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# Camino Polytechnic – A Science and Natural Resources Charter School Charter

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## Required Elements Reference Guide

In order to assist the reviewers of this document that all requirements of law have been met, the following Reference Guide shows the page number of each required element in Education Code 47605.

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Approved by the District Board of Trustees: December 12, 2017

## **Definition of Terms**

Hereinafter, the term “District” refers to the Camino Union School District, “Charter School” refers to Camino Polytechnic, A Science and Natural Resources Charter School, “District Board” or “CUSD Board” refers to the Camino Union School District Governing Board.

“Natural resource based education” is education about the natural resources, for the natural resources, and in the environment that promotes an understanding of, rich and active experience in, and an appreciation for the dynamic interactions of:

- The Earth’s physical and biological systems;
- The dependency of our social and economic systems on these natural systems;
- The scientific and human dimensions of natural resource issues; and
- The positive and negative consequences, both intended and unintended, of the interactions between human-created and natural systems.

## **1. Affirmations/Assurances**

The Camino Polytechnic, A Science and Natural Resources Charter School is non-sectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. The Charter School does not charge tuition, and no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code in any program or activity.

The Charter School admits all pupils who wish to attend the Charter School. Admission shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the pupil, parent or legal guardian. If enrollment exceeds capacity, a random public drawing shall be held pursuant to the process outlined in "Admissions Requirements" herein.

If a pupil is expelled or leaves the charter school without graduating 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. This paragraph applies only to pupils subject to compulsory full-time education pursuant to Education Code Section 48200.

## **2. Description of The School's Educational Program**

Camino Polytechnic, A Science and Natural Resources Charter School (Camino Poly) provides an academically rigorous standards-based curriculum using natural resource based education as an integrating context for learning across the curriculum. The school uniquely uses its surroundings and community to make the educational program relevant, team-focused and community-oriented. Students learn in an environment where what they do complements and extends what they learn.

Through the natural resources based focus, students learn standards-based content that is integrated into relevant themes; increase and practice problem-solving and critical thinking skills in school and community natural resources contexts; develop and practice life skills such as cooperation, team work, community-service and interpersonal communication; and gain an appreciation and understanding of how the community and natural surroundings are interrelated. The school provides a novel way of applying research on the benefits of local and relevant natural resource based education, implications of brain-based research on active learning for increasing student engagement, research on effective teams, research on effective instructional strategies, and research on effective assessment.

The Charter School acknowledges and agrees that it must comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (2013) (Local Control Funding Formula), as they may be amended from time to time, which include the requirement that Charter School shall annually submit a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)/annual update to the Camino Union School District on or before July 1. In accordance with Education Code sections 47604.33 and 47606.5, The Charter School shall annually update its goals and annual actions to achieve those goals identified in the charter using the Local Control and Accountability Plan template adopted by the State Board of Education, as it may be changed from time to time. The Charter School shall comply with all requirements of Education Code section 47606.5, including but not limited to the requirement that Charter School "shall consult with teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, parents, and pupils in developing the local control and accountability plan and annual update to the local control and accountability plan." (Ed. Code § 47606.5(e).)

Students may participate through a full day on-site program or through an independent study option.

### 1. Population served

The Charter School serves students in kindergarten through eighth grade.  
Enrollment preference is given to students residing within the Camino Union

School District boundaries but enrollment is open to all students. The Charter School's target population is students who are not adequately engaged or motivated in a traditional education program. This includes students who would thrive in an experiential, relevant, community-based, interdisciplinary, collaborative and active learning environment. Students who prefer an independent study learning environment have opportunities to work collaboratively with peers on natural resources based education grounded in the community.

## 2. What it means to be an educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

An educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is a lifelong learner with the skills, perspectives, knowledge and discipline to be a contributing and responsible citizen at the local, national and global level who acts as a steward for others and living things. An educated person is a self-motivated learner with the skills to work independently and collaboratively.

## 3. Charter school beliefs and vision

### a. Beliefs

We believe that:

- All students can achieve high levels of academic success when the school is organized for student success. Student success is ensured by clearly articulating performance standards, holding high expectations, providing high quality instruction, organizing curriculum to engage or 'hook' students' interests, giving students ongoing feedback on their progress, providing targeted and small group direct instruction when a student is not progressing and allowing students the flexibility to work from their strengths.
- Students need to be able to work independently and as a member of a team. The best way to learn team skills is to work cooperatively with other students and adults on community-based projects that can only be accomplished with teamwork.
- Parents have meaningful opportunities for contributing to their child's education by working in partnership with teachers.
- Students have increased motivation to learn academic standards when these standards are integrated into interdisciplinary themes and imbedded in consequential projects and problems that are relevant to students and the community.

- Students grow up to be contributing members of society when they are engaged in meaningful and relevant community-based projects.
- The educational program prepares students to become competent independent learners and responsible global citizens who are motivated to serve as stewards of natural resources.

### Vision

The Charter School stimulates students' desire to learn through a rigorous interdisciplinary curriculum and an expectation that students apply problem-solving skills and higher level thinking skills to challenging and meaningful local contexts. Students work independently and as teams on authentic learning experiences.

Students work to acquire the knowledge, skills, perspectives, and practices they need to participate as responsible citizens at the local, national, and global level, caring for each other and all living things. The education system seeks to fulfill its critical role in both delivering effective natural resources education, and modeling responsible practices for natural resource use.

