

American River Charter School



Authorizer:

Black Oak Mine Unified School District

Charter Petition Approved by the
BOMUSD Board of Trustees on
January 15, 2015

Table of Contents

AFFIRMATIONS/NEW LAWS	p. 4
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE DETERMINATION	p. 6
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION	p. 7
CHARTER SCHOOL INTENT	
Introduction, History, and Telling our Story	p. 9
ELEMENT 1: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM	
Mission Statement	p. 17
Educational Program and Philosophy	p. 17
Role of Parents/Guardians in Student Education	p. 18
How Learning Best Occurs	p. 19
Students Not Meeting Defined Outcomes	p. 20
Serving Students with Special Learning Needs	p. 20
Element 2: MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES	
Outcomes	p. 20
Local Control Accountability Plan Goals	p. 21
Element 3: METHOD BY WHICH PUPIL OUTCOMES WILL BE MEASURED	
Assumptions about Assessment	p. 22
Assessment Methods	p. 23
Element 4: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE	
Structure	p. 24
ARCS Council Responsibilities	p. 24
Administrator's Responsibilities	p. 25
Charter School Staff Meetings	p. 25
Charter School Administrator and Superintendent	p. 25
The Board of Trustees of BOMUSD	p. 25
Element 5: QUALIFICATIONS OF INDIVIDUALS EMPLOYED	p. 26
Element 6: PROCEDURES TO ENSURE HEALTH AND SAFETY	p. 27
Element 7: MEANS TO ACHIEVE RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE	p. 27
Element 8: ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS	
Non Discrimination Statement	p. 28
Priority Procedures	p. 28
Open Enrollment	p. 28
Lottery Process	p. 29
Family Participation	p. 30
Special Education Instruction and Services	p. 30
Previously Expelled Students	p. 31

Element 9: FINANCIAL AUDITS	
Programmatic Operation and Annual Audit	p. 31
Element 10: PUPIL SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION	
Policies	p. 32
Dismissal from ARCS	p. 32
Element 11: STAFF RETIREMENT SYSTEM	p. 33
Element 12: ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES	p. 33
Element 13: DESCRIPTION OF EMPLOYEE RIGHTS	
Employee Rights	p. 33
Procedure for request of leave of absence	p. 33
Element 14: DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS	
Intent	p. 34
Public Comments	p. 34
Disputes Arising from Within the School	p. 34
Disputes between ARCS and BOMUSD	p. 34
Oversight, Reporting, Revocation, and Renewal	p. 35
Element 15: LABOR RELATIONS	p. 35
Element 16: CLOSURE OF THE CHARTER SCHOOL	
Methods for Change	p. 35
Closure of the School	p. 36

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A	
Calendar and Daily Schedule	
APPENDIX B	
Revenue and Expenditures/Annual Report	
APPENDIX C	
Parent/Student Handbooks	
APPENDIX D	
School Safety Plan	
APPENDIX E	
Personal Policies and By-Laws	
APPENDIX F	
LCAP	
APPENDIX G	
School Accountability Report Card	

Affirmations/Assurances

As the authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application to renew the charter for the American River Charter School (“ARCS” or “Charter School” or “School”) located within the boundaries of Black Oak Mine Unified School District is true to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that if the charter is renewed, the Charter School is committed to the following affirmations:

1. American River Charter School shall meet all statewide standards and conduct all required pupil assessment tests, pursuant to Education Code Section 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or any other pupil assessments applicable to pupils in non-charter public schools.
2. American River Charter shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the American River Charter School for purposes of Educational Employment Relations.
3. The Charter School shall not enter into or bind the Eldorado County Office of Education to a contract in any way not authorized herein, nor to extend the credit of the County Office of Education to any third party without the express written permission of the County Office of Education.
4. The Charter School shall be non-sectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations.
5. The Charter School shall not charge tuition.
6. The Charter School shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, 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 or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
7. The Charter School shall admit all pupils who wish to attend the charter school and who submit a timely application unless the Charter School receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for pupils, in which case each application will be given equal chance of admission through a public random drawing process.
8. Except as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2), admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the student or his or her parents within the State.
9. Preference in the public random drawing shall be given as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B). In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of the Charter School in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(C). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(A)-(B)]
10. The Charter School shall conduct its meetings of the ARCS Council in accordance with the Brown Act and comply with the Public Records Act (Government Code 6250 et seq.) as well as Education Code 47604.3.
11. The Charter School shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004.

12. The Charter School shall meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to, credentials, as necessary.
13. The Charter School shall ensure that teachers in the Charter School hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools is required to hold. As allowed by statute, flexibility will be given to non-core, non-college preparatory teachers.
14. The Charter School under the guidance of BOMUSD will ensure that Special Education staff is appropriately credentialed.
15. Black Oak Mine Unified School District will not require any pupil to attend the Charter School.
16. The Charter School shall at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
17. The Charter School shall, for each fiscal year, offer at a minimum the number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by Education Code § 47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D).
18. 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.
19. The Charter School shall follow any and all other federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply, including but not limited to the following:
 - a. The Charter School shall comply with the Public Records Act and the Federal Educational Privacy Rights Act ("FERPA").
 - b. The Charter School shall on a regular basis consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School's education programs.
 - c. The Charter School shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to the location of its facilities.
 - d. The Charter School shall maintain accurate written contemporaneous records that document all pupil attendance, academic progress, disciplinary, immunization, and other health records and shall make those records available for audit and inspection upon request.
 - e. The Charter School shall comply with all laws related to the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment.
 - f. The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).
 - g. The Charter School shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum number of school days.
 - h. The Charter School will ensure that the eight priority areas as defined in EC Section 52060(d) are closely aligned to the Charter's goals as listed in their LCAP.
 - i. The Charter School shall comply with AB 1266 as defined by the Black Oak Mine Unified School District's Board policies. EC 221.5
 - j. The Charter School will ensure that the minimum school day requirement for students also enrolled part time in college classes are met. EC 46146.5

Susan Whittington, Director

Date:

Charter School Renewal Academic Performance Determination

Charter School Information

School Name:	American River Charter School		
CDS Code:	09-73783-0121566		

Authorizing Local Educational Agency (LEA)

Name:	Black Oak Mine Unified School District		
Address:	6540 Wentworth Springs Road,		
City:	Georgetown	Zip:	95634
Contact Name:	Dr. Robert Williams		
Phone:	530-333-8300	Fax:	530-333-8303
E-mail Address:	rwilliams@bomusd.org		

LEA Superintendent Certification

I hereby certify that the enclosed information is true and correct.

Superintendent or Designee Signature:	Date:
Superintendent or Designee Printed Name:	Title:

The Charter School Authorizer must provide supporting documentation and a written summary of the basis for any determination made in renewing a charter using the criterion in [EC 47607\(b\)\(4\)\(A\)](#), including evidence that pupil academic achievement for all groups of pupils served by the charter are at least equal to the public school that the pupils would otherwise have attended, as well as the academic performance of the schools in the school district in which the charter school is located, considering the composition of the pupil population that is served at the charter school.

