

**Orange Unified School District
El Rancho Charter School – Charter Renewal Status Update
Office of the Superintendent
May 9, 2017**

It has come to my attention that rumors, misinformation, partially accurate information, and only select documents are being disseminated by various parties causing confusion and distrust among our students, staff and community regarding the renewal of the El Rancho Charter School ("School"). The Orange Unified School District ("District") has always worked in partnership with the School in providing outstanding educational opportunities to students, and the District desires to continue that productive relationship.

The District is not interested in denying renewal of the School's Charter or closing the School, but the District does have an obligation to follow the requirements of law and the Charter and to require the School to do the same.

False factual and legal claims are being spread through the community, incorrectly alleging that the School's Charter has been "automatically" renewed and accusing the District and its representatives of ignoring the law. This is absolutely untrue.

Consistently with the School's prior renewals of its Charter, the District and the School specifically agreed to work together on revisions to a draft of the School's renewal Charter in order to address the District's questions and concerns, and to resolve the School's failure to include a required provision related to services for students with special needs. Suddenly, in the midst of that process, the School incorrectly claimed that its Charter had been automatically renewed, and the District has responded in detail to that false assertion.

This site was created to ensure that the community has accurate information regarding the facts and law, and to provide a resource where documents related to communications between the District and the School are posted and available for review by the public. Some, but not all, of these documents are posted on other web and/or social media sites. To the best of my knowledge, all the letters exchanged between the District and the School relative to the renewal process, along with some pertinent earlier communications and related documents, are posted here for public review.

Thank you for taking the time to educate yourself as to the concerns and positions of the School and the District. The District Board will hold the required public hearing on the School's renewal at its meeting on May 11 and will take action on the renewal request at its meeting on May 25. I remain optimistic that an acceptable Charter document will be approved by the Board of Education on May 25, 2017, and that El Rancho Charter School will continue in the future, as in the past, to provide high quality educational opportunities to 7th and 8th grade students.

The following documents are available here for public review:

- **[2012 – 2017 School Charter \[Note the requirement on page 45 that revisions be approved by 75% of School staff.\] \(District Board Approval: June 7, 2012\)](#)**

- Memorandum of Understanding (District Board Approval: June 7, 2012)
- Project Development and Construction Agreement (District Board Approval: July 23, 2015)
- Project Reimbursement Agreement (District Board Approval: July 23, 2015)
- Revised Memorandum of Understanding – Special Education (District Board Approval: June 9, 2016) [Note the requirement on page 18 that the Plan for Students with Disabilities from the MOU be included in the 2017-2022 Charter renewal.]
- Letter from M. Walker to E. Kissee claiming automatic renewal of petition (April 4, 2017)
- Letter from District Counsel to School Counsel – Young, et al. - disputing claim of automatic renewal, requesting proof of compliance with provisions of the current Charter regarding renewal and the MOU of June 9, 2016 (April 11, 2017)
- Proposed 2017 – 2022 Charter Renewal Petition (District Board Receipt: April 13, 2017)
- School Letter from M. Walker to District Board claiming automatic renewal of Petition (April 13, 2017)
- Letter from School Counsel - Procopio, et al. - to District Counsel regarding School's claim of automatic renewal by default (April 20, 2017)
- Letter from District Counsel to School Counsel - Procopio, et al. - reiterating the same issues as shared with School's prior counsel and requesting explanations as to the purpose and intent of the numerous changes in the proposed Charter from the prior approved Charter (April 20, 2017)
- Letter from School Counsel – Procopio, et al. - to District Counsel claiming validity of the automatic renewal and providing limited replies to requests from District Counsel's letter of April 20, 2017 (April 24, 2017)
- School-provided multiyear financial projections and assumptions (April 25, 2017)
- Letter from District Counsel to School Counsel – Procopio, et al. - explaining why the Charter was not automatically renewed, including quoting prior communications from M. Walker acknowledging that the parties were mutually working on a draft of the renewal Charter, issuing a second request for explanations/rationales for the Charter revisions and providing a spreadsheet format to help facilitate the reply (April 26, 2017)