Natural resources education provides a rich context for learning that engages all students in applying their knowledge and skills to real-world situations through an integrated approach, based on the resource and sustainability concepts found in all relevant subject areas. Such a context combines classroom learning with experiential learning, and provide opportunities to interact with, develop caring and concern for, and take action in the places where students live, study, and play. It provides connections between the curriculum and the world around them, allowing students to directly observe impacts and issues, and exposing students to the many points of view that must be considered in making choices to preserve the health of the natural ecosystems.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Shaping Our Schools, Shaping Our Future, Report of the Working Group on Environmental Education, Ontario, Canada, June 2007*

#### 4.How learning best occurs

##### a.Philosophy statement

Students learn best when they are interested and engaged. When subjects are integrated within a meaningful context and there are opportunities for students to see, feel and touch the world they live in, then learning increases.

Natural resources education seeks to promote an appreciation and understanding of, and concern for, natural resources, and to foster informed, engaged, and responsible citizenship. Effective natural resources education incorporates problem solving, hands-on learning, action projects, scientific inquiry, higher order thinking, cooperative learning, and employs relevant subject matter and topics that actively engage students in the educational process. Natural resources literacy is an important outcome of natural resources education. A literate student will have the knowledge and perspectives required to understand public issues and place them in a meaningful natural resources context.

Natural Resources education also embraces education for sustainability. There is an explicit focus on ensuring that the ways in which humans use or affect ecosystems does not compromise the natural ability of ecosystems' renewal or regeneration. Effective education for sustainability stresses the need for highly developed systems thinking and futures thinking.

Natural resources education draws on effective learning strategies – including inquiry, problem solving, critical thinking, and assessing alternatives - that engage students personally in their own learning, connect them to the world they live in, and give them the systems thinking and futures thinking they will need to become discerning, active citizens<sup>2</sup>.

Natural resources education not only helps children become better educated, but it also helps them become better citizens. By addressing real community issues, natural resources education nurtures community involvement and active citizenship – the backbone of our democratic government. Natural resource based education emphasizes depth of understanding over breadth, uses group work, and cultivates

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<sup>2</sup> Working Group on Environmental Education, 2007

critical-thinking and problem solving skills. By applying natural resources education to real-life problems, children are given authentic opportunities to provide service for their communities and solve local problems. Thus, in addition to benefiting their community, students gain analytical skills that are indispensable for higher education and adulthood.

#### b. Rationale for instructional delivery

The school vision and instructional delivery model was developed from research on the benefits of natural resource-based education, implications of brain-based research on instruction, research on effective teams, research on effective instructional strategies, and research on effective assessment.

*Education and the Environment: Strategic Initiatives for Enhancing Education in California*, published by the California Department of Education in 2002, summarizes the research that supports the goal of increasing student engagement and motivation to learn through natural resources education:

- A growing body of evidence is proving that education that is based in the local environment engages students, producing direct academic and personal benefits.

For example, research shows that natural resource based education improves students' academic performance and test scores, reduces discipline and attendance problems and increases their ability to transfer knowledge to new contexts.

- Natural resource based education connects many subjects within the curriculum. Its interdisciplinary nature pulls together the existing curriculum into a sensible and tangible whole. Learning parallels the "real world" by combining academic disciplines (English and language arts, mathematics, science, history and social science, visual and performing arts) through investigating the local environment, defining and assessing issues, and creating and communicating solutions.
- Classroom-based case studies of 60 schools conducted by the State Education and Environment Roundtable<sup>3</sup> provide evidence that good natural resource-based education improves education in general and decreases discipline and attendance problems. A March 2000 study<sup>4</sup> paired eight conventionally structured California schools with eight demographically similar schools that

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<sup>3</sup> Lieberman, G., & Hoody, L. (1998). *Closing the Achievement Gap: Using the Environment as an Integrating Context for Learning*. San Diego, Calif.: State Education and Environment Roundtable. <sup>4</sup>

Lieberman, G., & Hoody, L. (2000). *California Student Assessment Project: The Effects of Environment-based Education on Student Achievement*. San Diego, Calif.: State Education and Environment Roundtable.

- context for learning. These schools emphasize the local community and natural had reorganized their curriculum to use the environment as an integrating surroundings as the primary venue for learning. Students in schools using the natural resource-based model earned higher scores on standardized tests than their counterparts who did not have the natural resource based focus.
- The National Environmental Education and Training Foundation (NEETF) and North American Association for Environmental Education<sup>5</sup> identifies the following benefits for schools using natural resource based education as the central focus of the academic program:
  - Reading scores improve
  - Mathematics scores improve.
  - Students perform better in science and social studies.
  - Students develop the ability to transfer their knowledge from familiar to unfamiliar contexts.
  - Students learn to “do science” rather than just “learn about science.”
  - Classroom discipline problems decline.
  - Opportunities to learn at a high level are equalized among students.

In addition to *Education and the Environment: Strategic Initiatives for Enhancing Education in California* (2002), published by the California Department of Education, the following books and research were also instrumental in developing the Charter vision and goals. *Results and Understanding by Design* support the plan for student assessment and for providing continuous feedback on progress to students. The benefits and strategies for engaging students in learning are supported and described in *Brain Matters: Translating Research into Classroom Practice* (2001) by Wolfe, *Teaching with the Brain In Mind* (1998) by Jensen and *Powerful Learning* (1998) by Brandt. The decision to have students work as teams and learn team skills is supported by the SCANS report, the National Business Education Association’s 1999 *Yearbook* and *The Wisdom of Teams* (1993) by Katzenbach and Smith. Strategies for addressing the specific needs of economically disadvantaged and under performing students is based on research from *Key Characteristics of Effective Schools: A Review of School Effectiveness Research* (1995) by Sammon et al. at the University of London for the Office for Standards in Education, *The Schooling Practices that Matter Most* (2000), Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory and the Education Trust’s report *Dispelling the Myth Revisited*, (1999).

