrates the diversity at Nord Country School.

	# of Students	% of Students
African American	3	2%
American Indian	2	1%
Asian	1	.5%
Other Pacific Islander	1	.5%
Hispanic or Latino	63	42%
White (not Hispanic)	80	53%
English Learners	26	19%
Free and Reduced Lunch	108	72%

NCS serves grades K-6 with one hundred fifty (150) students at present. The school’s desire is to offer a personal education in which teachers, students, and parents know one another well and collaborate in the learning process. To achieve this goal the school will, within available resources, strive to maintain a low teacher/student ratio keeping 20:1 student to teacher ratio in grades K - 3 and a 25:1 student teacher ratio in grades 4 - 6. Ultimately, however, grade configuration will be determined by available facilities, enrollment and budget constraints.

## **21st Century Education**

Nord Country School will prepare its students for the future by creating exceptional opportunities for them to learn. We will continue to equip our children with strong academic skills. Concurrently, we will help them begin the lifelong process of learning and enable them to find paths that make their lives and the lives of others sustainable, productive and enjoyable.

Our intentionally limited school size, small classes, rural, garden-like setting, and the presence of many supporting volunteers contribute to a safe and nurturing environment. Here, at Nord Country School, students develop a strong foundation of skills in a setting rarely found in public schools.

An essential characteristic of the school's educational program will be its continued emphasis on the balance of intellectual, physical and social/emotional development of its students. The school will continue to offer a broad and balanced curriculum that is both carefully planned and regularly reviewed. The program will offer students continuous opportunities to be engaged in learning and to achieve success in their studies. To promote physical development, the school will continue to maintain an outdoor program including a garden and maintain a focus on student "wellness" (healthy food choices and exercise) that will prepare students to care for their physical and emotional well-being throughout their lives. The school will continue to provide a community that celebrates diversity, emphasizes individual and group responsibility and fosters self-esteem.

Our program identifies and builds on the strengths of our students, their parents, and the local community. Nord Country School will provide a before and after-school program to accommodate the needs of families beyond regular school hours and to extend learning opportunities.

## **How Learning Occurs at NCS**

### **The Program**

Nord Country School (NCS) will offer a site-based, broad and balanced curriculum which includes thorough instruction in the traditional academic disciplines: English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Fine arts, technology, athletics, drama, music, creative thinking, problem solving and environmental education will also continue to be integral parts of the program.

The uniqueness of each child will continue to be honored and an accepting environment will continue to be cultivated where individual interests and skills are encouraged. We recognize and honor the developmental stages of the child as well as their unique learning style.

### **The Teachers**

Nord Country School teachers assume that education is an active, engaging process that encourages students to accept challenges, give their personal best, and learn from their mistakes. Our teachers are an exceedingly able and dedicated group who care deeply about children and are responsive to the needs of individual students and families. They will continue to value the best elements of traditional and innovative education and support the development of every

student's mind, body and spirit. Supported by new technologies and ideas, they are eager to consider fresh approaches and strategies to maintain high standards throughout the curriculum. They are totally committed to the academic and personal growth of students and are willing to put in the extra time to ensure that their students succeed.

For new teachers, NCS will continue to contract with Butte County Office of Education so they may participate in the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program. Each new teacher will be assigned a mentor who, along with the Principal, will provide monthly feedback. The 2 year BTSA program focuses on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession.

### **The Community**

The community of Nord and the surrounding area supports Nord Country School in many ways. Volunteers work in the classroom as well as at special events. Some of our school and community events include our annual Harvest Festival, Love Chico Day, Mexican Independence Day Celebration, Halloween Carnival, Stone Soup Day, Pie Auction Dinner and the Carnitas Dinner.

In our small community there are many low-income residents and roughly 42% of our students speak English and a second language at home. Parents in the community have a wide variety of educational levels. The average education level for our parents is a 2.23 where 1 represents not a high school graduate and 5 represents graduate school (per 'STAR' demographic information).

### **The Parents and the Students**

Much of the school's philosophy lies in the knowledge that children with families that are involved in their child's education are more successful academically. Parents and staff support each other for the success of NCS. Each family is encouraged to volunteer and support NCS in many different ways, including assisting teachers in the classroom, driving on field trips, serving on our PTO board, or working on a committee. Supporting fundraising efforts and attending school functions are other opportunities for parents to contribute to their child's education.

Nord Country School strives to make our families feel welcome and makes every effort to include our families in all aspects of our school. Correspondence with parents, including our weekly newsletter, goes home in both English and Spanish and we translate all parent meetings, including Back to School Night and Open House for our Spanish speaking families.

Students are expected to adhere to high standards of behavior and academic achievement. Character Education will be directly taught and modeled by staff. Students are expected to demonstrate these values in their schoolwork as well as in their interactions with peers and adults.

### **Differentiated Learning**

Nord Country School will continue to provide a standards-based curriculum where teaching focuses on the individual child's needs. Student achievement data will inform instructional decisions. Student academic and behavioral growth will continue to be monitored through a progress monitoring assessment system. It teaches students to develop strong interpersonal skills, empowering them to effectively handle peer situations and relationships.