All materials are submitted electronically on a CD or by e-mail including this signed cover sheet:

Via mail:

California Department of Education
Charter Schools Division
Attn: Charter School Renewal—Academic Performance Determination
1430 N Street, Suite 5401
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

Or via e-mail:

charters@cde.ca.gov

Comparison for 2012-13

CST data - District schools and surrounding Charters in Eldorado, Placer and Nevada Counties

2012-2013	ARCS BOMUSD	Golden Sierra Junior High BOMUSD	Georgetown Elementary BOMUSD	Alta Vista Community Charter Auburn	Placer County Pathways Charter Meadow Vista	Sky Mountain Charter School Placerville	Camino Science & Natural Resources Charter Camino
API	784	783	779	703	660	784	816
Proficient or Above ELA	50.5%	51.8%	41.5%	34.0%	37.3%	39.0%	62%
Proficient or Above Math	51.7%	51.2%	56.6%	36.0%	26.4%	60%	59.5%

Supporting documentation and summary of basis of determination: ARCS students have scored higher or equal to other students in the 2012/13 CST's in ELA and Math at Georgetown Elementary and Golden Sierra Junior High. ARCS students also scored higher or equal to other BOMUSD students in 2013/14 Science CST's .

Comparisons are also listed to other similar sized Charter schools in surrounding counties.

Three Year Comparison - CST Data 2011-13 with CST Science Data

YEAR	Similar School Rank	Participation Rate		Percent At or Above Proficient				API	Overall API	Percent of Student Population		
		95% ELA	95% Math									
2012-13	4	Yes	yes	Subgroups	ELA Target		Math Target		786	784 growth 774 base	94% 33%	
					%Met	Target Met	%Met	Target Met				
				School wide	50.5%	yes	51.7%	yes				789
				White	51.2%	yes	53.6%	yes				751
2011-12	5	yes	yes	School wide	57.3%	No	41.7%	No	764	767 growth 768 base	94%	
				White	56.8%	No	39.5%	No	800	27%		
				Low-income	63%	No	48.1%	No				
2010-11	5	yes	yes	School wide	52%	N/A	35%	N/A	758		84%	
				White	56%	N/A	39%	N/A	765			
				Low-income	53%	N/A	39%	N/A	697		N/A	

Science 2013-2014	ARCS	Georgetown Elementary	Golden Sierra Jr. High	Northside School
5 th Grade	55 %	42%	N/A	56%
8 th Grade	72%	N/A	48%	N/A



American River Charter motto: “Soaring to New Heights Together”

<http://arcs-ca.schoolloop.com/>

American River Charter School (ARCS) opened in fall 2010-11. Our petition was written in the fall of 2009 by a group of innovative parents, staff, and the superintendent. It was approved by the Black Oak Mine Unified School District Board of Trustees January 2010 and the State of California in the May 2010. We are a unique school with three types of programs.

Our intent is to offer three different types of programs at American River Charter School (ARCS) designed to educate students in grades TK-12. We currently have a K-8 site-based school, located in Georgetown, and a K-12 Home School program serving students on the entire Georgetown Divide. Last year, 2013-14, we added Home School hybrid classes. Our school began with 150 students and we have grown approximately 20-25 students each year. We had an average school enrollment of 200 students last year, and this year, 2014-15, our enrollment is up to 220.

Educational Program and Philosophy:

The American River Charter School (ARCS) is designed to educate students in grades K through 12 who need or desire an alternative learning model to traditional education. Our three programs or “forks” are based on a structure that meets the needs of our students, provides consistency of programs, and facilitates connections between students, curriculum and the real world. In the beginning, our vision included a small Waldorf-inspired class, and even though that class did not continue past the first year due to low enrollment, a stronger and more successful American River Charter School evolved. We are growing and still meeting the needs of our students and families. Last year we added our popular Hybrid/Home School model.



The South Fork:

The South Fork of the American River Charter School, referred to as **ARCS Site Program**, provides a TK-8 thematic instruction design that allows for hands on, multi-aged, experiential learning in a site-based delivery model. We provide an art-infused curriculum with integrated music and art projects resulting in performances and community displays of learning. We provide outdoor education opportunities through camping

trips, Nature studies and Science activities in the adjoining Georgetown Nature Area.

Comments from a site parent:

I am very happy about one type of activity that ARCS encourages, and other schools would probably have a hard time about organizing. That is our camping trips to Capps Crossing, and

Camp Winthers. These are always “excellent adventures!” The two day trip is huge, not only for students, but also for the parents. The kids will always remember the camaraderie and fun they have at Capps Crossing, the excitement of sleeping in a tent and/or with friends, the nature related activities, and the learning, which comes so easily and naturally for them in this setting that they don’t even know they’re actually learning. My son still talks about Camp Winthers, four years after it happened. And for the parents, it’s a great way to bond, and/or continues enhancing friendships. This, on the surface, may not appear to be so important in a school setting, but I believe that parents that form a coherent, social circle are very helpful in nurturing the type of environment that helps kids thrive, in a tight circle of friends. I am very happy to be able to be a part of ARCS events like this.

A focus at this school is on the whole child. ARCS emphasize learning by doing, with particular focus on character growth (life skills), teamwork, reflection, literacy, and the arts. Teachers connect high quality academic learning to adventure, service, and character development through a variety of student experiences including interdisciplinary and project-based learning.

One example is described by one of our site teachers:

Though I have experienced many amazing moments as a staff member of American River Charter School, one moment that I experienced recently sums up the unique flavor of the learning opportunities that we offer our students: On a warm September morning, kindergarten and first grade students from Room 4 and their third and fourth grade “Learning Buddies” from Room 7 ventured into the Georgetown Nature Area to spend some quality learning time together.

First, we all gathered in the outdoor seating area near the pond as the morning sun filtered through the leaves and cast speckled shadows on the water. Students shared out the “Leave No Trace” principles and then paired up with a Learning Buddy to do a Nature Scavenger Hunt. It was inspiring to watch the older students take on a little buddy and gently lead them around the nature area to hunt for feathers, something from a conifer, something man made, an oak tree, two different kinds of blackberry leaves, and a variety of other items. The students were engaged in the learning and it was wonderful to see the caring attitude of the older students toward the younger ones. The kindergarteners and first graders were so excited to find the items and share them with their Learning Buddies.

When it was time to return to school, we all gathered again to share the discoveries of the day and then we headed back to school. It was a fun and educational experience that engaged all students and demonstrated the benefits of multi-age learning opportunities, which we strive to provide at ARCS.



The Middle Fork:

The Middle Fork of the American River Charter School, referred to as the **ARCS Home School Program**, provides a K-12 individualized learning model that allows students to participate in instruction at home and through parent selected vendors. The mission of the Home School program is to support parents as the primary teachers of their children through positive collaboration between students, parents, and

professional educators. Those participating in the American River Charter School (ARCS) Home School Program can also participate in BOMUSD site-based program offerings, like sports and high school electives, CTC or A-G math and science classes from BOMUS District schools based upon space availability and scheduling. This model provides services and resources to Homeschooling families through a dedicated budget allocated per pupil on a semester basis.

One Home School Parent comments:

Our child was struggling to keep up with the pace of her classroom. The family began to homeschool, giving her daily one-on-one direct teaching. Our student has grown both academically and personally, showing an increase in abilities, confidence, and self-direction.