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<sup>5</sup> Glenn, Joanne Lozar. (2000). *Environment-based Education: Creating High Performance Schools and Students*. Washington, D.C.: The National Environmental Education and Training Foundation

c. Curriculum and organizational structure to support student outcomes

The school applies research on how the brain learns to create an active learning environment with interdisciplinary curriculum focused on local and natural resource themes. To the greatest extent possible, curriculum is hands-on. Students work independently or in small groups on projects. Students may be enrolled in a regular full-day program or an independent study option.

In addition to using state adopted standards-based curriculum materials, the learning objectives and curriculum developed through the Education and Environment Initiative (EEI) under the auspices of the California Department of Education in consultation with resource agencies and over 100 scientific and technical experts are being used. The Charter School draws upon the Environmental Principles and Concepts identified under EEI, the standards-alignment maps for interdisciplinary curriculum, the EEI scope and sequence, and model EEI curriculum units.

5. Educational program goals

a. Goals tied to the vision

The Charter School is grounded in research on best practices for engaging students so that they will achieve high levels of performance. Through participation in the school, students are encouraged to :

- Demonstrate higher level thinking skills in culminating community-based projects (as measured by rubrics).
- Demonstrate increasing mastery of standards through authentic performance assessments, CAASPP (grades 2- 8), and a standards-based report card.
- Exhibit progress as evidenced by work samples in their portfolio and by competently explaining what they have learned and have to learn to their parent(s) and teacher.
- Report a sense of connection to school and the community, a sense of personal success and a positive attitude about working with peers on group projects (as measured by surveys, observation, or interviewing).
- Be actively engaged in learning and demonstrate positive and constructive work habits (as measured by progress in their portfolio, and through observation or interviewing).

b. Goals are measurable

Student progress and performance are monitored through the student's portfolio and the standards-based report card. Each student maintains a portfolio to document evidence of what they have learned, evidence of progress on grade level standards, and reflections on learning (as age appropriate). Student performance is measured against a defined set of performance indicators and rubrics that are based on the California content standards. Students' performance is also monitored based on the CAASPP testing program.

c. Action plan for goals

The school has developed and will maintain an annual action plan to ensure a focus on improvement goals identified by the Charter Advisory Committee (CAC). Stakeholder groups will be consulted for on-going feedback from students, staff and parents to adapt the school development to align with best practices and student needs. The CAC will review data on measurable goals and use this data to set improvement targets for the following year. Specific activities to be completed each month will be identified. The CAC will review the status of these action plan activities and progress towards meeting targets at monthly meetings.

d. Staff accountability for goals

The CAC has designed and carried out a formative and summative program evaluation plan. The summative plan includes annual surveys of stakeholders (students and parents) that address the degree to which the school is meeting the spirit of the Charter vision. The CAC reports findings to parents and students. There is also be an annual review of evidence (e.g., students meeting performance benchmarks and CAASPP scores) to determine the degree to which the Charter has met specific annual targets and goals. This review of aggregated student performance assessment data helps to identify school strengths and areas for improvement.

e. Process and procedures for monitoring progress towards goals and revising goals and action plans based on student needs. The Charter School staff and the CAC continually plan how to improve the charter operation in response to data on the degree to which student needs are being met and

the Charter is fulfilling its vision, goals, and assessment measures. Annual goals and action plans are developed and implemented based on evaluation findings. Progress on action plans is monitored at monthly CAC meetings.

The Charter School Principal reports on the status and progress of the Charter School twice a year at scheduled Camino USD Board meetings in order to assist the authorizer in meeting its oversight requirements.

### 3. Measurable Student Outcomes

#### 1. Identify specific measurable student performance expectations for the end of each grade level

##### a. Students show mastery of performance expectations

Student progress on grade level standards is monitored on grade level specific standards-based report cards that are directly related to the California content standards. Through the standards-based report card development process, specific and measurable student performance expectations have been developed to define work at standard for each grade level in the core content areas. Evidence of meeting standard is maintained in a portfolio. Students show evidence of meeting standards at student led conferences.

##### b. Students will show increasing mastery on performance assessment indicators developed by the charter

The Charter School staff systematically reviews student progress and feedback to identify how to improve the educational program. Student performance assessment data is reviewed at the beginning of each year based on performance data from the previous year. Specific measurable targets are developed. The CAC systematically examines evidence of progress towards the schools' annual improvement targets.

##### c. The school will strive to meet targets established by the state.

The school staff and students strive to meet the LCFF School Dashboard targets established by the state and local measures.

#### 2. Specific outcomes that are indicators of success

The following outcomes are indicators of success.

- The school's LCFF School Dashboard indicators will all register blue or green in yearly assessment results.
- Portfolios and standards-based report cards show evidence of student mastery of standards
- Student and parent surveys indicate a high level of satisfaction, that the charter is consistent with the vision and that students are motivated to learn
- There is a high student attendance rate

- There are a sufficient number of students seeking to enroll in the Charter School for the school to be economically viable.
- Once enrolled in the Charter School, a high percentage of students choose to continue in the Charter School from year to year.
- The discipline, suspension and expulsion rates are low (as defined by the CAC).

### 3. STATE Testing

The Charter School meets CAASPP assessment requirements specified in Education Code Section 60605.

