



Santa Clara County Office of Education

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County Superintendent of Schools

January 9, 2013

TO: Santa Clara County Board of Education

FROM: Toni Cordova  
Chief Strategy Officer

VIA: Xavier De La Torre, Ed.D.  
County Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Renewal of the Charter for Magnolia Science Academy – Santa Clara Countywide Benefit Charter School

The Santa Clara County Board of Education (County Board) approved the countywide charter for Magnolia Science Academy – Santa Clara (MSA-SC) on March 4, 2009. The Magnolia countywide charter approval was for three schools: Magnolia Science Academy - Santa Clara, Magnolia Science Academy – Milpitas and Magnolia Science Academy – San Jose. The charter was granted for a three-year term, July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2012. MSA-SC, upon County Board approval of a material revision, opened in the fall of 2010. On June 15, 2011, Magnolia Education and Research Foundation (MERF) requested a material revision to delay the opening of the MSA-Milpitas. The County Board granted the material revision. Magnolia Public Schools (formerly MERF) returned to the County Board on August 8, 2012, to request again a material revision to delay the opening of MSA-Milpitas and MSA-San Jose. Both of these schools were approved to open in fall 2012. The County Board granted the material revision contingent upon the renewal of the MSA-SC countywide charter.

On October 3, 2012, the Santa Clara County Office of Education received the petition for renewal of the Charter for Magnolia Science Academy – Santa Clara Countywide Benefit Charter School. On November 28, 2012, the County Board held a public hearing, at which 42 speakers spoke in favor of the charter school. The Alum Rock School District was represented and presented their concerns regarding MSA-SJ and requested the consideration of non-renewal as it related to the correlating approval to open MSA-SJ.

On December 6, 2012, the Santa Clara County Office of Education received a letter from Magnolia Public Schools wherein they stated that “Unfortunately, the state’s prolonged budget crisis, and the resulting reductions and delays in revenue coupled with the ineligibility of additional countywide charter campuses to receive the federal start up grant of almost \$600,000 make opening two more campuses an unrealistic goal for 2013, and for the foreseeable future.”

California Education Code 47605.6(b) requires that the County Board grant or deny the renewal within 90 days of receipt of the charter petition. MPS agreed to a nine-day extension of the County Board’s decision. The renewal would be for a five-year period, July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2018.

At the writing of this transmittal, the County Office of Education Staff Report and Recommendation to the County Board was in process and will be posted on January 7, 2013 at <http://www.sccoe.org/supandboard/agendaminutes/2012-13/> under the January 9, 2013 board agenda.