A Home School Teacher (ST) shares:

A family I have worked with for four years continues to grow. This family chooses to homeschool to give their children the best education - one child is above a grade level and one a little below, so she can tailor their needs appropriately. This family doesn't have a lot of resources, but continues to improve. The children always score well in tests and have great attitudes toward school. They started taking classes last year which helps their writing, and the new kindergartner this year began in the young group class where he gets to socialize with other children and talk about things other than video games and movies with them. This is so good for him. Unexpected family stress over the summer had me worried how they would recover, and I offered them the site or Georgetown school to take the stress away from the mom and help all children thrive. Mom decided to keep them all home and do her best to help them succeed. They have a schoolroom with laptops, desks, wall charts, audio books station, shelves and shelves of curriculum, art centers, hands on math areas and of course, the crib for the baby. What impresses me the most is how this family knows putting them in school may be easier on the mom, but instead have pulled together as a unit to be a strong family unit and help the children grow. The dedication to the best continues to impress me. I'm proud our school has given her resources to keep her family close and thriving. What a beautiful gift.

The stories keep coming from satisfied Home School Parents:

ARCS helped tremendously when making the transition from public school to a homeschool/charter program. I had always desired to homeschool my children, but wasn't quite sure of the steps required. One of my main concerns as a first time homeschooling parent was making sure my students stayed on track with curriculum, standards and continued to make forward progression. My Supervising Teacher (ST) that ARCS paired my family with helped me in choosing curriculum that aligned with the standards for both of my children and also complimented their learning styles. Through ARCS I am provided quality curriculum choices, assessments, and benchmark testing. I am also thankful to have a personal relationship with my ST and ARCS school officials which I feel was greatly lacking in the public school system we were previously enrolled in. During the three years that we have been enrolled in ARCS my oldest child has struggled in specific subject areas. My ST has assessed the areas of concern, assisted in seeking and implementing a more suitable curriculum tailored to my child's specific learning style, and provided opportunities for tutoring. These resources were not available to us in the public school system. I am very grateful to ARCS for the opportunity to take part in fostering the love of learning in my children.

The North Fork:

ARCS Hybrid Home School Program is where students can attend small teacher led classes two mornings a week with 10-12 other students for group activities and instructional support. One of our home school supervising teachers (ST) is facilitating the K-3 class. Last year we offered two separate Hybrid classes one for the younger learners and one for the older learners.

We have many amazing stories to tell, here is one from a Home School/Hybrid Teacher: *One of the best parts of American River Charter School is the variety of programs it makes available to students in the Black Oak Mine Unified School District. Each program has been created to meet the specific needs of specific students. The Hybrid program is a perfect example of ways they are meeting student needs within our community.*

During the 2013/14 school year, a program was developed by blending traditional site and traditional home-school programs. Two grade level options were available. I had the privilege of teaching the older group, a blend of 8th and 9th grades. The parents of these students did not feel that their child would be successful at district schools for various reasons, but they also did not feel able to home-school their student without additional support. Students met in a classroom setting once each week to present their completed work, receive direct instruction, participate in experiments, and generally improve their options for their future high school years. Students were instructed in Physical Science, Vocabulary, Literature, Writing, and Health. Math was delivered using an on-line program and each student completed the course that was appropriate for their grade level. Because of its small size, I was able to provide personal

attention to each student and allowed ongoing communication between my students and me to remove obstacles to their learning. I also developed lessons that followed their interests and met their individualized needs. As a result, each student experienced growth in areas needed. Specifically, reading vocabulary and fluency improved. I believe that the Hybrid program was a unique educational opportunity within the BOMUSD, as is American River Charter School.

Our students come from varied backgrounds and from different schools or programs within the county. We have families who were looking for a different educational experience for their children. Our twelve certificated teachers and eight support staff offer diverse site-based and home school programs; we offer something for everyone.

In fall 2012, we moved to a new and larger District facility. Our students have an improved playground and field space for PE. We are adjacent to the 30-acre Georgetown Nature Area where we offer outdoor education and environmental studies for all our students. We now also have a designed Computer Lab and Home School Resource room.

This year we increased our classified and certificated staffing to help address the needs of our LCAP academic and technology goals.

We believe learning best occurs when:

- Individual students' diverse learning styles, backgrounds and needs are given careful consideration
- Students experience tasks which challenge them and require perseverance, fitness, craftsmanship, imagination, self-discipline, and achievement
- Students are actively engaged in learning experiences which are integrated across curriculum areas and are meaningful within the context of their present and future lives
- Students are engaged in real-life studies, exposed to experts and work on authentic projects
- Learning opportunities provide information to ponder, experiment, and time to assimilate



American River Charter School certificated teachers prepare lessons and assignments that are aligned with the Common Core Standards and reflect students' interests. By encouraging students to pursue their interests, talents and passions, American River Charter School will enable students to become self-motivated, competent lifelong learners while pursuing academic competencies and requirements.

The key feature of our instructional approach is individualized learning programs where students are provided alternative educational approaches. Students learn in a variety of ways and are guided in assessing their individual learning styles. A student's learning opportunities might include the following: alternative class settings, such as but not limited to, cooperative small group classes, online courses, tutoring, contracted instruction with businesses and/or participating schools from within the sponsoring district, Home-based instruction; the use of traditional and nontraditional texts and learning materials; thematic projects and field studies . Eligible students may participate in community college courses, mentorships, and vocational training through existing community programs such as the local Regional Occupational Program. Enrolled home school students may also participate in classes, programs, and activities offered at local schools based upon space availability and student readiness for classes such as lab sciences, higher math, foreign language, visual and performing arts, and athletics.

While the traditional school setting is able to meet the needs of the majority of students, there is a growing need within our community for children and parents seeking an alternative learning environment. This program appeals to a wide variety of students. The goal of working individually and in small groups with students most particularly addresses the needs of students with learning differences. Students who fail to meet defined student outcomes may be referred by their teacher or parent to a Student Study Team (SST). At the SST meeting, parents, staff, professionals and sometimes the student will strategize on how to utilize resources within the charter school program to improve student success. Students who participate in special education programs will have their special learning needs addressed in their Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Other students whose learning issues are not addressed by special education programs may be addressed on an individual basis through general school resources. We are in partnership with EDCOE Special Education Programs, SELPA and Behaviorist for support and resources. Our staff was also trained in PBIS (Positive Behavior Supports Intervention) this year. We are working on our school culture as an LCAP goal. We believe and practice:

ARCS students are Respectful, Caring, and Safe



Comments from Site Parent: *I'm also very pleased about the culture that has developed at ARCS. This is a bit difficult to pin down in a few words. Perhaps the best way to paraphrase it is that I feel like ARCS has become an extension of our home. We know so many families at ARCS, and some of these very closely. We feel comfortable with sending kids to school for the academics, of course, but also because the academics happen seamlessly in an environment that's very much the same as at home. The transition from home to school is, I think, much more seamless than would be possible at other schools, and, for me, that's a good thing. The*

fact that we, as parents, have a clear opportunity to contribute, to suggest improvements, to help out, and are heard, also goes a long way to nurture this feeling.

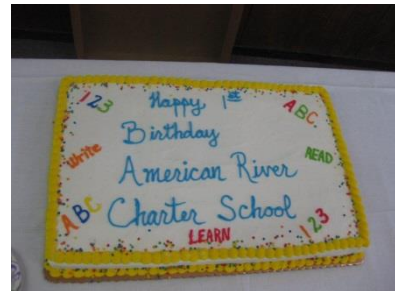
Friends of American River Charter School (FARCS)

In an effort to promote parent involvement, American River Charter School encourages parents and community members to assemble together in the interest of building community, providing input, and planning events. Friends of ARCS is a Parent Club that depends on parent volunteers! Parents work in the classrooms, drive on field trips, organize special events, serve on committees, and help raise money.