## **4. Measuring Pupil Progress**

### **1. Assessment plan**

The goal is to increase student achievement on state standards with natural resources based education as the 'hook' that engages students in learning. Students are assessed on multiple measures. Measures for monitoring student achievement include: CAASPP data analysis, LCFF School Dashboard, students meeting standards on grade level assessments linked to the standards-based report card, mastery rates on performance assessments and evidence of learning in each student's portfolio, and through student led parent conferences.

As defined by the Assessment Training Institute, there is assessment 'of' learning (such as standardized and state tests) and assessment 'for' learning, where a student self-assesses to identify their strengths, weaknesses, and progress. Assessment 'for' learning helps students to become independent learners by monitoring their progress against clear exemplars. The Charter School has assessment 'for' learning in addition to assessment 'of' learning.

There is an evaluation of satisfaction with the charter program that includes annual student surveys for grades 6-8, parent surveys and reflections by staff and the CAC. The surveys are designed to provide ratings for current performance as well as suggestions for program improvements. The CAC reviews and summarizes assessment data and uses data to recommend how to improve the educational program. Using the first year of operation as a baseline, the CAC will establish annual improvement targets and monitor progress on these targets at regularly scheduled meetings, consolidating this stakeholder feedback along with teacher evaluation results into a formal "action plan" which will be reviewed and approved by the CAC and used as a benchmarking tool for the subsequent year. Progress on targeted goals as set forth in the action plan is formally reported to the CUSD Governing Board twice a year and informally reported as part of the Charter Principal report at other Board meetings throughout the year.

### **2. Process for notification about student progress**

Charter school parents receive individual CAASPP test reports. Students and their parents participate in conferences to review student portfolios and progress on the grade level standards-based report card.

3. Process for meeting the needs of low performing and special education/  
handicapped students

In its effort to ensure that all of its students have access to a free and appropriate public education, Charter School shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws including, but not limited to, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Title II of the American with Disabilities Act related to civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Civil Rights (OCR) and Education Code Part 30.

All students are enrolled regardless of a disability or special education need. Charter School provides special education instruction and related services in accordance with the IDEA, Education Code requirements, and applicable policies and practices of the local Special Education Local Plan Area ("SELPA"). The most appropriate student placement for special needs students is determined through the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) process.

A Memorandum of Understanding between the Charter School and the District delineates the roles and responsibilities of each party to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations relating to special education.

## **5. Governance Structure of The School**

Camino Polytechnic, A Science and Natural Resources Charter School is a dependent charter school authorized by the Camino Union School District. All curriculum, staffing and financial decisions will be made at the discretion of the Charter School leadership.

The Charter School is non-sectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. The Charter School shall not charge tuition, and no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code in any program or activity.

Although the Charter School maintains a high level of autonomy, it is an integral part of the District's educational system and is entitled to many of the services and benefits offered to all Camino School District students at both charter and non-charter locations, as determined by the CAC and CUSD Governing Board and set forth in the MOU.

The CUSD Governing Board is responsible for the operation and activities of the Charter School. The CUSD Governing Board has authorized the Charter Principal to implement all aspects of the Charter School. The Charter Advisory Committee provides regular direction on how the Charter School can best meet the needs and interests of students and their families while working with Charter School staff, community/resources agencies, other educational agencies and the Camino Union School District. The CAC ensures that the Charter School operates in a manner consistent with the spirit of the charter mission, vision and beliefs; oversees all operations dealing with Camino Poly.

### **1. Involvement of stakeholders**

The CAC solicits parental involvement and feedback, determines how best to integrate this feedback into improving the educational program, and provides regular input on how the Charter School can best meet the needs and interests of students and their families while working with Charter School staff, community/resource agencies, other educational agencies and the Camino Union School District.

## 2. Decision-making process and organizational roles

The organizational roles of each group/individual are as follows:

**Charter Advisory Committee (CAC):** Represent all stakeholder groups and provide ongoing direction and decision-making authority on how the school can best meet the needs and interests of students and their families based on the Charter School vision; ensure that the school operates in a manner consistent with the spirit of the charter mission, vision, and beliefs; make recommendations to the principal on curriculum, instruction; evaluate and monitor the charter's progress and identify areas for improvement; and select new prospective CAC members to be voted on by parents and staff at the Charter School.

**Charter Principal:** Manage daily operations in a way that is consistent with the Charter School's vision, goals, and provisions; work with staff to develop curriculum, instruction, assessments, and recommendations to the CAC on improving the school program; twice a year presents a report on Camino Poly to the CUSD Board to assist CUSD in meeting oversight duties; supervise/ evaluate charter staff; prepare an annual school improvement action plan based on the findings from the Charter evaluation and stakeholder feedback; advise CAC on charter legislation, Education Code statutes, and legal parameters that are related to the scope of the CAC's authority, and coordinate/communicate with District staff regarding operations.

CAC members serve staggered three-year terms. CAC members may serve more than one term. A member of the CAC may be removed if a majority of CAC members vote to remove the individual. The CAC will be made up of the following individuals: 3 Parent representatives, 2 Charter Schoolteachers, 1 CUSD Representative and 1 Authorizing Board Member. The initial members of the Board will be elected prior to the opening of the initial school year by all stakeholder groups. The CAC will meet periodically during the school year. Meetings of the CAC will be held under the provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act, Government Code §54950 et seq.

In the event it is determined that a provision of the Charter should be changed, the process for material charter revision in Education Code will be followed.

