

San Juan Choices Charter School
Charter Renewal

Presented to:

San Juan Unified School District
Board of Education

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San Juan Choices Charter School

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ELEMENT A: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

"A description of the educational program of the school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an 'educated person' in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners." (Education Code Section 47605-(b) (5) (A))

Vision: The vision of San Juan Choices Charter School (CCS) is to provide an alternative, educational partnership that allows students in grades 6-12 the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for academic success, responsible citizenship, and life-long dedication to continued learning.

CCS Students learn best in a school setting that is flexible enough to include those who have not found success in the traditional school environment. Teachers establish a three-way partnership between the students, parents/guardians, and school to stimulate student responsibilities which encourage young people to develop both as scholars and citizens. This effective partnership fosters critical thinking, goal setting, and responsible behavior.

The primary focus of CCS is the success of all its students. CCS is committed to providing students and parents/guardians with an educational environment where students are continually encouraged and empowered to develop a greater sense of confidence and self-worth through self-sufficiency and pride in their academic accomplishments. CCS provides an independent study program consisting of individual and small group instruction, seminar enrichment, and online classes.

Enrollment for the 2013-2014 school year is estimated to fall between 200-260 students. By early September 2013, 188 students had enrolled; enrollment typically builds throughout the Fall and Spring semesters. The school site can accommodate a student population of up to 400 students, provided there is additional staffing. Class sizes are small and typically run between 10-15 students with class size not to exceed 20 students. CCS accepts and welcomes students from both inside and outside the San Juan Unified School District.

Mission: The mission of San Juan Choices Charter School is to provide an educational public option for students in grades six through twelve. Our mission is to graduate confident, self-directed students who are contributors to their communities. This is accomplished through a partnership with parents, students and staff, in a positive and safe environment where learning is student-focused and relevant to student goals and future plans.

CCS operates an independent study program that involves parents/guardians as partners in the education of their child(ren). The majority of CCS students meet weekly in small groups for core class instruction with highly trained teachers who present curriculum strategically designed using Common Core standards and content standards to fulfill University of California a-g admission requirements. On-site classes, along with tutoring, serve to strengthen academic and social skills. One-on-one instruction is provided for those students who need a more individualized academic program to be successful. Students typically spend 2 – 6 hours per week in class on campus, and spend another 5 hours per week, per course, completing homework at home, under the supervision of a parent or guardian.

CCS supports the district commitment to student learning and achievement as outlined in the shared beliefs of the five-year results-based Strategic Plan.

CCS's independent study learning environment encourages parent/guardian participation through regular contact with teachers; more specifically through meetings with teachers, phone calls with teachers, Edline, e-mail and social media (Facebook). The school counselors and staff are cognizant of and remain current with the full range of social services available through the district and in the community and purposefully direct families to existing sources of information that can mitigate crises. The array of academic supports - counseling, tutors, staff, and online access to Naviance and Edline promotes student responsibility and self-reliance.

CCS Learning Community Values

Within the Charter Schools Act, the "at risk" student is defined as "a pupil who, because of physical, emotional, socioeconomic, or cultural factors, is less likely to succeed in a conventional educational environment". CCS was created to alleviate the number of students slipping through the cracks in the traditional educational environment, and to provide a viable public option for the student who chooses an alternative to the traditional school setting. To successfully educate the "at risk" student, CCS offers a blended learning program - a hybrid of research-based best practices delivered using face-to-face instruction, along with access to online curriculum for core and elective classes that support the belief that all students, if given proper access, appropriate tools, and academic support, can succeed and become educated, contributing members of society.

According to diagnostic testing of students at the time of enrollment from April 2012 through March 2013, CCS students arrive at Choices performing at an average grade level of 6.9 in Math and 7.5 in English Language Arts. 46% of new students during this time frame tested with 6th grade or lower Math skills. 44% of new students during this time frame tested with 6th grade or lower English Language Arts skills. In 2012-13, 78% of these students enrolled at CCS were in 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. Most of these students tested well below grade level in Math and English Language Arts.

Most students who remain at Choices find that they are able to build skills, improve their GPAs, and to graduate from high school. For many of them, this academic success represents a significant turning point in their lives. In 2013, 49% of graduates reported that they do not believe that they would have graduated from high school had they not enrolled at Choices. In 2013, 47% of graduates reported immediate plans to either join the armed forces or to pursue subsequent academic endeavors (community college or four-year university.) 100% of graduates said that they would recommend Choices to other high school students. This data is strong evidence that the CCS program is highly effective in providing high-risk students with "academic rehabilitation" that leads, in many cases, to high school graduation and subsequent enrollment in programs that will broaden the spectrum of opportunity available to them and to their future generations.