Some of the activities FARCS provides leadership for include:

- Fundraising opportunities
- Organizing Enrichment Programs
- Planning After-School Events
- Volunteering options at school

Fundraising is an important aspect of our school community. We have been the recipient of a couple of grants applied for by staff. Last year we received an Agriculture grant for our FARM Club and a Visual and Performing Arts grant for our VAPA program.



Past Five Year Review

- We did everything in our petition we said we were going to do.
- Our students made progress toward our academic goals.
- Parents were engaged and volunteered over 1000 hours per year.
- Finances were sound and budgets were balanced with carry-over funds each year.
- We hired and retained credentialed staff.
- We had clear audits.
- Our attendance was over 95% each year.
- We had less than 0.3% suspensions and no expulsions in past years.
- We followed our Mission Statement.

Future Five Year Goals

American River Charter School staff and parents have worked together to develop our goals for the next five years in conjunction with BOMUSD. As a dependent charter, we want our long term goals to be inclusive of our sponsoring District's LCAP goals.

- Recognizing parent's requests and needs in our community, we want to add a Transitional Kindergarten to our school options.
- Working with the District Curriculum Council, we will use the District recommended assessments in ELA and Math.
- We will support and practice California Common Core standards instruction using Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) strategies.
- We will develop opportunities for all students to access state-of-the-art Technology within direct instruction of computer and keyboarding skills in our new Computer Lab.
- We will continue to develop a Visual and Performing Arts program-rich culture for our students.
- We will continue to engage our students in researched-based instructional practices.
- We will continue to use Love and Logic and Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies (PBIS) to support positive classroom management and school-wide discipline and culture.
- We will align our Charter to the State priorities where they are applicable to charters.
- We will pursue WASC accreditation as it fits the needs of our school.
- We will work with the ARCS Council to improve the knowledge of their role and responsibilities.

Comments from a parent about our annual Variety Show: *The ARCS Variety Show not only allows us to portray our student's special abilities and talents, it also contributes to our entire community. On top of being an entertaining evening for our entire community, it is also a fund raiser for ARCS and brings in money to further develop and enrich our Performing Arts Department, as well as promotes our local businesses/vendors who advertise in our show program. It is one of the few sources of affordable advertising for our businesses on the Divide. In addition, the Variety Show helps teach students business & sales skills by going door-to-door to our local vendors asking for donations in exchange for advertising them in our show program.*

Now if that's not something to 'brag' about, I don't know what is!!

Element 1: Educational Program

Mission Statement

American River Charter School provides a rigorous, challenging, and adventurous education. Varied programs which are responsive to student and family needs, will be interesting and complex. Satisfying, high-quality student performance will be the result of powerful, consistent, teacher collaborated instruction, and diligent, persistent student effort. The atmosphere will be joyful, trusting and respectful. Students will become skillful, curious, life-long learners, creative problem solvers, caring involved community participants, and global citizens.

Educational Program and Philosophy

The American River Charter School (ARCS) is designed to educate students in grades TK through 12 who need or desire an alternative learning model to traditional education. Our programs are based on a structure that meets the needs of our students, consistency of programs and connections made between students, curriculum, and the real world in the 21st century.

Our student population for the first school year was 150 with increases of 20 – 25 students per year up to 400 students total. Enrollment caps will be managed by the ARCS Council subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District, the authorizing Local Educational Agency (LEA). Should enrollment exceed 400 students, BOMUSD and the American River Charter School will confer about strategies for accommodating the growth. The program is designed to support a variety of educational options to meet the diverse needs of the student population we serve. The ARCS will contract with the Black Oak Mine Unified School District for instructional support including but not limited to: professional development, curriculum selection, course outlines, program design, evaluation of instructional programs, assistance with classroom management, technology support, development of assessment methodology, tools for measuring student progress, and strategies and supports to meet the needs of diverse student learners.

Our school is named for the three forks of the American River and offers three diverse programs:

The South Fork

The South Fork, referred to as American River Charter School Site program, provides a K-8 thematic instruction design that focuses on creating independent thinkers in a positive, cooperative school community using hands-on curriculum in multi-age classes. Students enjoy an educational option which includes experiential, project-based instruction, an arts-infused curriculum, and small class sizes.

See Appendix C- Site Handbook

The Middle Fork

The Middle Fork, referred to as the American River Charter School Home School program, provides homeschooling families with a variety of educational options, including a Supervising Teacher for guidance and parent-chosen educational resources, including vendor classes, field trips, and instructional supplies. Those participating in the American River Charter School (ARCS) Home School Program can also participate in site based program offerings from BOMUSD schools based upon space, availability, and scheduling.

ARCS is not a WASC accredited school and for the small number of high school students enrolled, parents are notified in the Home School Parent Handbook what this means for their college options. High school students do have the option of taking A-G classes at the District High School, taking classes at the local community colleges, and taking accredited online classes.

See Appendix C- Home School Handbook

The North Fork

The North Fork, referred to as the American River Charter School Hybrid program provides a blended program for families who desire both site based and home study opportunities. Students will meet regularly with their Supervising Teacher for direct instruction and socialization, yet remain under the teaching of their parent.

The primary goal of offering these educational options is to provide viable educational alternatives to students and their families throughout the Georgetown Divide. In order to meet the primary goal of providing a variety of educational alternatives, ARCS may partner with other programs to create a comprehensive continuum of program offerings. Furthermore, BOMUSD and ARCS may collaborate to create unique program offerings should the need arise.

Role or Parents/Guardians in Student Education

American River Charter School will develop a functioning Parent Teacher Group that is a separate entity from the charter and sponsoring district. The purpose of the parent group is to increase the level of parent support in the overall program and to provide support to the instructional program, welcome and train new volunteers, and assist in the leadership of the school. These groups will be a key support to the ARCS Council as they will be asked for input in program design, modifications, and support through fundraising and field trips.

Parent involvement is an integral part of ARCS as stated in State Priority #3. Parent involvement will be demonstrated in the following ways.

- Parents will fulfill expectations set forth in the Program Agreement which is signed upon the student's registration into ARCS.

- Parents will be active members of the school community and their input will be gathered through surveys, committees, and meetings.
- Parents will adhere to the volunteer guidelines set forth in the Charter School Parent/Student Handbook and BOMUSD Volunteer guidelines.
- Friends of ARCS will assist in fundraising and festivals for the Charter School.

See Appendix C

See Appendix G – LCAP for Priority 6 data

How Learning Best Occurs

We believe learning best occurs when:

- Individual student’s diverse learning styles, backgrounds, and needs are given careful consideration.
- Students experience tasks which challenge them and require perseverance, fitness, craftsmanship, imagination, self-discipline, and achievement.
- Students are actively engaged in learning experiences which are integrated across curriculum areas and are meaningful within the context of their present and future lives.
- Students are engaged in real-life studies, exposed to experts, and work on authentic projects.
- Learning opportunities provide information to ponder, experiment, and time to assimilate.
- Students have opportunity to learn using technology, preparing them for the 21st century.

By encouraging students’ to pursue their interests, talents, and passions, American River Charter School will enable students to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners while pursuing academic competencies and requirements. The key feature of our instructional approach is an Individualized Learning Program where students are provided alternative educational approaches. Students learn in a variety of ways and are guided in assessing their individual learning styles following the Common Core Standards as recommended by State Priority #2 . An Individualized Learning Program might include the following:

Alternative class settings, such as but not limited to, cooperative classes to on-line courses, tutoring, contracted instruction with businesses and/or participating schools from within the sponsoring district, home-based instruction, the use of traditional and non-traditional texts and learning materials, as well as thematic projects, and field studies. Eligible students may participate in community college courses, mentorships, job shadowing, and vocational training through existing community programs, such as the local Regional Occupational Program as well as other locally offered Career Technical Education classes. Enrolled students may also participate in classes, programs and activities offered at local schools based upon space

availability and student readiness for classes such as lab sciences, foreign language, Visual and Performing Arts and athletics, as recommended in State Priority #7.

