

**RECOMMENDATION:** Grant the proposed revision to the charter of Darnall Charter School to revise the leadership structure at the school, effective immediately upon approval.

**BACKGROUND:** Pursuant to Education Code section 47607, a material revision of the provisions of a charter petition may be made only with the approval of the authority that granted the charter. Darnall Charter School (“Darnall”) is requesting to revise their leadership structure at the school.

**RENEWAL VERSUS REVISION:**

A petition to open a new charter school can be approved by the district for up to a five-year term. Near the end of the term, a charter school applies for “renewal” of its charter to continue operating. Education Code section 47605 requires the review and approval process for new and renewing charter petitions to take place over two board meetings: (i) public hearing, and (ii) action to grant/deny.

Within a charter term, a charter school may request the district’s approval to revise its existing charter. Pursuant to Education Code section 47607, material revisions are governed by the standards and criteria described in Education Code section 47605, and may be made only with the approval of the authority that granted the charter. Proposed revisions may include a change in the school’s location, special education status, expansion of grade levels, or other significant revision. The new criteria established by Assembly Bill 1505 are not applicable to this material revision as the school is not requesting an expansion of its operations.

**Darnall REVIEW:**

Darnall is operated by the nonprofit public benefit corporation of the same name, pursuant to Education Code section 47604. Darnall has been in operation since fall 1993. The school serves grades K-8 at a district-owned property located at 6020 Hughes Street (92115), which is within the attendance boundaries of Crawford High School. Darnall was renewed for a five-year charter term beginning July 1, 2019, and ending June 30, 2024. Subsequently, Assembly Bill 130 provided a two-year extension, and Senate Bill 114 provided a one-year extension, moving Darnall’s charter term end date to June 30, 2027. The following table summarizes Darnall’s charter petition and renewals.

**Table 1: Summary of Charter Petitions and Renewals**

| Item                         | Board Date       | Term                          |
|------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Initial Charter (conversion) | July 27, 1993    | July 27, 1993 – July 26, 1998 |
| Extension of charter         | July 14, 1998    | Extended to October 27, 1998  |
| Renewal                      | October 27, 1998 | Oct. 27, 1998 – Oct. 26, 2003 |
| Extension of charter         | May 27, 2003     | Extended to April 30, 2004    |
| Renewal                      | December 9, 2003 | May 1, 2004 – June 30, 2009   |
| Renewal                      | April 21, 2009   | July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2014  |
| Renewal                      | May 13, 2014     | July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2019  |
| Renewal                      | May 14, 2019     | July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2024  |

|                             |            |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------------------------|
| Assembly Bill 130 extension | July 2021  | July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2026 |
| Senate Bill 114 extension   | Sept. 2024 | July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027 |

This revision is to change the distributed leadership structure in the current charter petition to a more centralized, Executive Director and Associate Director leadership model. The change will streamline decision-making, enhance operational efficiency, strengthen the school's leadership capacity, and positively impact the school's ability to serve students and achieve its educational goals.

Darnall anticipates the following benefits as a result of the changes:

- **Clear Lines of Authority:** An Executive Director with a designated Associate Director fosters a clear chain of command, facilitating swifter decision-making and improved accountability.
- **Enhanced Efficiency:** The traditional model allows for a more streamlined operational structure, enabling leadership to focus on strategic initiatives and day-to-day management.
- **Stronger Leadership Capacity:** The dedicated roles of Executive Director and Associate Director, aligned with principal and assistant principal duties, leverage the expertise of both individuals, leading to stronger overall school leadership.
- **Alignment with Best Practices:** This structure aligns with common leadership models in successful charter schools, allowing us to leverage best practices in educational leadership.

The primary changes to the Governance and Employee Qualifications sections of the charter petition are summarized below, as well as the proposed changes (additions in **bold**, deletions in ~~strikethrough~~).

GOVERNANCE SECTION OF CHARTER PETITION:

**Executive Director/Principal**

**The Executive Director/Principal is responsible for the overall guidance and direction of the organization, and ultimately for its performance.**

**Duties of the School Executive Director/Principal**

**The Board delegates, through policies and resolutions, responsibilities and duties to the Executive Director/Principal in the following areas:**

- **Vision and Strategic Plan**
- **Academic Performance Monitoring**
- **Staffing and Personnel**
- **Parents, Student and Community Relations**
- **Finance and Budget**
- **Facilities**