3. Development of the instructional program, selection of course content, selection of course textbooks and other instructional materials and inventory auditing  
Charter School staff work collaboratively to develop curriculum and instructional strategies consistent with the beliefs, mission, vision and goals of the Charter and state accountability. The CAC reviews and gives input on the instructional program and the Principal approves the instructional program. Instructional materials are inventoried and financial information audited using standard accounting procedures.

4. Relationship between the charter school and the school district  
Camino Polytechnic, A Science and Natural Resources Charter School operates as a Charter School within the Camino Union School District, and, as such, complies with all provisions enacted by the Board of Trustees of the District. The Board of Trustees maintains oversight of school policy, management, and finance. The school operates as an arm of the District in terms of legal relations, operational relations, labor relations and financial relations. The Charter School has more latitude (as per Education Code Sections 47610-47615) than other District schools in developing curriculum, establishing performance expectations by grade level, providing customized and independent learning programs for students, identifying types of positions needed, and setting budget priorities

5. Administrative services  
The District Administration supervises certificated, classified, and any contract staff. Evaluations are conducted based on existing practices and consistent with contract language.

The Charter School may contract with CUSD or other third party for services that may include administrative services, legal services, operational services and financial services.

6. Employee contracts  
The Charter School agrees that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity. The employees of the Charter School have elected to be covered under the District's collective bargaining agreements. This decision was reached by the employees in order to preserve pay and benefit equality at all public schools within CUSD.

## 6. Employee Qualifications

### 1. Process for staff selection

Staff members must apply for positions at the Charter School. Given that the focus of the Charter School is on science and natural resources based education, staff selection criteria includes experience with the natural resources related sciences, community-based and integrated thematic instructional strategies as well as effectively teaching the core curriculum for the needed grade level or grade level span.

### 2. Credentials, requirements, and qualifications of staff

Teachers of core subjects meet credential requirements of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC). Classified staff meets the requirements and qualifications in Camino Poly job descriptions. The CAC may identify that additional classified positions are needed that are not covered by an existing job description. In this event, classified contract language will be followed and requirements and qualifications for a new position or positions will be created.

### 3. Salaries and benefits for employees

The CAC established pay schedules that match the District scales in order to demonstrate pay equality between charter and non-charter employees in the area.

### 4. Plan for evaluating staff performance

Staff performance are evaluated based on meeting performance goals, as well as on student performance and alignment with state standards.

All employees shall be reviewed by the Principal. The purpose of these reviews is to identify strengths (noting particularly good work), recognize areas for improvement and skill development encourage growth, and develop strategies within a supportive team.

Reviews are generally conducted during the 4th quarter of each year. The Principal may do interim evaluations throughout the year as deemed appropriate. The Principal and other staff shall be permitted to conduct formal observations of teaching staff and other staff at a mutually agreed upon time. Parents and visitors may conduct observations of teaching staff by appointment.

Teachers have a right to know that they are being formally observed for evaluation. All of these evaluations may be used, among other things, to determine whether the School intends to continue employment for the subsequent school year.

All employees shall have the right to make their own written comments in response to the observations or review findings within two weeks of receipt. This response will be attached to the observation and/or evaluation and kept in the employee's Confidential Personnel File.

5. Procedures for background checks

Employees and contractors of the school are required to submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code 44237 and 45125.1. New employees not holding a valid California Teaching Credential are required to submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. The Charter Principal monitors compliance with this policy and reports regularly to the CUSD Governing Board.

## **7. Health And Safety Procedures**

### **1. Criminal Record Summary**

Each employee of the Charter School furnishes the school with a criminal record summary as described in Education Code Section 44237 and as outlined in “Procedure for background checks” in Section 6 above.

### **2. Plan for ensuring safe school facilities**

The Charter School is located in a Camino Union School District facility, The terms of such occupancy are delineated in a Memorandum of Understanding between the Charter School and the District. During the period that the Charter School occupies CUSD facilities, the Charter School has adopted the safety plans in place at each such facility. Safety plans are updated in the event of a facility renovation or addition in accordance with District procedures.

### **3. Plan for ensuring safe auxiliary services**

The Charter School may contract with the District or other third party for the purpose of providing auxiliary services such as transportation, food service, custodial services, and handling of hazardous materials. If the Charter School contracts with CUSD for such services, the Charter School receive levels of service comparable to other District schools and the Charter School follow the same safety guidelines. As the Charter School evolves or expands, auxiliary service needs may change and additional auxiliary services would be available to the Charter School on an as-needed basis from the District. When contracting with the District, the Charter School pays a proportional rate for these services that is comparable to other District schools.

### **4. Role of staff as mandated child abuse reporters**

All classified and certificated staff members are mandated child abuse reporters and fully comply with Education Code and all other applicable law and regulations.

### **5. TB testing**

All Charter School staff fully complies with Education Code and all other applicable law and regulations relating to TB testing.

6. Health Services provided

The Charter School has contracted with CUSD for health services such as health screenings equivalent to the services offered at other schools in the Camino Union School District. The Charter School pays its proportional share of costs for these services.

## **8. Racial And Ethnic Balance Among Pupils Reflective Of District**

The Charter School intends to achieve a racial and ethnic balance that is equal to the District's overall ratios. The Charter School has implemented a student recruitment strategy that includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following strategies to ensure a racial and ethnic balance that is reflective of the District:

- Promotional and informational material to appeal to all of the various racial and ethnic groups represented in the District.
- The distribution of promotional and informational materials to a broad variety of community groups and agencies that serve the various racial, ethnic, and interest groups represented in the District.
- Informational materials translated into Spanish and provision for translation at such time that 5% or more of students in the District are native speakers of that language.
- Racial and ethnic groups graphically represented in the District promotional materials.