While the traditional school setting is able to meet the needs of the majority of students, there is a growing need within our community for children and parents seeking an alternative learning environment. This program appeals to a wide variety of students.

Students Not Meeting Defined Outcomes

The goal of working individually and in small groups with students most particularly addresses the needs of students with learning differences. Students who fail to meet defined student outcomes may be referred by their teacher or parent to a Student Study Team (SST). At the SST meeting, parents, staff, professionals, and sometimes the student will strategize on how to utilize available resources within the charter, district, or county to improve student success using the Response to Intervention model (RTI).

Serving Students with Special Learning Needs

Students who participate in Special Education programs will have their special learning needs addressed in their Individual Education Plan (IEP) following all requirements of the offer of Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and in accordance with BOMUSD and our Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). Other students whose learning issues are not addressed by the Special Education Programs may be addressed on an individual basis through general school, district, or county resources.

The American River Charter School shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and all other operations. The charter shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender or disability, nor shall it charge tuition.

Element 2: Measurable Pupil Outcomes

American River Charter School empowers students to fulfill all their learning requirements for graduation in a manner consistent with the philosophy of the school. Students may demonstrate their growth towards student standards in a variety of ways. However, the preferred measurement of learning is through completed assignments, projects, and age dependent formative, summative, and cumulative assessments. Application of critical thinking skills and creative presentation will be encouraged. Pupil achievement will be measured by assessments as appropriate to State Priority #4.

Outcomes

American River Charter students' overall outcomes are in alignment with the BOMUSD District's outcomes and will follow the District/GSHS vision statement:

- Healthy Individuals and Exceptional Citizens

- Effective Communicators and Academically Responsible Students
- Curious and Imaginative Learners
- Resourceful and Lifelong Learners
- Critical Thinkers and have Creative Presentation skills
- College and Career Ready

Students, parents and Charter School teachers will develop measurable learning results for the student; these will be identified and included in the student’s file. Progress toward student learning results will be assessed a minimum of two times a year by the ARCS teacher.

The students will demonstrate growth in the following areas:

- Growth Area Goal #1: Student reads, writes, and computes effectively.
- Growth Area Goal #2: Student applies reading, writing, computation, and communication skills to solve problems.
- Growth Area Goal #3: Student appreciates and respects the history, values, and contributions of diverse cultures.
- Growth Area Goal #4: Student has a sense of civic responsibility and comprehends the political process.
- Growth Area Goal #5: Student applies scientific concepts, and uses technology to explain the world, finding solutions to its problems.
- Growth Area Goal #6: Student demonstrates skills and attitudes that allow adaptation to change, valuing of relationships, and working cooperatively with others.
- Growth Area Goal #7: Student uses special interests, talents, and abilities to think, reason, and produce creatively.

Local control Accountability Plan Goals

Our Local Control Accountability Plan goals and outcomes are all aligned with the eight state priorities and our LCAP was approved by our authorizing District in the spring of 2014. The ARCS LCAP goals will be measured and updated yearly including all subgroups. Our Local Control Accountability Plan goals and student outcomes include:

Goal 1: Academic Goals:

All students will learn the skills and content necessary to make academic improvement in Common Core State Standards. Each student in the charter school is expected to be learning at

their grade level and will be given the support needed to be college and career ready when they graduate. This goal will be measured by multiple assessment measures.

Goal 2: Technology goal:

Students in grades 3 – 12 will use computers regularly. Keyboarding skills will be developed starting in grade 3 leading toward middle school and high school students submitting final papers and assignments electronically. Students will be prepared for the Smarter Balanced assessments, learning the SBAC Universal tools and keyboarding skills needed for their success as measured by data collected in Computer classes on WPM with (2014-15) as the baseline year.

Goal 3: School Climate goal:

ARCS students will focus on the qualities of respect, caring, and safety. Our behavior management goals for on-site students will focus on these three areas. This goal will be measured by PBIS data collected in baseline year (2014-15) and compared thereafter and recommended in State Priority #6. All students will be encouraged to develop a sense of civic responsibility and learn to respect and value the contributions of others while also developing their own interests and talents.

All students and subgroups, Foster Youth, ELL students, low socio- economic youth, and students with Disabilities will receive support in the way of extra tutors, intervention strategies in the general education program, and small group instruction to help them achieve these goals. We currently have no ELL students in our school, less than 30 students with Disabilities, and less than five Foster Youth. Our specific annual actions are listed in our LCAP and match our outcomes for all subgroups recommended in State Priority #4.

See Appendix G – Local Control Accountability Plan

Element 3: Method by Which Pupil Outcomes will be Measured

Assumptions about Assessment

Our choice of methods to assess pupil progress is based on the following six beliefs about assessment:

1. In order to have a complete picture of a student's growth, a multi-tier system of assessments must be used. Assessments should focus on a student's growth towards a proficiency standard rather than comparing a student's performance against other students.
2. There should be a close relationship between a desired student's outcome and the means used to assess it.
3. Assessing what students do with knowledge is as important as assessing what knowledge they have.

4. Assessment should promote and support reflection and self-evaluation on the part of students, staff, and parents.
5. Assessment data will offer a comprehensive method of differentiating supports to at risk students and target populations including the Student Study Team process.
6. Alternative school selected assessments will be used to show increase in students' academic achievement in all groups and subgroups.

Assessment Methods

While all students will achieve the required standards by graduation, not all will progress at the same rate. Evaluation of that progress is based on individual abilities, interests, and talents. Based on the above beliefs, methods by which student progress is assessed will be through a variety of the following and will align with our Local Control Accountability Plan:

- Monthly review of work
- Annual portfolios (minimum of two samples per subject area per semester)
- Parent and Teacher observations
- The current state mandated assessment tool administered in spring
- Student work samples – collected frequently
- Student grades
- Student demonstrations of learning
- School selected assessment tools might include for ELA: Basic Reading Inventory, the San Diego Quick Word Recognition test, Accelerated Reading STAR Diagnostic assessments, and District Writing Assessment
- Field studies
- Participation in enrichment activities and classes
- The California High School Exit Exam
- American River Charter School will administer the current state mandated Assessment tool during the state-approved testing windows in alignment with those of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District.

Element 4: Governance Structure

Structure

The American River Charter School shall be governed by the Board of Trustees of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District, which will serve as the charter board of the American River Charter School. Notwithstanding anything in this petition to the contrary, the Board of Trustees of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District has final decision-making authority over all financial, operational (including staffing), and other matters for the American River Charter

School. The Board of Trustees may, from time to time and in its sole discretion, delegate this authority to one or more individuals or entities, to the extent permitted by applicable law.

The American River Charter School will also have a Charter Council (ARCS Council), which will be responsible for making recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The ARCS Council will be governed by bylaws established and approved annually by the council. The council will be comprised of 50% parents, students and community members and 50% staff of the ARCS plus one member to be designated by the Black Oak Mine Unified School District Board of Trustees. The member designated by the Black Oak Mine Unified School District Board of Trustees will serve until his or her replacement is designated by the Board of Trustees. For purposes here-of, the term “parents” includes step-parents and legal guardians. Staff members on the council shall be elected by all staff members with one vote per employee.