Learning Community Core Values – a major tenet of blended learning programs is the potential to offer more personalized student-centered, modular, and flexible instruction than that provided by face-to-face classroom-only versions. Blending learning can include some mix of these three types of instruction: (1) expository instruction (direct presentation of material through lecture, text, visuals, animation); (2) active learning (the individual student researches information, solves problems, takes quizzes, manipulates digital artifacts, engages in drills, simulations, or games); and (3) interactive learning (students collaborate with other students).

Through the blended learning program, CCS students meet weekly for face-to-face small group instruction taught by highly trained teachers and have access to effective online curriculum whose design is guided by the Common Core standards, content standards, and

Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences and Learning Style Inventories. The blended learning program offers CCS students instruction and curriculum that is personalized, adaptive, engaging, and balanced in terms of instructor and learner controls. CLAD certified teachers support EL students in their acquisition of English proficiency in content standards.

CCS creates a learning community that encourages all students to develop their academic potential and more deeply understand their individual learning style and strengths. The traditional school setting is often toxic to students with troubled home lives or to those who are viewed as "outside" the main stream. The failure to fit in hinders academic achievement. Choices' learning community is designed to accomplish positive changes in the lives of students, parents/guardians, teachers, staff, and community stakeholders. Through dialogue, reflection, and action, the learning community creates an environment where students are able to maximize strengths that will enable them to be productive, resourceful, socially conscious, and compassionate.

The following values are key to Choices' model for success:

- Provide an educational choice for students within the public school system;
- Promote student development of character and competence;
- Create personalized learning in a nurturing environment for students;
- Teach students how to make informed choices;
- Help students direct their education through personalized leadership;
- Teach students positive alternatives to "dropping out";
- Model alternative expressions of anger, frustration, and impatience for students;
- Teach students "action" based on integrity and maturity.

The primary goal of CCS is to offer educational alternatives organized around how students can effectively gain the necessary academic and social skills that will prepare them to enter and thrive in the 21st century. Given the blended learning program that is central to Choices' educational model, students are motivated to engage with the material at their convenience and at their appropriate pace; additionally, they are offered appropriately sequenced opportunities for interaction through guided and independent practice with timely, substantive feedback. Because onsite classes are small (no more than 20 students to a class) teachers can work with individual students and/or re-teach in small groups to address identified gaps. Tutors, working closely with teachers and content, also serve students bi-weekly to alleviate additional academic struggles and promote student success.

School program focuses on:

- Core academic skills based on Common Core and content standards;
- What it means to be an educated and responsible citizen;
- Ability to read, write, speak, and reason logically
- Ability to apply mathematics to real life situations
- Proficiency in the basic information technologies essential for cultural literacy in the 21st Century.

This commitment to a blended learning program builds students' commitment to school, and strengthens engagement in learning. Choices staff recognize that students are unlikely (or unable) to be successful unless the curricula and learning activities are compatible with the perspectives the students bring to learning. As a result, lessons are tailored to create powerful learning experiences that are meaningful, involve multiple senses, and lead to

competence and mastery. Such learning experiences engage and motivate students toward success, curiosity, originality, and satisfying relationships.

To become an “educated person” in the 21st century, students must develop proficiency in reading, writing, math computation, information technologies, and problem solving. All students need to experience success, and develop interests, abilities, and talents. To ensure success in these areas the following **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)** guide the school:

Choices students are:

- a) Goal Oriented
 - Student has defined short/long term goals and has a plan to accomplish them.
- b) Research Driven
 - To meet academic objectives, student accesses relevant information from a variety of resources beyond the textbook.
- c) Analytical
 - In response to complex problems, student infers, predicts outcomes, draws conclusions, and applies knowledge to new situations.
- d) Technology Literate
 - Student communicates learning through the use of appropriate multimedia.

Students who remain enrolled at Choices throughout their middle school and high school careers will be provided ample opportunity to accomplish the CCS SLOs through thoughtfully-crafted assignments available across the curriculum, school-wide. At the beginning and end of each school year, students evaluate themselves using the Choices Charter School Student Learning Outcomes Rubric; once a year, students are evaluated on the rubric by their Supervising Teacher, who bases the evaluation on “SLO-oriented” assignments completed during the current year. Graduates should acquire an “Accomplished” rating of mastery of each of the SLOs, enabling them to enter their adult lives as self-motivated, competent, lifelong learners.

Choices is committed to addressing the needs of *all* students and is particularly focused on meeting the needs of its two most significant subgroups: Students with Disabilities and Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students. The CCS 2013 Academic Performance Index Report states that 18% of 2013 STAR testers were classified as Students with Disabilities; 50% were Socioeconomically Disadvantaged.