## **State Standards Based Curriculum**

Nord Country School will continue to ensure that all students, including educationally disadvantaged and low achieving students, master state academic content standards and have the opportunity to learn in a technology-rich environment. Concepts will continue to be taught through thematic units that integrate subjects in cooperative learning groups. Students will move forward at a rate that challenges the students' abilities. NCS integrates fine arts and technology throughout the curriculum. Each classroom is equipped with computer technology that is wired to the Internet for supervised student use.

## **Overview of the Educational Program**

Our approach to educating our students is based on offering a broad and enriched education, aligned with the California State Content Standards. We provide students with curriculum that is thematic and hands-on. We concentrate on character education to promote good citizenship and a healthy lifestyle. We embrace cooperative learning for students and focus on creating an engaging curriculum that emphasizes depth and understanding of essential topics. Smaller class sizes and strong academic, social and intervention support programs helps the staff get to know each student and family well.

NCS will continue to focus on high student performance. Student assessments help drive our instruction. NCS will continue to measure results on standardized tests and other reliable indicators and use this data to improve teaching and learning.

## **Special Education**

NCS is committed to high levels of academic success for all students, including students with disabilities. NCS complies with all applicable State and Federal Laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ("Section 504"), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

In 2009 NCS was approved by the Butte County SELPA to be an independent LEA for Special Education purposes pursuant with Education Code 47641(a). NCS complies with all state and federal laws related to the provision of special education instruction and related services. We follow the SELPA policies and procedures. The facilities used by NCS are accessible to all students with disabilities.

## **Referral for Assessment**

A referral can be made by a parent, guardian, foster parent, teacher or other service provider of the student, consistent with the limitations contained in Federal Law. The referral process includes an examination of pre-screening data (e.g. test scores, teacher observations, grades, response to initial interventions) as well as School Based Intervention Team (SBIT) results and observations. If the SBIT team concludes that assessment is warranted, NCS will obtain written permission from the student's parent or legal guardian in order to provide a formal assessment.

## **Services**

We employ our own Resource teacher who works closely with the classroom teachers to make sure each student is receiving access to the core curriculum and that their accommodations and

modifications are being met in the classroom. This teacher coordinates the Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and the corresponding services to those students. We have contracted with Chico Country Day School for Psychology, Speech, Adaptive PE, SEIS Management Services and Special Education Management Services.

### **Development and Instruction of IEP**

Each student who is referred for formal assessment will have an IEP that documents assessment results and determines eligibility for education services. If the student is eligible for services NCS will provide those services in accordance with the student's IEP. These services will be provided in the least restrictive environment.

Every student at NCS with an IEP will have an IEP team that oversees the implementation and progress of the IEP. The IEP team shall meet the requirements of Education Code Section 56341 which requires the following individuals: 1) one or both of the pupil's parents or guardians, a representative selected by a parent, or both; 2) the student as appropriate; 3) no less than one regular education classroom teacher serving that student; 4) no less than one special education teacher of the pupil or if appropriate not less than one special education provider; 5) an individual who is qualified to interpret the instructional implications of the assessment results; and 6) a representative of the LEA.

If required, NCS will provide an interpreter to ensure non-English speaking families understand and can fully participate in the process. If the parent is unable to attend, school personnel will ensure that the parent is informed and involved in the process through phone or email communications.

### **Individualized Education Program (IEP) Transfers**

In the case where an individual who has an IEP transfers to NCS from a district not operating under the same SELPA in which the individual was enrolled within the same year, NCS will provide the pupil with a free and appropriate public education. These services will be comparable to those described in the previously approved IEP, in consultation with the parents, for a period not to exceed 30 days, by which time NCS will adopt the previously approved IEP or will develop, adopt and implement a new IEP.

### **IEP Review**

An IEP review will be performed in accordance to state and federal law, meeting at least once a year to ensure IEP goals are being met.

### **General Education Section 504**

NCS recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability may, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program. Any student who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits a major life activity including but not limited to learning, is eligible for accommodation by the school.

A 504 team will be assembled by the principal of NCS and shall include parents/guardians, the student where appropriate, the classroom teacher, evaluators, and any other person deemed necessary. The 504 team will review the student's existing records, including academic, social and behavioral records and is responsible for making a determination as to whether an evaluation for 504 services is appropriate. If the student has already been evaluated under IDEA but found ineligible for special education instruction or related services, those evaluations may be used to help determine eligibility under Section 504.

The final determination of whether the student will or will not be identified as a person with a disability is made by the 504 team and notice is given in writing to the parent or guardian of the student in their primary language along with notice of the procedural safeguards available to them. The 504 team shall be responsible for determining what, if any, accommodations or services are needed to ensure that the student receives a free and appropriate public education at NCS.