If a community representative is not found to fill the position within three months, a parent may be appointed by the ARCS Council to serve the remainder of the term. If a parent is not available then a staff member may be appointed by the ARCS Council to serve the remainder of the term.

The Brown Act will govern all activities of the ARCS Council.

Appendix F – ARCS Council By-Laws

ARCS Council Responsibilities

The ARCS Charter Council is responsible for recommending modifications to the school Charter, if necessary. Any ARCS Council recommendations to amend the school Charter must be approved by the Black Oak Mine Unified School District Board of Trustees prior to implementation.

The ARCS Council will meet every other month, at least quarterly. Announcements of all ARCS Council meetings will be included in newsletters sent home to all families and will be posted in appropriate places to conform with the Brown Act. The American River Charter School will be annually evaluated by the ARCS Council. The evaluations will be used to determine the effectiveness of the Charter School programs and provide direction for program improvements.

The ARCS Council will provide input and recommendations to the Black Oak Mine Unified School District Board of Trustees on the American River Charter School budget.

Membership and its definitions, succession, voting rights, termination of membership, resignations, and vacancies are covered in detail in the by-laws. The procedure followed for conducting elections and soliciting candidates is also delineated in the by-laws.

Administrator's Responsibilities

The American River Charter School Administrator shall continue to assure:

- Evaluation of staff in relationship to approved policies and procedures and in accordance with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP's)
- Review selection and assignment of staff with the ARCS Council
- Oversight of school site plan
- Development of the Charter Budget with input from the ARCS council for approval by the BOMUSD Board of Trustees
- Development of the Local Control Accountability Plan
- Coordination of the charter school operations in conjunction with BOMUSD
- Development of the annual school calendar
- Development of the employee handbook and communication with employees affected by the handbook, subject to the Board of Trustees of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District
- Day to day operations of the Charter School in accordance with the California Standards for Professional Educational Leaders (CPSEL's)

Charter School Staff Meetings

The ARCS staff will meet regularly to monitor the daily operations, curriculum, and development of the programs and options offered in the Charter School.

Charter School Administrator and Superintendent

The ARCS administrator will coordinate and facilitate the general operations of the Charter School and meet regularly with Black Oak Mine Unified School District administration.

The Board of Trustees of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District

The Board of Trustees of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District is the governing body of the American River Charter School. The Board of Trustees will designate a representative to serve on the American River Charter School (ARCS) Council. The results of both the annual parent evaluation and student assessments results will be shared with the Board annually.

Element 5: Qualifications of Individuals Employed

Individuals employed by our school should be models of those characteristics we wish to nurture in our students. They will display a continuing passion for learning and strive for excellence in their chosen field. They will be intelligent, flexible, open to the process of personal growth, and skilled in communication. Their accomplishments and competence may be demonstrated by experience working with children under the guidance of recognized experts, or by reputation, and high regard in the community. In addition, all teachers will possess a valid California Teaching Credential.

Qualities in a Charter Teacher and Charter Administrator will be sought after as delineated in the ARCS Charter School Petition. Teachers, parents, and other stakeholders will be actively involved in the selection of these candidates. The ARCS Charter Council is responsible for making recommendations regarding the structure of the school including the type of administration with ultimate authority resting with the BOMUSD Board of Trustees. Some options for consideration may include but not be limited to: a self-governance model, contracting with the BOMUSD for technical support or a separate administrator. Should the ARCS Charter Council hire their own administrator, the Charter Administrator will solicit evaluative feedback from teachers and other key stakeholders annually and be evaluated annually by the BOMUSD Superintendent or designee in accordance with BOMUSD policies and procedures with input provided by the ARCS council. The BOMUSD will at all times provide oversight in regards to governance, support and technical assistance to the ARCS. The Board of Trustees of Black Oak Mine Unified School District or its designee(s) will have final decision making authority over staffing matters.

Documents relating to employee qualifications shall be maintained on file at Black Oak Mine Unified School District and shall be subject to periodic inspection by Black Oak Mine Unified School District.

Qualifications for any other full-time, part-time or temporary employee shall be determined by the Black Oak Mine Unified School District Board of Trustees based upon recommendations from the ARCS Council.

Element 6: Procedures to Ensure Health and Safety

To ensure the safety of students and staff, California Education Code (C.E.C), Section 44237, shall be followed in regard to salaried employees. Immunization and other health-related issues of employees and students of American River Charter School will be addressed in accordance with existing board policy and applicable law. All certificated and administrative staff shall receive training in emergency response, including appropriate "CPR" training or its equivalent.

All employees of the school must submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Section 44237. Safety reviews, employee record checks (i.e. C.E.C Section 44237) and program, transportation, and building use standards and practices shall be performed as needed and as is consistent with appropriate laws, Charter School Statutes, and Black Oak Mine Unified School District policy. An on-site designee shall oversee proper reporting procedures for building/grounds safety issues, injuries, or other health/safety related problems.

American River Charter follows the same BOMUSD Board policies in regard to: Non Discrimination and Harassment BP5145.3, Sexual Harassment BP 5145.7, Hate Motivated Behavior BP 5145.9, Bullying Sect 5131.2. We will follow district guidelines for Ed Code Sect 221.5.

All school facilities shall function as a drug, alcohol, and tobacco free workplace. School climate will be measured through the Annual School Survey as recommended in State Priority #6 and reported in the Annual Report.

Appendix D Annual Report

Appendix E Comprehensive School Safety Plan

Element 7: Means to Achieve Racial and Ethnic Balance Reflective of District

American River Students will be considered for admission without regard to ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability. American River Charter School will seek to maintain racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general population within the territorial jurisdiction of Black Oak Mine Unified School District through the open enrollment policy of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District.

Element 8: Admissions Requirements

Non Discrimination Statement

The American River Charter School (ARCS) is a nonprofit, coeducational, English-language, public charter school open to all applicants living in El Dorado County and all contiguous counties without discrimination on the basis of actual or perceived disability, gender, nationality, race, or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, level of English, or any other prohibited characteristic. ARCS also adheres to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004. Students enrolled at the ARCS shall not be required to pay a pupil fee for participation in any educational activity. (Section 49011) (a)

Priority Procedures

The priority procedures for admission and the filling of open seats in the classroom will follow the procedures outlined in the Charter School Parent/Student Handbook.

Prior to being admitted into the American River Charter School, students and parents will be required to:

- Understand the charter school's philosophies and growth areas.
- Select the student's educational program or option.
- Sign and agree to abide by the Charter School Agreement
- Agree to abide by the guidelines set forth in the Charter School Parent/Student Handbook.
- New families will participate in an intake conference.

Within the first year of being admitted to the American River Charter School, in order to remain in the American River Charter School, students and parents will be required to demonstrate they can:

- Maintain the academic proficiency standards set for each grade level.
- Adhere to the Charter School Agreement.
- Participate and be involved in the educational program.

Students are considered for enrollment into American River Charter School as follows:

Open Enrollment

- For Transitional Kindergarten, open enrollment ends the last Friday in February if they will be 5 years of age by December 1 of the same year. TK is a two year Kindergarten option.
- For Kindergarten, open enrollment period for siblings of those already enrolled in American River Charter School for 1 year ends the last Friday in January.