## **9. Admission Requirements**

### **Legal Assurances**

Charter schools are schools of choice and admissions policies reflect this compliance with state and federal requirements. In accordance with Education Code Section 47605 (d)(2)(A), Camino Poly admits all students who wish to attend, up to the school's enrollment capacity.

Camino Polytechnic, A Science and Natural Resources Charter School:

- is non-sectarian in all areas of operations, including student admission
- Does not discriminate based on disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code in any program or activity
- does not charge tuition
- does accept all students who are California residents
- does not require any pupil to attend the charter school
- does not enroll pupils over 19 years of age unless continuously enrolled in public school and making satisfactory progress toward high school diploma requirements
- complies with all laws establishing minimum age for public school attendance
- adheres to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensures 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.

### **Application Process**

To be included in the admissions lottery, families must submit a pre-enrollment application which asks for the student's name, grade, address, birthday, and contact information for the family. Applications will not be subject to lottery if received before January 31<sup>st</sup> and prior to all available positions for students within the Charter School.

## **Random Public Drawing**

In the case that enrollment totals during the open enrollment period exceed the capacity of the Charter School, a random public drawing, or lottery, shall be held to determine admission during the May Charter Advisory Committee meeting. The chartering authority shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of the charter school and shall not take any action to impede the charter school from expanding enrollment to meet pupil demand.

The following categories of enrollment applicants shall be exempted from the lottery and automatically enrolled for the following year:

1. Existing students
2. Siblings of existing students

The following categories of students shall be granted enrollment preference consistent with federal law, the California Constitution, and Section 200, in the form of weighting via one additional vote for each eligible applicant (two votes total):

1. Students residing within the boundaries of Camino Union School District
2. Students for whom special consideration is required to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution.

The Charter School actively recruits a representative student population from the District and surrounding areas. Students from surrounding areas may also attend the Charter School. As part of the charter application process, students and their families sign a compact that specifies the commitment made by students, families, and staff. The compact clearly defines expectations for students and parents based on the school's instructional and operational philosophy.

## **10. Financial Audit and Fiscal Procedures**

Camino Polytechnic, A Science & Natural Resources Charter School is included in the Camino Union School District's annual independent financial audit. The District's auditing process uses generally accepted accounting principles; including a process for resolving audit exceptions and deficiencies. This audit will address the required content, evaluation criteria and meet timelines for financial reporting (i.e., an annual financial audit will be submitted to the state no later than December 15th of each year.)

It is anticipated that the annual audit will be completed within four months of 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 the 15th of December of each year. The Charter Principal will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the CUSD Governing Board with recommendations on how to resolve them, along with an anticipated timeline for the same.

The independent fiscal audit of the Charter School is public record to be provided to the public upon request.

### **1. Budget and financial operation**

The Charter School operates as a direct-funded charter school for financial purposes, and as such has complete control over the use of said funds. The charter's financial records are maintained in a manner that is consistent with generally accepted accounting principles. As the administrative services provider for the Charter School, the District maintains a separate charter fund in the District's accounting system, and provides the Charter School with regular access to financial reports.

### **2. Insurance and Liability**

The Charter School is covered under property, liability, worker's compensation, and other required insurance coverages of the Camino Union School District.

3. School facilities and facilities maintenance

The Charter School operates at a District facility as set forth in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Charter School and the District. The school facilities used are based on enrollment, program needs, and facility availability. The District provide maintenance and facility improvements as needed to ensure the health and safety of students, in accordance with the MOU. The Charter School pays its proportionate share of the cost for these services, in accordance with the MOU. The Charter School and District will negotiate on ongoing facility needs based on enrollment and program requirements.

4. Process for Providing Fiscal Services

The Charter School contracts with the District for fiscal services such as payroll, accounting, and purchasing, in accordance with the MOU. During the period this contract is in place, the Charter School shall follow District procedures to ensure that financial records meet District auditing requirements. All expenditures require receipts.

5. Processing and Monitoring Teacher Credentials

The Charter School's planned fiscal services contract with the District includes tracking of teacher credentials, as set forth in the MOU. Credentials are processed and monitored as to status by the Camino Union School District.

6. Procedure for ensuring an adequate cash flow

The business office of the Camino Union School District uses the same business practices for ensuring adequate cash flow at the Charter School as used for program budgets. During the period that the fiscal services contract is in place, the District is responsible for maintaining adequate cash flow at the Charter School, as set forth in the MOU.

7. Identification of the minimum enrollment for the charter school to be financially viable

The minimum enrollment for the Charter School to be financially viable is 50 students. The maximum enrollment for the Charter School would be 350 students.

The Charter School could demonstrate fiscal stability at a lower enrollment level if enrollment demand is insufficient to meet this target or the CAC determines it is in the best interests of the Charter School to remain at a lower enrollment level. Staffing and other operational costs will be prorated based on enrollment to ensure a balanced budget.

8. Description of fund raising procedures

The Charter School Principal and CAC work to identify additional funding sources to support the Charter School's operational costs.

9. Financial Policies

The Camino USD Governing Board maintains control over the development and adoption of the Camino Poly Charter School's budget, oversee the receipt and expenditure of funds, business management services, audit services, purchasing and contract decisions and other financial matters.

