WEI YU
INTERNATIONAL
CHARTER
SCHOOL

WEBSITE | WWW.WEIYUCHARTER.ORG
FACEBOOK | WEIYUCHARTER
EMAIL | WEIYUCHARTER@GMAIL.COM

NOVEMBER 24, 2014

VIA: HAND DELIVERY

Mr. Leon Beauchman, Board of Education President
Jon R. Gundry, Superintendent of Schools
Santa Clara County Office of Education
1290 Ridder Park Drive
San Jose, CA 95131-2304

Re: Wei Yu International Charter School Charter Petition Appeal to the Santa Clara County Board of Education

Dear Board President Beauchman and Superintendent Gundry:

This letter is to inform you that Wei Yu International Charter School ("WYICS" or the "Charter School") hereby submits its appeal of the denial of its Charter Petition by the Moreland School District (the "District") to the Santa Clara County Board of Education ("County"), as provided for in Education Code Section 47605(j)(1), and Title 5, California Code of Regulations Section 11967(a).

On November 18, 2014 our charter application to the Moreland School District was denied. We feel that the denial of our Petition was unwarranted due the numerous errors, omissions, misunderstandings, and inaccuracies in the Moreland School District staff report. The staff had no findings with respect to the core of our educational program. The vast majority of the findings are factually inaccurate, based on conjecture, irrelevant, and/or extends beyond the requirement of the Education Code. In some cases, staff either ignored or misread the relevant section of our Charter Petition, which has led to a report filled with misstatements and inaccuracies used to justify an unwarranted denial of our Petition. We have refuted each of the staff findings in detail.

Furthermore, we feel that we were given a very limited opportunity to work with the District. While we understand that individual board members are under no obligation to meet with us outside of public meetings, we made a number of attempts to meet with each of the board members prior to submitting the Petition. With the exception of the board president, all of the other board members did not even acknowledge our communications. The board president however refused to meet with us, citing a need to be transparent: "transparege our communications. The board president however refused to meet with us, ade a nu matters be heard and discussed in a public board meeting. To avoid any appearance of impropriety, this is

especially important to us on matters likely to be considered by the board in a public hearing such as the Wei Yu Charter Petition" (H. Sutton, personal communication, September 8, 2014).

We were also not given an opportunity to address the board at the determination meeting on November 18, 2014. Instead, the Petitioners had to rely on public comment period to refute the many inaccuracies in the District staff report.

We present our Charter Petition to the County Board of Education and ask for your approval of the charter on appeal. Our mission at WYICS is to provide a complementary public education choice for parents, while also preparing students for the 21st century by being bilingual and biliterate in English and Mandarin. Our school extends beyond Mandarin immersion because the language is the medium used to deliver our Common Core-aligned curriculum, which will incorporate Project-Based Learning via the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) framework, as well as Social-Emotional Learning.

We are well positioned to provide such a public education choice to the Moreland School District due to the following:

- **Strong community support and demand.** The demand for this school is clear. In less than 1 month, more than 150 families signed our Charter Petition and our community support continues to grow. WYICS believes that parents and families are critical partners in this work, and are entitled to school choice.

- **Strong team:** We have the experience, skills, and passion to deliver on our commitment. Our governing board, advisory board, and strategic partners have extensive experience with K-8 education and Mandarin immersion.

- **Innovative school design to meet the needs of all students:** While WYICS is based on a one-way Mandarin immersion model, we also have an unique opportunity to deliver innovative curriculum in a progressive learning environment that includes:
    - A strong emphasis on problem solving and critical thinking
    - Development of social-emotional skills of self-awareness, self-management, and self-direction
    - A cultivation of a strong sense of social justice and civic responsibility

- **Solid financial plan:** The five-year budget prepared in concert with Charter School Management Corporation is financially sound with very conservative revenue assumptions.

Following is a timeline of pertinent events:

- **September 15, 2014:** The Charter School Petitioners submit the Charter Petition to the District.

- **September 23, 2014:** The District adds the Charter School to the board meeting agenda and gives Charter School Petitioners 15 minutes to address the Moreland School Board.

- **September 30, 2014:** The District holds a board study session on charter school law.

- **October 14, 2014:** The District holds a public hearing on the Charter Petition. Many parents, prospective students, and community members attended to demonstrate their support for the Charter School.