## **ELEMENT 2: Measureable Student Outcomes and Other Uses of Data CA Education Code 47605(b)(5)(A)**

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*The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. “Pupil outcomes,” for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all students of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school’s educational program.*

Students attending this charter school will continue their education in a world growing ever more complex, interdependent and uncertain. This demanding future will require citizens who are self-confident and broadly educated, who possess ethical standards against which they can judge the choices they will have to make, and who are eager to contribute to a changing world. NCS students will have a well-founded understanding of the interdependence among people and will have the capacity to approach the world with compassion and respect.

Basic intellectual skills will include the ability to think clearly and creatively, to communicate orally and in writing, to find and use information, to problem solve and to develop mathematical reasoning. Students will learn to accept challenges and learn from their mistakes. They will acquire the capacity to work hard, independently and in groups, and to contribute to their community. All curriculum and instruction at NCS will be designed to align to California State Academic Content Standards.

### **Cognitive Processing**

Students will demonstrate complex thinking skills by identifying, accessing, integrating and using available resources and information. They will be able to reason, make good decisions, and solve complex problems in a variety of contexts based upon content knowledge, and by articulating their thinking process.

### **Science & Technology**

Students will demonstrate their ability to define problems, hypothesize, design and carry out investigations, observe, collect, display and analyze data, communicate findings, redefine problems, and revise experimental design using appropriate methods, materials and tools of technology.

### **Communication**

Students will exhibit effective communication through listening, speaking, reading and writing in a critical, reflective, and responsible fashion using a variety of media, including the arts. Student will have an awareness and understanding of multiple perspectives.

### **Social & Emotional Well Being**

Students will exhibit healthy self-esteem by expressing respect for others and making positive choices in interpersonal relationships. Students will develop skills in respect, honesty, teamwork, perseverance, and kindness.

## **Physical**

Students will demonstrate physical skills that will enable them to participate in individual and team activities. They will recognize and pursue healthy habits of fitness, nutrition, sportsmanship, and safety. They will be taught why a healthy lifestyle is important to maintain.

## **OUR EXPECTATIONS & GOALS ARE THAT ALL NCS GRADUATES WILL BE:**

### **Educated individuals who**

- attain a level of knowledge that meets or exceeds California grade level standards
- attain subject area learning standards including, but not limited to, English/Language Arts, History/Social Science, Science, Math, Health, P.E., and Visual and Performing Arts
- use a variety of sources effectively to access information

### **Contributing members of society who**

- possess and apply the skills to be productive in the workforce, family and community
- have the skills to adjust to new situations and ideas
- adapt to a changing world
- work effectively in a team setting
- analyze, interpret and communicate information effectively
- serve as positive role-models

### **Critical, reflective thinkers and problem solvers who**

- gather, analyze and process information from a variety of sources
- organize relevant information, make connections, and draw conclusions
- work individually and cooperatively towards effective solutions

### **Informed, responsible individuals who**

- recognize and appreciate individual and cultural uniqueness
- contribute to solutions of community and worldwide issues
- take positive action on issues affecting our environment
- demonstrate teamwork and/or leadership skills
- exhibit mutual respect
- set, prioritize and revise personal goals

### **Effective communicators who**

- understand and convey written, oral and visual ideas and information
- listen and ask questions

**Effective users of technology who**

- are computer literate
- are able to use the internet appropriately for various uses including research
- are able to create, revise and save documents
- are able to use a variety of technological tools to enhance learning
- are able to assess the validity of information on the internet

**Confident individuals with positive self-esteem who**

- have respect for themselves and others
- have a clear, realistic and positive view of self
- accept differing values and belief systems in their interactions with others
- are self directed, lifelong learners.

Multiple measures of student performance have been developed to accurately monitor student progress toward achieving grade level standards and benchmarks. Assessments are formative and used in progress monitoring, as well as summative to measure student attainment of benchmark and year end grade level standards. The school will continue to participate fully in the California State standardized testing in all required grade levels.

First trimester report cards will continue to be discussed with parents during individual conferences in the Fall. At the second and third trimesters the school's standard's based report cards will be sent home to parents.

The following table shows the school's goals.

Objectives	Measurement Tools
Meet the Academic Performance Index (API) growth target	API data published by the CDE
Ongoing parent satisfaction with the school	Annual parent surveys
94.5% attendance rate for all students	Monthly attendance reports
80% of our students will achieve a 3 or 4 on the school's standards based report cards	Teacher/Curriculum developed assessments
All students will demonstrate that they are tolerant of differences and cooperative with others	Teacher observations using positive discipline principles

### **ELEMENT 3: Assessment of Measurable Pupil Outcomes CA Education Code 47605(b)(5)(C)**

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*The method by which pupil progress is to be measured in meeting pupil outcomes.*

The school will continue to use performance, authentic and standardized testing methods to demonstrate that the students have obtained desired skills and knowledge. All testing methods required by the state of California will be used by NCS. Assessments will include annual results from the Statewide Testing and Reporting (STAR) program and any other statewide standards or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools.

Furthermore, NCS will continue to establish ongoing communication with parents using, but not limited to, phone and personal conferences, weekly progress reports and standards based report cards given to students three times a year.

NCS will continue to provide the CUSD Board of Education with an annual performance report focusing on overall student and teacher performance, progress towards school goals, and the financial condition of the school.