## • Charter Performance and Renewal

**The Executive Director/Principal creates a common culture of expectations around the use of skills and knowledge, holding the various pieces of the organization together in a productive relationship with each other, and holding individuals accountable for their contributions to the collective result. (Elmore, Richard F., Building a New Structure For School Leadership).**

### ~~Leadership Team~~

~~The Leadership Team is responsible for the overall guidance and direction of the organization, and ultimately for its performance. The team is comprised of standing positions hired by the Board and nonstanding positions appointed by the Board. The minimum composition of the team is one standing position and two nonstanding positions; the maximum is two standing and three nonstanding. This structure allows for a balance between new ideas and programmatic changes new standing positions bring to Darnall; and administrative and operational consistency nonstanding positions maintain.~~

### ~~Standing Positions:-~~

- ~~• Associate Director of Communications & Operations~~
- ~~• Associate Director of Instruction~~

### ~~Nonstanding Positions:-~~

- ~~• Programs and Assessment Coordinator~~
- ~~• Technology & Data Systems Coordinator~~
- ~~• Counselor, Psychologist~~

~~The Board will appoint two executive officers from the Leadership Team. The Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer are appointed by the Board, chosen from the Leadership Team, and shall have powers and duties as prescribed by the Board.~~

### ~~Duties of the School Leadership Team~~

~~The Board delegates, through policies and resolutions, responsibilities and duties to the Leadership Team in the following areas:-~~

- ~~• Vision and Strategic Plan~~
- ~~• Academic Performance Monitoring~~
- ~~• Staffing and Personnel~~
- ~~• Parents, Student and Community Relations~~
- ~~• Finance and Budget~~
- ~~• Facilities~~
- ~~• Charter Performance and Renewal~~

~~The Leadership Team operates under the principles of Distributive Leadership where the job of administrative leaders is primarily about enhancing the skills~~

~~and knowledge of people in the organization, creating a common culture of expectations around the use of those skills and knowledge, holding the various pieces of the organization together in a productive relationship with each other, and holding individuals accountable for their contributions to the collective result. (Elmore, Richard F., Building a New Structure For School leadership).~~

#### EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS SECTION OF CHARTER PETITION:

##### **Executive Director/Principal**

**The Executive Director/Principal will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Charter School in accordance with the delegated duties described in Element 4.**

##### **Minimum Qualifications:**

- **Teaching credential, five (5) years teaching experience including K-8**
- **Documented leadership experience**
- **Master's degree in education**
- **2 years experience as district or site supervisor preferred**
- **Cleared Administrative Services Credential (desired)**
- **Experience with diverse populations of English learners**

**Preferred Qualifications: Charter background; National Board Certification; practice in primary, elementary, and middle school grade levels; bilingual English/Spanish**

##### **Associate Director/Assistant Principal**

**The Associate Director/Assistant Principal is responsible for articulating and communicating the mission of the Charter School; coordinating and supervising day-to-day operations; and implementing and monitoring work practices, systems, and methods that are effective, efficient, and consistent with Darnall's human resource policies and procedures. The Associate Director/Assistant Principal assumes other leadership roles as necessary in the absence of the Executive Director/Principal.**

**Minimum Qualifications: Minimum five years of successful teaching or related school experience in a school/district, experience with MTSS, RTI, Special Education, Academic Instruction, and SST programs.**

##### **HR Business Officer**

**The Human Resources/Business Officer is responsible for performing a variety of human resource services including monitoring credentials, information services, recruitment, and classified and certificated staffing. The HR/Business Officer will review, update, and process all employee personal data and employee job assignment information and process payroll and benefits as assigned. This position is also responsible for working with the Charter School's back office provider to plan, organize, and direct the Charter School's finances.**

### ~~Leadership Team~~

~~Each Leadership Team member has a specific job description with responsibilities separate from their Leadership Team responsibilities. Leadership Team responsibilities not covered under individual job descriptions are delegated ] to each team member in the Annual Leadership Plan.~~

~~The following summarize key qualifications for Leadership Team positions:~~

### ~~LEADERSHIP TEAM STANDING POSITIONS~~

#### ~~Associate Director of Communications & Operations~~

~~The Associate Director of Communications & Operations is responsible for articulating and communicating the mission of the Charter School; coordinating and supervising daytoday operations; and implementing and monitoring work practices, systems, and methods that are effective, efficient, and consistent with Darnall's human resource policies and procedures. The Associate Director of Communications & Operations is Darnall's point of contact and spokesperson for public, media, and political relations needs. The Associate Director of Communications and Operations assumes other leadership roles as necessary in the absence of Leadership Team members. This is a standing position on the Leadership Team.~~

#### ~~Associate Director of Instruction~~

~~The Associate Director of Instruction leads and coordinates all schoolwide collaborative efforts in instructional matters and is primarily responsible for promoting a school culture in which staff engage in individual and collective professional learning that results in their continuous improvement and high performance. The Associate Director of Instruction is primarily responsible to the Board for student achievement and management of selection and implementation of curricula and instructional resources. This is a standing position on the Leadership Team.~~

The following table summarizes Darnall's historic enrollment and academic information.

