



**ORANGE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
Staff Report for  
California Republic Leadership Academy Yorba Linda  
November 21, 2023

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Per the Charter Schools Act, as outlined in Education Code section 47600, et seq., the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) staff conducted a comprehensive review of the CRLA Southern California petition proposing to establish California Republic Leadership Academy Yorba Linda, submitted on appeal following denial by the governing board of the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District. This report summarizes findings from that review and provides recommendations for consideration by the Orange County Board of Education (the Board).

Based on information gathered throughout the review process, OCDE staff recommends approval with conditions of the California Republic Leadership Academy Yorba Linda charter petition. This action would result in the approval of the charter and require the execution of an Agreement to address the issues outlined in this report and establish appropriate timelines for the petitioners to meet the conditions as specified. Should the Board take action to deny the charter petition, it may adopt this report as the written factual findings required to support a denial of the charter petition.

**II. BACKGROUND**

On August 28, 2023, CRLA Southern California, a California nonprofit public benefit corporation, submitted a petition on appeal requesting to operate California Republic Leadership Academy Yorba Linda within the boundaries of the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District. The school proposes to serve students in transitional kindergarten through grade eight beginning in the 2024-25 academic year.

On October 4, 2023, the Board held a public hearing on the charter's provisions to consider the level of support for the petition by parents/guardians, teachers, and other district employees where the charter school proposes to be located. On October 19, 2023, a clarification meeting was held with charter school representatives and the OCDE petition review team.

The Board must take action to either grant or deny the charter within ninety (90) days of petition receipt unless this date is extended by an additional 30 days by agreement. The lead petitioner agreed to a 10-day extension to accommodate the Board's regular meeting schedule. Therefore, action is scheduled for the Board's regular meeting on December 6, 2023.

### III. LEGAL STANDARD<sup>1</sup>

Education Code section 47605(k)(1)(A)(i) indicates, "If the governing board of a school district denies a petition, the petitioner may elect to submit the petition for the establishment of a charter school to the county board of education." The county board of education shall review the petition according to Education Code sections 47605(b) & (c).

Should the Board approve the petition, the Board would become the charter authorizer for the Charter School. Should the Board deny the petition, the petitioner may appeal that denial to the state board within 30 days of the denial.

The Board shall deny a petition for the establishment of a charter school if it finds one or more of the following:

- 1) Charter school presents an unsound educational program for the pupils to be enrolled in the charter school.
- 2) The petitioners are demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the program set forth in the petition.
- 3) The petition does not contain the number of signatures required by subdivision (e).
- 4) The petition does not contain an affirmation of each of the conditions described in subdivision (e).
- 5) The petition does not contain reasonably comprehensive descriptions of the required elements under Education Code section 47605.
- 6) The petition does not contain a declaration of whether or not the school shall be deemed the exclusive employer of the employees of the charter school for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act Chapter 10.7 (commencing with Section 3540) of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code.
- 7) The charter school is demonstrably unlikely to serve the interests of the entire community in which the school is proposing to locate.
- 8) The school district is not positioned to absorb the fiscal impact of the proposed charter school.

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<sup>1</sup>The legal basis for the reviewed items include the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. §1232g; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. §1400 *et seq.*; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), 29 U.S.C. §794; California Education Code §§47605, 47607, 52052, 49010 *et seq.*; Title V, California Code of Regulations §11967.5.1.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

- A. The petition does not contain reasonably comprehensive descriptions of the required elements under Education Code section 47605(c)(5)(A-O).
1. The petition does not contain reasonably comprehensive descriptions of the annual goals and pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school for all pupils and each subgroup of pupils to be achieved in the state priorities, as described in Education Code section 52060(d) and specific annual actions to achieve those goals that align with the state priorities.
    - a. State priority #4 – The school does not identify an English language learner reclassification rate.
    - b. State priority #5 – Chronic Absenteeism rate fails to identify a goal and measurable outcome percentage for students identified as chronically absent.

## **IV. REQUESTED TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS**

The petition indicates that upon closure of the school, assets are to remain the sole property of the school. Upon clarification from the lead petitioner, that was an error and should state that the assets will remain the sole property of CRLA Southern California, the school's nonprofit benefit corporation. The petition should be amended to correct this technical error.

## **V. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

OCDE staff recommends that the Board approve the California Republic Leadership Academy Yorba Linda charter petition with conditions. This action would result in approval of the charter and require the execution of an Agreement that delineates the operational relationship between the School, the Board, and OCDE, addresses the concerns outlined in this Staff Report and by the Board, and establishes appropriate timelines for the petitioners to satisfy the conditions.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

The Board has three options for action regarding a charter petition on appeal:

- Option One: Approve the charter petition as written.
- Option Two: Approve the charter petition with conditions. This action would result in the charter petition being approved and require the execution of an Agreement to address the issues outlined in the Staff Report.
- Option Three: Deny the charter petition.

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