These policies are designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement and maintenance of the following standards, with any additional standards to be determined by the CAC:

1. Accounting records properly and accurately reflect and account for all transactions, including cash and cash equivalents. Accounting information must be relevant, reliable, comparable and consistent and must be available for the preparation of reliable financial statements.
2. Full compliance with all applicable conflict of interest laws, including but not limited to a policy requiring Form 700 filing for all applicable parties.
3. Full compliance with EDCOE, CDE and federal regulations, policies and procedures, where applicable.
4. Financial reporting documentation that supports its financial statements and that reflects its financial position/condition, results of operations or changes in net assets and, where appropriate, cash flows for any fiscal period/year.
5. Required independent audits are performed and submitted when due in a timely manner, as prescribed by the California Department of Education.

6. Initial and interim budgets that clearly define achievable goals as defined in the school's charter and approved by the deadlines set in Ed Code.
7. Maintenance of documentation that evidences proper internal controls on business practices, including purchasing and personnel controls.
8. Transactions are executed in compliance with laws, regulations, and the provisions of contracts or grant agreements that could have a material effect on public funds.
9. Funds, property, and other assets are safeguarded against loss from unauthorized use or disposition.

The School's accounting system is in conformance with the California School Accounting Manual.

Accounting is SACS-based and follows Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) guidelines for governmental accounting. All budgets and financial reports are presented using modified accrual accounting in alignment with annual audited financial statements.

The School's financial records provide the following information:

1. For each income account: the current budget estimate, the receipts to date, and the remaining balance anticipated.
2. For each expenditure account: the current budget estimate, year-to-date expenditures, encumbrances, and remaining available balance.
3. For each purchase order: the name of vendor, description of the item involved, and amounts.
4. For each purchase: the purchase order information above, plus the record of receipt and condition of goods, the invoice and the record of payment.

## **11. Suspension And Expulsion Procedures**

### **1. Involving parents, students, and staff in designing and implementing the school's discipline policy**

The CAC and CUSD Governing Board annually reviews and comments on the school's discipline policy.

### **2. Due process procedure for students**

The Charter School has adopted procedures in compliance with Education Code Section 48900 et seq. on due process for students.

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

The Charter School will comply with AB 1630 by which pupils can be suspended or expelled for disciplinary reasons or involuntarily removed from the Charter School.

- For suspensions of fewer than 10 days, provide notice of the charges against the pupil and opportunity for the pupil to present his or her side of the story.
- For suspensions of 10 days or more, provide timely written notice of the charges and an explanation of the student's rights.
- Provide the parent with written notice of intent to remove the pupil no less than 5 school days before the effective date of the action with notice of parent's rights.

### **3. Procedure for appeals of disciplinary action**

The Charter School has adopted procedures in compliance with Education Code Section 48900 et seq. on appeals of disciplinary action

The student or parent/guardian is entitled to file an appeal of the Board's decision with the County Board. The appeal must be filed within 30 days of the Board's decision to expel, even if the expulsion order is suspended and the student is placed on probation. (Education Code 48919)

The student shall submit a written request for a copy of the written transcripts and supporting documents from the district simultaneously with the filing of the notice of appeal with the County Board. The district shall provide the student with these documents within 10 school days following the student's written request. (Education Code 48919)

Prior to the suspension or expulsion of any student, the principal or designee shall notify appropriate city or county law enforcement authorities of any student acts of assault which may have violated Penal Code 245. (Education Code 48902)

The principal or designee also shall notify appropriate city or county law enforcement authorities of any student acts which may involve the possession or sale of narcotics or of a controlled substance. In addition, law enforcement authorities shall be notified regarding any acts by students regarding the possession, sale, or furnishment of firearms, explosives, or other dangerous weapons in violation of Education Code 48915(c)(1) or (5) or Penal Code 626.9 and 626.10. (Education Code 48902)

Within one school day after a student's suspension or expulsion, the principal or designee shall notify appropriate city or county law enforcement authorities, by telephone or other appropriate means, of any student acts which may violate Education Code 48900(c) or (d), relating to the possession, use, offering, or sale of controlled substances, alcohol, or intoxicants of any kind. (Education Code 48902)

#### 4. Procedure for ensuring rights of students

The Charter School has adopted procedures in compliance with Education Code Sections 48900 et seq. on ensuring the rights of students.

The Governing Board desires to provide a safe school environment that allows all students equal access and opportunities in the district's academic and other educational support programs, services, and activities. The Board prohibits, at any district school or school activity, unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying of any student based on the student's actual race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender,

gender identity, or gender expression; the perception of one or more of such characteristics; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

Prohibited discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying includes physical, verbal, nonverbal, or written conduct based on one of the categories listed above that is so severe or pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; has the effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with a student's academic performance; or otherwise adversely affects a student's educational opportunities.

The Board also prohibits any form of retaliation against any student who files a complaint or report regarding an incident of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide age-appropriate training and information to students, parents/guardians, and employees regarding discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying, including, but not limited to, the district's nondiscrimination policy, what constitutes prohibited behavior, how to report incidents, and to whom such reports should be made.

In providing instruction, guidance, supervision, or other services to district students, employees and volunteers shall carefully guard against segregating or stereotyping students.