The following critical questions will continue to guide our work:

- How do we help students articulate their learning process?
- How do we help students evaluate their own learning?
- How do we measure student gains in learning other than standardized testing?
- How do we regularly examine student work to ensure students are mastering grade level standards?
- How do we use informal and formative assessments to determine student needs and guide classroom lesson planning?

#### **English Language Learners**

English learners are faced with the challenge of having to simultaneously learn a second language and the core curriculum. They have not fully developed sufficient English skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing to master standards at their grade level. Many steps are taken to provide additional support for these students so they can be successful.

At NCS all students with a Home Language Survey designation other than English will be tested at the beginning of the school year. Several assessments are administered including the federally and state mandated California English Language Test (CELDT) in order to identify new students who are English learners and to determine their level of English proficiency. This test will also be administered annually in order to monitor any progress made by students who have already been identified as English learners in previous years. Students will continue taking this test until

they are reclassified as Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) based on the criteria established by NCS.

Teachers at Nord Country School will continue to use specialized instructional strategies that are designed to help ELs such as Guided Language Acquisition Development (GLAD) and Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE). Thematic instruction will allow for structured English immersion where the curriculum and presentation is designed for children who are learning the language.

On-going indicators of student progress in language development include CELDT testing, CST scores in English Language Arts, benchmark assessments, curriculum developed tests, and software program tests. In addition, the ELD teacher will frequently communicate with the other teachers so student progress and needs can be discussed. English learners will continue to receive additional and appropriate services until they meet objective reclassification criteria.

### **High Achieving Students**

Nord Country School will provide support and challenges for high achieving students. Lessons will be individually designed to ensure higher order thinking skills and productive collaborative learning. The Language Arts and Math curriculum has distinct levels for approaching students, on level students and those students who are working beyond grade level. The curriculum for those working above grade level keeps higher achieving students active and engaged.

### **Low Achieving Students**

Universal screening using DIBELS will be conducted in Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade in order to detect any learning difficulties early. An RTI three tier approach will be used with initial interventions beginning in the regular education classroom. Frequent progress monitoring assessments will be used to determine if students have progressed enough to exit an intervention group, or if there is not sufficient progress, then referral to a more intensive program will be made. More intensive interventions could include pull-out programs such as Read Naturally, SIPPS, Go Phonics, and Barton Reading and Spelling.

If further intervention is warranted, a student study team (SST) will be convened. The SST will include parents, teacher, and appropriate administrative personnel. If the student study team finds that the initial intervention plan does not adequately meet the student's needs, it will recommend that student for formal special education assessment. Parental permission is necessary before any assessment can be administered.

See Appendix I for a list of intervention curriculum.



## **ELEMENT 4: Legal Issues, Governance and Parental Involvement CA Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(D)**

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*The governance structure of the school including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement.*

### **Legal Issues**

Nord Country School will continue to pay CUSD for actual costs of supervisorial oversight of up to 3% of the Charter's revenue as defined by Education Code 47613(f). Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604, CUSD in performing its oversight of the school as required by Education Code Section 47602.32, shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of the school or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the school so long as it complies with all of its supervision and oversight responsibilities under the Charter Schools Act of 1992.

The charter school and district shall enter into a lease agreement. The lease shall specify that Chico Unified School District is responsible for all deferred maintenance, in accordance with current law, at a level comparable with major maintenance services provided for similar facilities. NCS is responsible for routine maintenance of the facilities, including janitorial, grounds keeping, minor maintenance, and utility costs. The specific lease terms for this facility will be negotiated in an operational agreement to be developed by NCS and CUSD. For a list of training and professional development see Appendix D.

### **Governance**

The school is governed by the Nord Country School Board. The Board of Directors will be composed of a broad cross-section of the school community and the community at-large, including parents, professionals, and community leaders. These members attend training in effective board practices including Brown Act and Conflict of Interest conducted by a legal professional.

The number of people serving on the Board of Directors and the length of terms will be specified in the NCS Bylaws. The Board will consist of at least the following members: two (2) parents nominated by the school's parent community and elected by the Board of Directors, three (3) community members, nominated and elected by the board, one (1) classroom teacher nominated by the teaching staff at a regularly scheduled staff meeting and elected by the board. The Board of Directors reserves the right to amend the Bylaws to increase the number of directors at any regularly scheduled board meeting. A quorum by the board shall be a majority of the voting members. In the event that legislature passes and the Governor signs a bill that would bar employees of charter schools from serving on the Board of a Charter School, the petitioners agree to amend the governance portion of this charter to remove employees from the Board of Nord Country School and to amend the Bylaws of the nonprofit corporation accordingly.

The Board of Directors is responsible for making collaborative decisions about the school's governance guided by the establishment of operating policies and procedures and NCS Board of

Director By-laws. Major roles and responsibilities will include establishing and approving all major educational and operation policies, approving all major contracts, approving the school's annual budget, overseeing the school's fiscal affairs, selecting and evaluating the top administrative staff, and overseeing fundraising activities.