- **October 28, 2014:** The District holds a board question and answer session regarding the Charter School.

- **November 14, 2014 at 4:38pm:** The District publishes the staff report on the Charter School's Petition.

- **November 18, 2014:** The District governing board voted 5-0 to deny the Charter School's Petition. Many parents, prospective students, and community members attended to demonstrate their support for the Charter School.

Enclosed herein and described below are the required documents for an appeal of the denial of the Charter School's petition by the District. The California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 11967(b) requires that a charter school whose petition has been denied and that wishes to appeal its petition to the County Board of Education must send the following information within 180 days after the denial action:

1. A complete copy of the Charter Petition as denied, including the signatures required by Education Code Section 47605. (Attached under **Binder Tab 1**.)

   On September 26, 2014, we notified the Moreland School District of a change to our Charter Petition. Ching-Pei Hu resigned from the initial Bay Area Language Immersion Schools (BALIS) Board because of concerns raised by her Superintendent over a conflict of interest between the Moreland School District and the Cupertino Unified School District, where she is a Principal. Ching-Pei was immediately replaced on the Board by Helen Wong, who has extensive administration experience, in addition to experience successfully launching and growing schools based on the Mandarin immersion model. The following is her biography:

Helen Wong is currently the Founder and Head of School at Cornerstone Learning Foundation in Palo Alto, CA. Helen is the former founding Principal and Head of the Chinese Program at Wellspring International School. Prior to Wellspring, she worked for Yew Chung International School in Hong Kong and Silicon Valley for 13 years, serving as a teacher, Head of Chinese Program, and Vice Principal. Before emigrating to Hong Kong, Helen taught at Jinguang Elementary School, in Fujian, China. Ms. Wong has taught students from preschool age to high school in Mainland China, Hong Kong and the U.S.

Helen believes students learn foreign language best when they are active constructors of meaning and users of the language, rather than passive receivers of vocabulary and information. She believes teachers teach best when they can scaffold instruction so that their students became increasingly independent in their use of the spoken and written language. Knowing each student is the first step that a teacher needs to take in order to be able to teach best. Although parents tell Helen they are fortunate to have her as their child's teacher, Helen feels the child is the root for her enjoyment, motivating her professional growth.

2. Evidence of the governing board's action to deny the Petition (e.g. meeting minutes) and the governing board's written factual findings specific to the particular Petition, when available, setting forth specific facts to support one or more of the grounds for denial set forth in Education Code Section 47605(b).

   Attached under **Binder Tab 2**, please find:

   a. District staff report containing findings for denial of the Charter Petition, November 18, 2014
   b. Charter School response to District staff report, November 24, 2014
   c. Note: The District Board-approved meeting minutes for November 18, 2014 will be sent under separate cover, when made available from the District.

3. A signed certification stating that the Petitioners will comply with all applicable law. (Attached under **Binder Tab 3**.)

4. A description of any changes to the Petition necessary to reflect the County as the chartering entity, as applicable. (Attached under **Binder Tab 4**.)

5. Letter from California Department of Education to Wei Yu International Charter School regarding Charter School's eligibility for funding under the Public Charter

Schools Grant Program ("PCSGP"), dated October 22, 2014. (Attached under **Binder Tab 5**.)

6. Revised budget reflecting receipt of PCSGP grant funds, dated November 24, 2014. (Attached under **Binder Tab 6**.)

7. A completed Charter School Review Matrix indicating with page numbers where each item can be located within the Petition. (Attached under **Binder Tab 7**.)

8. A compilation of support letters that the Petitioners submitted to the Moreland School District at the public hearing on October 14, 2014. (Attached under **Binder Tab 8**.)

At its November 18, 2014 meeting, the District Board of Education acted to deny the WYICS Charter Petition. This appeal is therefore well within the 180 day limit for submission of an appeal of a Charter Petition. According to Education Code Section 47605(b) and California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 11967(d), not later than 60 days after receiving a complete petition package, the Santa Clara County Board of Education shall grant or deny the Charter Petition.

* * * *

We look forward to working with your office and the Santa Clara County Board of Education as it considers the Charter Petition. Please feel free to contact me at (408) 533-2518 or ted.dong@gmail.com if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

Jun Dong
Lead Petitioner
Wei Yu International Charter School

cc: Michelle A. Lopez, Esq., Young, Minney & Corr, LLP

Enclosures