The principal or designee shall develop a plan to provide students with appropriate accommodations when necessary for their protection from threatened or potentially harassing or discriminatory behavior. Students who engage in discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, or retaliation in violation of law, Board policy, or administrative regulation shall be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including counseling, suspension, and/or expulsion. Any employee who permits or engages in prohibited discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

#### Grievance Procedures

The following position is designated Coordinator for Nondiscrimination to

handle complaints regarding discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and to answer inquiries regarding the district's nondiscrimination policies:

Charter Principal  
3060 Snows Road  
Camino, CA 95709  
(530) 644-2204

Any student who feels that he/she has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying should immediately contact the Coordinator, the principal, or any other staff member. In addition, any student who observes any such incident should report the incident to the Coordinator or principal, whether or not the victim files a complaint.

Any school employee who observes an incident of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying or to whom such an incident is reported shall report the incident to the Coordinator or principal, whether or not the victim files a complaint.

In addition, the employee shall immediately intervene when safe to do so. (Education Code 234.1)

Upon receiving a complaint of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, the Coordinator shall immediately investigate the complaint in accordance with the district's uniform complaint procedures specified in AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the student handbook clearly describes the district's nondiscrimination policy, procedures for filing a complaint regarding discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and the resources that are available to students who feel that they have been the victim of any such behavior. The district's policy shall also be posted on the district web site or any other location that is easily accessible to students.

5. Ensuring educational access for all students, including students who have been suspended or expelled

The Charter School has adopted procedures in compliance with Education Code Section 48900 et seq. on educational access for all students, including students who have been suspended or expelled.

## 12. Retirement System

### 1. Relationship between the teachers at the charter school and the District bargaining unit

Charter School employees in classifications that are covered by bargaining units are represented by the same bargaining units as non-charter employees in the Camino Union School District. Charter School employees have the same rights and opportunities as non-Charter School employees in terms of leaves, work experience, discipline, guidance, reassignment, rehire rights and transfers. Staff must apply and be hired to work in the Charter School. The nature and purpose of the Charter School may require flexibility in the workday or work year to accommodate community events or schedules. The Charter School employees and Charter Principal must mutually agree upon any minor changes (up to one day) in work year or schedule.

### 2. Process for determining salaries, benefits, retirement, leaves, working conditions, seniority and items such as calendars, holidays, vacations, work year and work day

Salaries, benefits, retirement, and leaves are determined by the CUSD Governing Board for Charter School staff. CUSD has set these parameters consistent with the non-Charter School staff in the same job classifications.

### 3. The process for resolving complaints/grievances

The CAC has established that the Charter School follows Board policy, labor law, and Education Code on complaints and grievances.

### 4. The process for ensuring due process

The CAC has established that the Charter School follows Board policy, labor law, and Education Code on due process.

### 5. Coverage under the State Teachers' Retirement System and Public Employees' Retirement System

All credentialed employees are covered under the State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS). All classified employees are covered by the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) and Social Security.

6. Process for staff recruitment, selection, evaluation, and termination

The CAC has established that the initial staff recruitment and selection process is similar to District practices. Evaluation procedures for certificated staff and the Charter Principal have been established by the CAC to meet the needs of The Charter School. The Charter School Principal is responsible for all evaluations of Charter School employees. The CAC offers evaluation guidance and the CUSD Administration evaluates the Charter School Principal. Due process is followed for termination.

### **13. Dispute Resolution**

#### **1. Process for addressing disputes**

Any formal written complaints are first addressed by the Principal who may then call upon the CAC for input. All complaints are reported to the Superintendent of the authorizing district, Camino Union School District, as part of the District's oversight responsibilities. Unresolved problems follow the CUSD dispute and complaint procedures.

#### **2. Type and scope of legal services**

In the case of a dispute, the Charter School may retain legal counsel to review the Charter and advise the CAC on a proper course of action. The Charter may be modified based on the recommendations of legal counsel, following approval of the CAC and the CUSD Board. Legal counsel may also be used in the event that new charter legislation or revised legal interpretations of existing law appear to impact the operation of the Charter School.

#### **14. Labor Relations**

Camino USD shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act.

## **15. Attendance Alternatives**

The Charter School is open to students throughout the Camino Union School District. Students within the District have the option of attending the Camino Polytechnic, A Science and Natural Resources Charter School or Camino School in grades K-8.

## **16. Transfer and Return Rights**

Charter School does not have the right to require the District to reemploy an employee who moves back and forth between the Charter School and District, unless specified in a CBA agreed upon by CUSD, Charter School, and bargaining unit.

## **17. Closure Protocol**

In the event that the Charter School closes, the District will conduct a final audit to determine the assets and liabilities of the Charter School. To the extent feasible, assets will be used to cover liabilities. Any remaining assets will revert to the District. Student records will be transferred to the District. The District will maintain student records as needed by other schools that students will attend the following year.

## **18. District Impact Statement**

This statement is intended to fulfill the terms of Education Code Section 47605(g) and provides information regarding the proposed operation and potential effects of the Charter School on the District.

The Charter School works diligently to assist the District in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including monthly meetings, reporting, or other requested protocol to ensure the District shall not be liable for the operation of the Charter School.

Further, the Charter School and the District have entered into a memorandum of understanding, wherein Charter School has indemnified the District for the actions of the Charter School under this Charter.

The District shall not be held liable for the debts or obligations of the Charter School or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the School, if the District has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

The Charter School has obtained insurance coverage providing for indemnification of the CUSD Board of Trustees, officers, agents, and employees. Insurance coverage includes general liability insurance, Directors and Officers insurance, and fidelity bonding to secure against financial risks. The District is named as an additional insured on the general liability insurance of the Charter School.

The Charter Governance Council has instituted appropriate risk management practices, including screening of employees, establishing of codes of conduct for students, and dispute resolution as described elsewhere in this petition.