Any Board member who has a conflict of interest or whose child is before the Board for disciplinary reasons, must abstain from voting and refrain from attempting to influence the decision by discussing the matter with Board members or staff responsible for making recommendations to the Board on the matter.

Modifications to current or existing NCS policies will be presented to the Board of Directors for approval. Specific procedures for considering amendments to existing policies will be addressed in the operating policies and procedures and the Board of Director Bylaws. The NCS Board of Directors and the CUSD Board of Trustees must approve all material revisions to NCS' Charter.

The NCS Board of Directors addresses personnel issues related to the Principal. Personnel issues pertaining to other employees of NCS shall be addressed by the Principal. The Principal is accountable to the Board of Directors and will work closely with the Teacher in Charge to insure a smooth functioning school.

### **Parent Communication**

Parents are a vital and important resource to the school. Their participation as partners in the educational program and their support of the program's philosophy are critical. Parents are encouraged to volunteer at school and to support their students at home to achieve their maximum potential. Working together we can achieve educational excellence in the development of the whole child.

A separate Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) will provide support for academic programs by organizing volunteer and service activities. These activities will focus on fostering community spirit, facilitating the transition of new families into the school, promoting the school in the larger community, and fundraising.

Parents will be given a Parent & Student Handbook every year, which outlines the role NCS encourages our families to take in the educational process as it relates to assisting the school, helping their student(s) with homework, attending parent meetings, and assisting in the fundraising activities of the school. Sensitive to the busy schedules of parents, staff members and the PTO will explore ways that all parents can contribute to the program.

See Appendix E for Parent- Student Handbook.

## **ELEMENT 5: Employee Qualifications**

### **CA Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(E)**

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*The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the school.*

#### **Administrative Qualifications**

The Administrators of Nord Country School should possess leadership abilities, a comprehensive educational vision that is consistent with NCS' mission and educational program, skill in hiring and supervising excellent teachers, technology and data-analysis experience, and, if possible, business and legal experience.

The minimum criteria for administration candidates include: a B.A. degree or its equivalent, relevant educational experience after college, experience supervising certificated personnel and positive references from the most recent places of employment, college or graduate school.

#### **Teacher Qualifications**

Nord Country School teachers shall adhere to California Education Code Section 47605(1), all California Commission on Teacher Credentialing requirements, and the applicable provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act. They will hold appropriate California Teaching certificates, permits or other documents required by law.

All hiring processes will insure that all teachers are properly credentialed with emphasis placed on teachers being NCLB “highly qualified” and CLAD certified. Nord Country School will focus on competency within the standards for the teaching profession. Teachers will also continue to:

- Integrate new, reliable research into methodology and curriculum as appropriate.
- Be able to be facilitators of learning rather than dispensers of knowledge and be sensitive to all students’ needs.
- Be creative and resourceful in their teaching method.
- Have a high level of commitment to the program and its philosophy.
- Be team members. They will work with parents as partners to execute the program.
- Teachers will be flexible, resourceful and imaginative.

NCS may also employ non-certificated instructional staff in any case where a prospective staff member has an appropriate mix of subject matter expertise, professional experience, and the demonstrated ability to work successfully in an instructional capacity in non-core courses and activities.

#### **Aide Qualifications**

Aides will continue to meet all requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Aides shall possess experience working with students, preferably in a group setting. They shall relate to students, parents, and staff in a positive and professional manner and communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing. They will assist students in academic subjects, work effectively with students in classrooms and assist them in living skills. They will continue to assist in maintaining records and charts on individual students, attendance records, test scores and progress of student learning. All aides will be under the supervision of credentialed teachers.

## **ELEMENT 6: Health and Safety Procedures**

### **CA Education Code**

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*The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures will include the requirement that each employee of the school will furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described in Education Code Section 44237.*

NCS meets all local building codes and all safety regulations. This includes adherence to local fire regulations, safety inspections, earthquake drills, visitor control, and the NCS disaster plan. In addition, a safety committee, consisting of parents, staff and school administrators will conduct periodic classroom and grounds safety inspections. The safety committee will have the authority to make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding changes necessary to improve NCS' safety and will adhere to the safety plan adopted by the NCS Board of Directors.

NCS implemented a comprehensive set of health, safety, and risk management policies. These policies are developed in consultation with the school's insurance carriers and attorneys and at a minimum address the following topics:

- A requirement that all enrolling students and staff provide records documenting immunizations to the extent required for enrollment in non-charter public schools.
- Policies that state that NCS will provide for the screening of students' vision and hearing to the extent required if the student attended a non charter public school.
- Policies relating to the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines.
- Policies and procedures for response to natural disasters and emergencies, including fires, earthquakes and hazardous material spills.
- Policies relating to preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens.
- Policies requiring that instructional and administrative staff receive training in appropriate "first responder" training or its equivalent.
- 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.
- A policy establishing that the school functions as a drug, alcohol, and tobacco free workplace.
- A requirement that each employee of the school submits to a criminal background checks and furnishes a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Section 44237.
- A requirement that each employee will be tested for tuberculosis prior to commencing employment and working with

These policies are incorporated as appropriate into the school's student and staff handbooks and are reviewed on an ongoing basis in the school's staff development efforts and governing board policies.