**Table 2: Darnall Overview**

|         | Fall Enrollment | Grades Served | CAASPP ELA % Met/Exceeded | CAASPP Math % Met/Exceeded |
|---------|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2014-15 | 639             | K-8           | 32                        | 25                         |
| 2015-16 | 663             | K-8           | 31                        | 25                         |
| 2016-17 | 644             | K-8           | 36.52                     | 26.60                      |
| 2017-18 | 634             | K-8           | 38.06                     | 29.01                      |
| 2018-19 | 657             | K-8           | 36.88                     | 27.23                      |
| 2019-20 | 651             | K-8           | --                        | --                         |
| 2020-21 | 606             | K-8           | --                        | --                         |
| 2021-22 | 515             | K-8           | 32.17                     | 23.10                      |

|         |     |     |       |       |
|---------|-----|-----|-------|-------|
| 2022-23 | 467 | K-8 | 30.40 | 18.92 |
| 2023-24 | 442 | K-8 | N/A   | N/A   |

In the 2023-24 school year, about 84.9% of Darnall’s enrollment was made up of SDUSD resident students, consisting primarily of students that would have otherwise attended the schools identified in the following table. It is noted that Darnall’s students came from eight different district middle schools, and 27 different district elementary schools.

**Table 3: Darnall - Schools by Resident Boundary**

|                 | Number of Students | % of total enrollment<br>(based on 442 students) |
|-----------------|--------------------|--|
| Carver          | 145                | 32.8%  |
| Mann            | 104                | 23.5%  |
| Outside SDUSD   | 67                 | 15.1%  |
| Fay             | 15                 | 3.4%   |
| Rolando Park    | 10                 | 2.3%   |
| Oak Park        | 9                  | 2.0%   |
| Clark           | 9                  | 2.0%   |
| Hamilton        | 8                  | 1.8%   |
| Euclid          | 7                  | 1.6%   |
| Marshall Elem.  | 7                  | 1.6%   |
| Clay            | 6                  | 1.3%   |
| Encanto         | 6                  | 1.3%   |
| Millennial Tech | 5                  | 1.1%   |
| Webster         | 5                  | 1.1%   |

The following tables summarize the Darnall enrollment that was approved as part of the most recent charter renewal. The school is not requesting to increase these enrollment projections as part of this material revision request.

**Table 4: Darnall Enrollment (Approved with Renewal May 2019)**

|             | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25* | 2025-26* | 2026-27* |
|-------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|----------|
| Grades TK-5 | 474     | 478     | 478      | 478      | 478      |
| Grades 6-8  | 219     | 219     | 219      | 219      | 219      |
| Total       | 693     | 697     | 697      | 697      | 697      |

\*These numbers were extended out to these years by district staff, and are not currently reflected in the Darnall charter petition

The Darnall governing board is the decision-making body for the charter school. The school’s bylaws require a minimum of five and maximum of nine governing board members. There are currently six governing board members, as summarized in the following table.

**Table 5: Board Roster**

| Name | Office / Designation | Term Date |
|------|----------------------|-----------|
|------|----------------------|-----------|

|                 |                                    |                        |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Marilyn Chavez  | Chair / Parent Representative      | Oct. 2021 – Sept. 2025 |
| Kathleen Szarek | Vice Chair / Parent Representative | Oct. 2022 – Oct. 2024  |
| Tim O’Neill     | Community Member                   | Aug. 2022 – Oct. 2025  |
| Lauren Kimmons  | Parent Representative              | Nov. 2023 – Oct. 2026  |
| Joanie Riegel   | Staff Representative               | Oct. 2023 – June 2024  |
| Denise Smith    | Staff Representative               | Oct. 2021 – Oct. 2024  |

**CONCLUSION:**

Grant the proposed revision to the charter of Darnall Charter School to revise the leadership structure at the school, effective immediately upon approval.

[Originator/Contact: Deidre Walsh, Director, Office of Charter Schools, 619.725.7107, [dwalsh1@sandi.net](mailto:dwalsh1@sandi.net)]