- Open enrollment period for kindergarten ends the last Friday in February for current school year.
- Open enrollment for grades 1 - 12 ends the last Friday in February for current school year.
- The charter school shall comply with all existing laws establishing minimum and maximum age limits for attending public school.
- Once enrolled, ARCS students receive guaranteed placement in subsequent years dependent upon parent and student signatures on Student Agreements signed and complied with each year of enrollment. For students participating in the American River Charter School Home Study Academy, student agreements must be signed and complied with each semester.

As it is expected that the combination of continuing students and applicants will exceed capacity each year, available spaces will be filled through a public random drawing (i.e. lottery) conducted according to the California Education Code and the provisions of our Charter. Lottery procedures are defined below. We include all applications received during the published enrollment window in the lottery, without consideration for the order received. Each applicant included in the lottery receives placement in the school at the appropriate grade level or a numbered position on our waiting list for that grade level. We do not accept applications received later than the published closing day and time for the enrollment window. If a spot becomes available and the waitlist has been exhausted for the grade involved, a subsequent open enrollment period will be held for that grade only.

Per the terms of our Charter and the California Education Code, students must be 5 years old by September 1 to enter kindergarten and 6 years old by September 1 to enter 1st grade. We may review the placement of individual students after a six-week trial period to determine if that are developmental appropriate for that grade level.

Lottery Process

Due to the divergent geographic area and grade spans served by this charter school, a lottery may be held for a specific geographic area or grade level, not the whole school.

- Any public lottery for American River Charter School will be held on or before the first and third Monday on the month following the determination that a lottery is necessary
- All names selected in the lottery draw are assigned a number and entered onto a waiting list in order of their selection. When the waiting list is exhausted, new applicants will be eligible for the next lottery draw.
- All drawings will be held at noon.
- Three people must be present at a lottery drawing.
- A log will be kept of all applicants in the drawing and their assigned number.

Preference for admission shall be given to siblings of currently enrolled students, as well as students residing within the Black Oak Mine Unified School District. Admission will be dependent upon parent and student signatures on Student Agreements signed and complied with each semester of enrollment. American River Charter School seeks to admit children ensuring that the educational program provides the least restrictive environment.

The American River Charter School shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and all other operations. The charter will neither discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender or disability, nor shall it charge tuition.

Family Participation

As a charter school, California law allows the ARCS to require family participation hours as a condition of enrollment. Believing that family involvement improves both the educational process and organizational success of ARCS, three hours of monthly service are required to the school. Options for serving these hours of service include classroom assistance, fieldtrip chaperoning, Saturday school site workdays, committee and workgroup assignments, office work, school meetings, and much more, every family will have an opportunity to find a meaningful and workable way to contribute their required time. The signed agreement includes a commitment to these hours of service as a condition of enrollment.

Unlike participation hours, as a public school, our school cannot and does not charge tuition. We receive basic funding from the State of California. The ARCS Parent Teacher Groups including parents, teachers, and other supporters will operate independently from the school for the sole purpose of supporting the school.

Special Education Instruction and Services

As a charter school authorized by the Black Oak Mine Unified School District (District), the American River Charter School operates as a public school of the District for all special education purposes. Accordingly, students eligible for special education who are enrolled in ARCS shall receive special education services in accordance with their Individualized Education Programs (IEP) and in the same manner as any other student enrolled in the District. The District, as the local education agency for special education purposes, offers special education instruction and related services that may be unavailable on the ARCS school site. Accordingly, an ARCS student requiring special education services may receive such services from the District at another site in the District or as otherwise arranged by the District in accordance with the student's IEP and the policies of the District and Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA).

Special education placements and related services available on site at ARCS may include general education inclusion, a resource specialist program, speech and language therapy, and other

designated instructional services. Other special education placements and services may be available off-site in the District as called for in a student's Individualized Education Program. ARCS shall not discriminate against any student with disabilities in the ARCS admissions and enrollment process.

In compliance with Federal and State laws and regulations governing special education services, services for eligible students will be provided through the Black Oak Mine Unified School District, the Local Education Agency of the El Dorado County Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). These services may include Search and Serve, referrals for special education services, assessments and identification, IEP meetings, consulting, direct student service, and administrative services. The American River Charter School shall be responsible for an appropriate share of special education encroachment costs in accordance with the California Education Code, as determined in the sole discretion of the Board of Trustees of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District.

Previously Expelled Students

Students who have been expelled or have school records showing recurrent behavior/disciplinary problems will require special consideration by the Black Oak Mine Unified School District Board of Trustees and may not be accepted for enrollment.

Element 9: Financial Audits

Programmatic Operation and Annual Audit

A qualified auditor, which shall employ generally accepted accounting practices applicable to the school, will perform an annual financial audit of American River Charter School. The audit will be part of Black Oak Mine Unified School District's audit. Such an audit shall at a minimum verify the accuracy of the school's financial statements, revenue-related data collection and reporting practices, and examine the school's internal controls.

It is anticipated that the annual audit shall be completed reasonably promptly after the close of the fiscal year. A copy of the auditor's findings shall be forwarded to the Black Oak Mine Unified School District. Procedures and/or processes that caused the exceptions and deficiencies shall be modified to meet the auditor's specifications. Such modifications shall be sent to the Black Oak Mine Unified School District Board within three months of the auditor's report. In addition to a regular financial audit, American River Charter School will produce and provide to Black Oak Mine Unified School District an annual performance audit. The Programmatic Audit will, at a minimum, include the following data:

1. A copy of the ARCS Council's self-evaluation on prior year management performances, summary of major decisions and policies established during the year, and the upcoming year's goals.

2. Data on the level of parent and staff involvement in the school's ARCS Council (and other aspects of the school, if applicable) and summary data from an annual parent and staff survey.
3. Data regarding the number of staff working at the school and their qualifications.
4. An overview of the school's admissions practices during the year and data regarding the numbers of students enrolled, the number on waiting lists, and the number of students expelled and/or suspended.
5. Analysis of the effectiveness of the school's internal and external dispute mechanisms and data on the number and resolution of disputes and complaints.

See Appendix D – Annual Report

Element 10: Pupil Suspension and Expulsion

Policies

American River Charter School will follow the student policies of Black Oak Mine Unified School District. These suspension or expulsion policies will be posted on the school's website and available in the school office. The master contract and school handbooks will clearly describe the school's expectations regarding discipline, attendance, mutual respect, substance abuse, violence, safety, and work habits. **See Appendix C Handbooks**

The school director may suspend students who fail to comply with these policies at any time in accordance with the California Education Code. Students who habitually fail to comply with these policies and/or who present an immediate threat to health and safety may also be suspended and later expelled by the Black Oak Mine Unified School District Board of Trustees. Prior to expulsion, students will be accorded due process unless the student's conduct presents an immediate threat to the health or safety of others. The school will notify the district of any expulsions and will include suspension and expulsion data in its annual performance. For students with an IEP, guidelines for suspension and expulsion will be followed as per the BOMUSD Policies.

Dismissal from the American River Charter School

Charter student and parent members may be exited for non-compliance with the terms of the Charter School Parent/Student Handbook and/or the American River Charter Program Agreement signed by the student, parent and teacher.

Element 11: Staff Retirement System

All employees of American River Charter School shall participate in the school sponsored retirement plans according to approved ARCS policies. These may include but are not limited to STRS and PERS.

Element 12: Attendance Alternatives

All students who reside in the Black Oak Mine Unified School District who do not wish to attend the American River Charter School may choose to attend the school district's other schools within the Black Oak Mine Unified School District.