## **ELEMENT 7: Means to Achieve Racial and Ethnic Balance** **CA Education Code 47605(b)(5)(G)**

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*The means by which the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted.*

NCS has a student recruitment strategy that includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following elements or strategies to ensure a racial and ethnic balance among students that is reflective of the district:

- An enrollment process that is scheduled and adopted to include a timeline that allows for a broad-based recruiting and application process.
- The development of promotional and informational material that appeals to all of the various racial and ethnic groups represented in the district.
- The appropriate development of promotional and informational materials in languages other than English to appeal to limited English proficient populations.
- The distribution of promotional and informational materials to a broad variety of community groups and the agencies that serve the various racial, ethnic, and interest groups represented in the district.
- Conduct outreach in several areas of the district to reach prospective students and parents.

An open enrollment policy will continue to maintain a diversified balance among students of NCS. We welcome any child equally, regardless of ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, perceived sexual orientation, home language, socioeconomic profile or any other characteristics described in Education Code Section 220.

## **ELEMENT 8: Enrollment Requirements** **CA Education Code 47605(b)(5)(H)**

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*The Admission requirements, if applicable.*

NCS will continue to actively recruit a diverse student population from the community and surrounding areas who understand and value the school's mission and are committed to the school's instructional and operational philosophy. Admission will be requested by completing and submitting a registration form. If there are more applicants than available seats in a particular grade level a waiting list will be maintained. Students will continue to be placed on the waiting list based upon the order in which their name is drawn from the lottery. A lottery will be held by public random drawing.

NCS will continue to be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. NCS does not charge tuition and does not discriminate on the basis of any characteristic described in Education Code Section 220. Enrollment preference in ranked order in the case of a public random lottery shall be as follows:

- Children of staff members.
- Kindergarten siblings of currently enrolled students.
- New kindergarten students (lottery).
- Re-entry students with a planned leave of absence.
- Students currently on the waiting list.

Nord Country School serves students in Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Grade configuration is determined by available facilities and enrollment. Parents who intend to re-enroll their children must notify Nord Country School office by March of the current school year.

Parents and students will continue to be given handbooks at the beginning of the academic year that describes the educational philosophy of Nord Country School. Parents will continue to be encouraged by NCS to support the school in a variety of ways, including volunteering in the classroom, driving on field trips, or assisting in fundraising efforts.

All students are required to follow the school rules and policies regarding student behavior. All students are afforded the protections under written policies adopted by the NCS Board of Directors with respect to nondiscrimination.

## **ELEMENT 9: Annual Audit and Fiscal Issues**

### **CA Education Code 47605(b)(5)(I)**

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*The manner in which an annual, independent, financial audit 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.*

Nord Country School is a 501(c)3 not for profit corporation. NCS will continue to comply with all state laws pertaining to financial reporting to CUSD and the State of California. As a non-profit corporation, the NCS Board of Directors will select an independent auditor and oversee the completion of an annual audit of the school's financial affairs.

NCS may receive funding in accordance with Education Code, Charter Schools Act and other appropriate laws, and will continue to opt to receive funding directly from the State. These funds may include, but are not limited to Average Daily Attendance (ADA), the California State Lottery; Categorical block and non-block grants; class size reduction funds if applicable; charter school funding from the California Department of Education; the federal government or other sources; and any other available or mutually agreeable sources of funding for programs. When applicable, NCS may seek equitable distribution of local sales taxes and other similar funding sources.

As required by 2002 Assembly Bill 1994, Nord Country School acknowledges that the School must commence operations by September 30 to be eligible for that fiscal year's ADA-based state general purpose revenue.

#### **Audits**

Nord Country School will facilitate an annual independent audit of the school's financial affairs. The NCS Board will select and oversee an auditor with appropriate education audit experience. The audit will verify the accuracy of the School's financial statements, attendance and enrollment accounting practices and review the school's internal controls. The audit will be conducted in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applicable to NCS. It is anticipated that the annual audit will be completed four months after the close of the fiscal year and that a copy of the auditor's findings will be forwarded to the District, the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller and to the CDE by December 15th each year.

The Principal, or the Principal's designee, along with an audit committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the School Board with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Charter School Board will submit a report to the District describing how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved to the satisfaction of the District. Any disputes regarding the resolution of audit exceptions and deficiencies will be referred to the dispute resolution process contained in this Charter.

#### **Financial Reporting**

NCS will continue to provide reports to the District as follows, and may provide additional fiscal reports as requested by the District:

1. By July 1, a preliminary budget for the current fiscal year.
2. By December 15, an interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through October 31. Additionally, on December 15, a copy of the NCS' annual, independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year shall be delivered to the District, State Controller, State Department of Education and County Superintendent of Schools.
3. By March 15, a second interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through January 31.
4. By September 15, a final unaudited report for the full prior year. The report submitted to the District will include an annual statement of all NCS' receipts and expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.

NCS will compile and provide to the district an annual performance report. This report will, at a minimum, include the following data:

- An analysis of whether student performance is meeting the goals specified in Element 2.
- A summary of major decisions and policies established by the school's governing board during the year.
- Data on the level of parent involvement in the school's governance and summary data from an annual parent and student satisfaction survey.
- Data regarding the number of staff working at the school and their qualifications
- A copy of the school's health and safety policies and/or a summary of any major changes to those policies during the year.
- Information demonstrating whether the school implemented the means listed in charter Element 7 to achieve a racially and ethnically balanced student population.
- An overview of the school's admissions practices during the year and data regarding the numbers of students enrolled the number on waiting lists, and the numbers of students expelled and/or suspended.
- Analyses of the effectiveness of the school's internal and external dispute mechanisms and data on the number and resolution of disputes and complaints.
- Other information regarding the education program and the administrative, legal and governance operation of the school relative to compliance with the terms of the charter generally.

NCS and CUSD will jointly develop an annual site visitation process and protocol to enable CUSD to gather information needed to confirm the school's performance and compliance with the terms of this charter.



## **ELEMENT 10: Pupil Suspension and Expulsions**

### **CA Education Code 47605(b)(5)(J)**

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*The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled.*

Nord Country School's comprehensive student discipline policy has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well-being of all students. When the policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction.

Staff will continue to enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently amongst all students. This policy and its Administrative procedures will be printed and distributed as part of the Student Handbook and will clearly describe discipline expectations.

Discipline includes but is not limited to advising and counseling students, conferring with parents/guardians, detention during and after school hours, the use of alternative educational environments, suspension and expulsion.

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of, physical pain on a student. For purposes of the policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

The Principal or Principal's designee will continue to ensure that students and their parent/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures. The notice shall state that this policy and administrative procedures are available on request at the Principal's office. Suspended or expelled students will be excluded from all school and school related activities unless otherwise agreed upon.

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to regular education students except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. The School will follow Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, IDEA, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and all federal and state laws when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such students.

NCS will include suspension and expulsion data in its annual performance report. Students who present an immediate threat to health and safety may also be immediately suspended by the Principal or their designee and later expelled by the NCS Board of Directors upon recommendation by the Hearing Officer. See Appendix G for a full copy of the Suspension and Expulsion policy

**ELEMENT 11: Retirement System**  
**CA Education Code 47605(b)(5)(K)**

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*The manner by which staff members of the Charter School will be covered by the State Teachers' Retirement System, the Public Employees' Retirement System, or the Federal Social Security program.*

Nord Country School has the responsibility to provide retirement benefits to its employees. Certificated staff participates in the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS) and Classified staff participates in the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) and/or the federal social security system. Nord Country School will continue to make contributions for workers' compensation insurance, unemployment insurance, and any other payroll obligations of an employer.

**ELEMENT 12: Attendance Alternatives**  
**CA Education Code 47605(b)(5)(L)**

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*The public school attendance alternative for pupils residing within the District who choose not to attend charter schools.*

Nord Country School is a public school of choice. The students living in Nord can choose between attending NCS or their school of residence.

Parents/guardians are hereby informed that students have no right to admission in a particular school in any district as a consequence of enrollment in NCS.

**ELEMENT 13: Right to Return as District Employee**  
**CA Education Code 47605(b)(5)(M)**

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*A description of the rights of any CUSD employee upon leaving the employment of the District to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the District after employment at a charter school.*

Nord Country School staff that has left permanent status employment at Chico Unified School District to work at NCS shall not have the right to return to a comparable position in the district unless these return rights are granted by CUSD or other local education agencies.

Teachers hired at NCS outside of Chico Unified School District have no rights to employment within CUSD in the event of the closure of NCS, their dismissal or the voluntary termination of said teacher.

## **ELEMENT 14: Dispute Resolution Procedures**

### **CA Education Code 47605(b)(5)(N)**

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*The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to the provisions of the charter.*

#### **Intent**

The intent of this dispute resolution process is to (1) resolve disputes within the school pursuant to the school's policies, (2) minimize the oversight burden on the district, (3) ensure a fair and timely resolution to disputes, and (4) frame a charter oversight and renewal process and timeline so as to avoid disputes regarding oversight and renewal matters.

#### **Public Comments**

The staff and governing board members of NCS and CUSD agree to attempt to resolve all disputes regarding this charter pursuant to the terms of this section. Both shall refrain from public commentary regarding any disputes until the matter has progressed through the dispute resolution process.

#### **Disputes Arising from within the School**

Disputes arising from within NCS, including all disputes among and between students, staff, parents, volunteers, advisors, partner organizations, community members, and governing board members of the school, shall be resolved pursuant to policies and processes developed by the school.

The districts shall not intervene in any such internal disputes without the consent of the governing board or Board of Directors of NCS for resolution pursuant to the school's policies. The district agrees not to intervene or become involved in the dispute unless the dispute has given the district reasonable cause to believe that a violation of this charter or related laws or agreements has occurred, or unless the governing board of the school has requested the district to intervene in the dispute.