Element 13: Description of Employee Rights

Employees of this Charter School will participate in STRS, PERS, or Social Security depending upon each individual's eligibility. No district employee will be required to work at the Charter School (Ed. Code 47605 (3)(e)).

Employee Rights

Employee rights and terms of employment for ARCS employees will be governed by individual employment contracts and/or other ARCS policy statements, which may be set forth in employee handbooks or other documents.

Existing Black Oak Mine Unified School District employee agreements, contracts, or policies relating to school district or school district personnel may not cover American River Charter School employees. Employees covered by existing Black Oak Mine Unified School District employee agreements that transfer to American River Charter School staff, are no longer covered by Black Oak Mine Unified School District collective bargaining agreements.

Procedure for request of a leave of absence

Any site based half-time or more Charter School Certificated Employee may enter into an agreement regarding a request for leave of absence with the American River Charter School according to the following specifications: This agreement specifies the dates for break in service and reinstatement with a future contract. Written notification requesting such an agreement must be received by American River Charter School administrator prior to March 1st of the previous school year. The agreement states when a break in service would occur and when a new contract would be issued if enrollment so warrants. Willingness to enter into this agreement is at the discretion of the Board of Trustees of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District based upon the recommendation of the American River Charter School Administrator.

See Appendix F – Personnel Policies Handbook

Element 14: Dispute Resolution Process

Intent

The intent of this dispute resolution process is to: resolve disputes within the school pursuant to the school's policies, minimize the oversight burden on the district, ensure a fair and timely resolution to disputes, and frame a charter oversight and renewal process and timeline so as to avoid disputes regarding oversight and renewal matters.

Public Comments

The staff and ARCS Council members of American River Charter School and Black Oak Mine Unified School District agree to attempt to resolve all disputes regarding this charter pursuant to the terms of this section. Both shall refrain from public commentary regarding any disputes until the matter has progressed through the dispute resolution process.

Disputes Arising from Within the School

Disputes arising from within the school, including all disputes among and between students, staff, parents, volunteers, advisors, partner organizations, and ARCS Council members of the school, shall be resolved pursuant to Black Oak Mine Unified School District Board policy, including the Uniform Complaint Procedure.

The Black Oak Mine Unified School District shall not intervene in any such internal disputes without the consent of the ARCS Council of the school and shall refer any complaints or reports regarding such disputes to the ARCS Council and/or director of the school for resolution pursuant to the school's policies. The district agrees not to intervene or become involved in the dispute unless the dispute has given the district reasonable cause to believe that a violation of this charter or related laws or agreements has occurred, the Charter Council of the school has requested the district to intervene in the dispute, or it otherwise determines that its intervention is in the best interests of the ARCS, the Black Oak Mine Unified School District or any other relevant constituency.

Disputes Between the American River Charter School and the Black Oak Mine Unified School District

In the event that the ARCS or Black Oak Mine Unified School District have disputes regarding the terms of this charter or any other issue regarding the school and the district relationship, both parties agree to follow the BOMUSD complaint process identified in the BOMUSD Board Policies and Administrative Regulations.

The Board of Trustees of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District has decision making authority over all matters relating to ARCS, and nothing in this section shall limit the authority of the Board of Trustees to finally and conclusively make any and all determinations regarding ARCS and its operations, including with respect to disputes between ARCS and the Black Oak Mine Unified School District.

Oversight, Reporting, Revocation, and Renewal

If the Board of Trustees for the Black Oak Mine Unified School District believes it has cause to revoke this charter, the board agrees to notify the ARCS Council of the school in writing, noting the specific reasons for which the charter may be revoked, and grant the school reasonable time to respond to the notice and take appropriate corrective action.

The Black Oak Mine Unified School District agrees to receive and review the annual fiscal and programmatic audit and annual performance report as specified above. Within two months of the receipt of this annual review, Black Oak Mine Unified School District must notify the ARCS Council of the school as to whether it considers the school to be making satisfactory progress relative to the goals specified in this charter. This annual notification will include the specific reasons for the Black Oak Mine Unified School District conclusions. If, in its review of the school's annual report, Black Oak Mine Unified School District determines that the school is making satisfactory progress toward its goals, this charter, and any mutually agreeable amendments, is renewed for a term of no less than five years.

Element 15: Labor Relations

The ARCS will be the exclusive public school employer responsible within the meaning and for the purpose of Education Code Section 47611.5.

Element 16: Method for Change to the Charter/Closure of the Charter School

Methods for Change

The process for change to the Charter Document is as follows:

- A. Ideas for change may originate anywhere.
- B. Recommendations come to the ARCS Council through one of its members for consideration.
- C. The ARCS Council will consider and reach a decision through consensus for the proposed recommendation for additions, deletions, and modifications to the Charter Document.
- D. Recommendation for additions, deletions, and modifications to the Charter Document from the ARCS Council will be brought to the Board of Trustees of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District for approval.

The intent of this specific outlined process is to increase communications regarding changes and allow the ARCS to operate in a responsive timely manner.

Closure of School

Listed are the procedures that will be used in the event that ARCS closes. This closure could be due to the Board of Trustees of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District or the State Board of Education's revocation of the charter, or American River Charter's decision to voluntarily close.

- A. Notification will be given to the ARCS community in regards to the pending closure. This will be done in written form and at least one community meeting for each of the following constituents will be held: Students, Parents/Community, and Staff. The purpose of these meetings will be to discuss the particulars of the school closure and the manner in which parents/guardians may obtain copies of student's records.
- B. Every effort will be made to forward student records to the appropriate new schools, all other records will be forwarded to the Black Oak Mine Unified School District Office, including a list of students in each grade level and the classes they have completed.
- C. All outstanding debt shall be paid to the extent that funds are available. A final audit will be conducted by the Black Oak Mine Unified School District's auditor.
- D. Any assets that exceed liabilities will be distributed to the Black Oak Mine Unified School District which will assume all rights and title to such assets.
- E. Notification to the California Department of Education and County Office of Education
- F. Completing and filing any Annual Reports required in pursuit of Education Code 47604.33. The charter authorizing entity should send a notice of the school closure to the Charter Schools Unit at the CDE and to the El Dorado County Office of Education. The notification should include the following information:
 1. Charter school name, charter number and CDS code
 2. Date of closure action
 3. Effective date of the closure, if different
 4. Reason for the closure (Specify revoked, not renewed or other reason. If the charter is revoked pursuant to Education Code sections 47604.5 or 47606, or not renewed pursuant to Education Code Section 47607, the notice should clearly state that the charter has been revoked or not renewed, as appropriate. If it is being closed for other reasons, the notice should specify the reason(s) and clarify that the charter school is being closed, but not revoked.)
- G. After receiving the notification of closure, CDE will notify the charter school and the authorizing entity if it is aware of any liabilities that the charter school owes the state, such as overpayment of apportionments, unpaid revolving fund loans, grants, etc. The CDE may contact the county office of education or independently contract for an audit of the charter school if it has reason to believe that the school received state funding for which it was not eligible.
- H. Notification to Receiving Districts - The charter school or authorizing entity should notify any school district that may be responsible for providing education services to the former students of the charter school so that the receiving district(s) may assist in facilitating student transfers.

The Black Oak Mine Unified School District Board of Trustees approved the Charter Petition for the American River Charter School.

Dated this 15th day of January, 2015 by order of the Board of Trustees of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District upon a vote of ayes and nays.

Joe Scroggins, President of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District

Rob Williams, Superintendent of Black Oak Mine Unified School District