#### **Disputes between NCS and CUSD**

In the event NCS or CUSD have disputes regarding the terms of this charter or any other issue regarding the school and grantor's relationship, both parties agree to follow the process outlined below.

In the event of a dispute between NCS and CUSD, the staff and governing board members of the school and district agree to first frame the issue in written format and refer the issue to the Superintendent of the district and Board of Directors of NCS. In the event that CUSD believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter, this shall be specifically noted in the written dispute statement.

The Principal and Superintendent shall informally meet and confer in a timely fashion in an attempt to resolve the dispute. In the event that this informal meeting fails to resolve the dispute, both parties shall identify two governing board members from their respective boards who shall

jointly meet with the Superintendent of the district and the Principal and attempt to resolve the dispute. If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the Superintendent and the Principal shall meet to jointly identify a neutral, third party arbitrator. The format of the arbitration session shall be developed jointly by the Superintendent and the Principal, and shall incorporate informal rules of evidence and procedure unless both parties agree otherwise. The findings or recommendations of the arbitrator shall be non-binding, unless the governing boards of the school and CUSD jointly agree to bind themselves.

### **Oversight, Reporting, Revocation, and Renewal**

The Chico Unified School District may inspect or observe any part of the school at any time, but shall provide reasonable notice to the Principal of NCS prior to any observation or inspection. CUSD shall provide such notice at least three working days prior to the inspection or observation unless the school's board or Principal agrees otherwise. Inspection, observation, monitoring, and oversight activities may not be assigned or subcontracted to a third party by CUSD without the mutual consent of the governing board of NCS.

If the governing board of CUSD believes it has cause to revoke this charter, the board agrees to notify the governing board of NCS in writing, noting the specific reasons for which the charter may be revoked, and grant NCS reasonable time to respond to the notice and take appropriate corrective action.

**ELEMENT 15: Exclusive Employer  
CA Education Code 47605(b)(5)(O)**

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*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)*

Nord Country School will continue to be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for the purposes of the Education Employment Relations Act.

## **ELEMENT 16: School Closure**

### **CA Education Code 47605(b)(5)(P)**

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*A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedure 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.*

As NCS is operated by a non-profit public benefit corporation. Should the corporation dissolve with the closure of NCS, the Board will follow the procedures set forth in the California Corporations Code for the dissolution of a non-profit public benefit corporation and file all necessary filings with the appropriate state and federal agencies.

#### **Documentation of Closure Activities**

Closure of NCS will be documented by official action of the Board of Directors. The action will identify the reason for closure. The official action will also identify an entity and person or persons responsible for closure-related activities.

If it is feasible to do so while still maintaining a viable and appropriate educational program, charter school closure will occur at the end of an academic year.

#### **Notification of Closure**

The Board of Directors will promptly notify parents and students of NCS, the District, the Butte County Office of Education, the Charter School's SELPA, the retirement systems in which the Charter School's employees participate (e.g. PERS, STRS), and the California Department of Education of the closure as well as the effective date of the closure. This notice will include the names of and contact information for the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure; the pupils' school districts of residence; and the manner in which parents/guardians may obtain copies of pupil records. The notice will also include information on assistance in transferring the students to another appropriate school and a process for the transfer of all student records.

#### **Student and School Records**

As applicable, NCS will provide parents, students and the District with copies of all appropriate student records and will otherwise assist students in transferring to their next school. All transfers of students records will be made in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") 20 U.S.C. §1232g. All records shall be transferred to the District upon NCS closure. If the District will not or cannot store the records, NCS shall work with the County Office of Education to determine a suitable alternative location for storage.

All state assessment results, special education records, and personnel records will be transferred to and maintained by the entity responsible for closure-related activities in accordance with applicable law.



### **Financial Close-Out**

As soon as reasonably practical, the Charter School will prepare final financial records. NCS will also have an independent audit completed within six months of closure. NCS will pay for the final audit. The audit will be prepared by a qualified Certified Public Accountant selected by NCS and will be provided to CUSD promptly upon its completion. The final audit will include an accounting of all financial assets including: cash and accounts receivable; an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value; an accounting of the liabilities, including accounts payable; any reduction in apportionments as a result of audit findings or other investigations; loans; unpaid staff compensation; and an assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to NCS.

NCS will complete and file any annual reports required pursuant to Education Code section 47604.33.

### **Dissolution of Assets**

On closure of NCS, all assets, including but not limited to all leaseholds, personal property, intellectual property and all ADA apportionments and other revenues generated by the students attending NCS, remain the sole property of NCS and shall be distributed in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation upon the dissolution of the non-profit public benefit corporation to another California public educational entity. Any assets acquired from the District or District property will be promptly returned upon NCS closure. The distribution shall include return of any grant funds and restricted categorical funds to their source in accordance with the terms of the grant or state and federal law, as appropriate, which may include submission of final expenditure reports for entitlement grants and the filing of any required Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as well as the return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any conditions established when the donation of such materials or property was accepted.