At CCS, with the support of SJUSD, Students with Disabilities are provided with all services available in the traditional school format. CCS functions as an “arm of the district,” and all student referral, identification, and assessment follows federal and state mandates. This relationship is described in the MOU between CCS and SJUSD (see Appendix.) Upon enrollment, a special needs student’s file is thoroughly reviewed by Special Education professionals on staff. Students are placed in grade-level classes or one-on-one instructional settings based on which situation will more effectively meet the students’ needs. If students will benefit from additional individualized tutoring sessions with Special Education personnel or subject area specialists, this is also arranged. Most Students with

Special Needs are placed in individualized instructional situations with a Special Education Teacher. For those students who thrive in grade level classroom settings, course instructors and Special Education professionals collaborate regularly about student performance and methods to best meet students' individualized needs. IEP's are maintained regularly. Supplemental services, provided through the SJUSD, are provided to students on an as-needed basis.

Student scores on the CAHSEE exam are tracked to assess growth while enrolled in the program. During the 2012-2013 school year, 75% of 10th Grade Students with Disabilities who took the CAHSEE exam passed in ELA; 61% passed in Mathematics. Of these students who passed as 10th graders, 83% of those who passed in ELA had been enrolled at CCS for at least one school year; 80% of those who passed in Math had been enrolled at CCS for at least one school year. Of those Students with Disabilities of all grades who did not pass the CAHSEE exam in 2012-2013, 89% improved their Math CAHSEE score between the Fall and Spring administrations; 38% improved their score in ELA. This data demonstrates clear academic growth in English Language Arts and Mathematics while enrolled at CCS.

Attitude surveys are administered annually to track changes in students' feelings about school and the CCS program. In 2012-2013, 95% of surveyed Students with Disabilities reported that they like to come to school and feel safe at CCS; 86% reported that they plan to graduate from Choices.

Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students make up half of CCS's student population. These students typically face challenges such as:

- Lack of transportation
- Lack of technology resources in the home
- Missed meals
- Lack of parental supervision
- Homelessness

In order to address these needs, CCS provides:

- One-on-one weekly meeting times that reduce the amount of times a student must be able to travel to school
- Transportation by staff members when students must attend testing
- Option of submitting homework and seeking assistance electronically
- A computer lab and computer resources in each classroom to support completion of homework while at school
- Free frozen meals and affordable snacks available on campus
- Mentoring of students by staff members, tutors, and guest speakers
- A new homework policy that strengthens the relationships between parents, students, and teachers and guides parents in their supportive role

Some students do not succeed, at first, in the Independent Study model. Many students need guidance as they learn to manage their time effectively and to work independently. At CCS, students who are not thriving academically are first approached by their teacher. Together, the teacher and student seek solutions. When necessary, teachers contact students' parents to discuss a problem. If a teacher has concluded that discussion with the student and his/her parents has not resulted in meaningful change, CCS's Interventionist facilitates a Formal Intervention: a face-to-face meeting with the student and parent(s.) During this intervention, all parties work together to agree upon a strategy. A contract is created, which outlines commitments that have been made during the meeting. Teachers and the Interventionist track student progress in keeping commitments. In many cases, this caring approach results in academic transformation for the student. In some cases,

students continue to struggle, and it is ultimately decided that another program may better fit their needs. When students leave the program, CCS assists families in finding a school that may be a better fit for the student's needs or learning style. Students are, at the very least, re-directed to their home school for enrollment.

Subject Area Methodologies – The distinct advantage of blended learning with an online component is that it gives control of time, place, and pace to the learner. CCS's blended program emphasizes student responsibility for learning and developing effective time management skills. Core and elective curricula is specifically designed to require 5 hours of work weekly at home to thoroughly complete assignments. The subjects of mathematics, reading, writing, literature, social studies, science, music, and art are taught using best practices, and promote student research, analysis, and technological literacy. Appropriate technologies are used to enhance lessons and meet individual student needs since they offer teachers and students the ability to construct learning projects around specific learning styles. Students are regularly required to use online programs Edline and Math XL to complete coursework; special projects require the use of the internet for research and current-generation documentation and presentation software programs to communicate what they have learned. The Choices computer lab is available daily from 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM for students who do not have computer access at home. In addition to student access to computers in the Computer Lab, there are 2-4 computers set up in most classrooms, and in the 2013-2014 school year, students at Choices will be using newly purchased Chrome books in the classroom setting for instructive and assessment purposes.

Student learning at Choices is supported by parent/guardian participation, on-site tutors, accessibility to staff, use of appropriate technologies, recognition of multiple learning styles, and early intervention strategies. These student supports accomplish the following objectives:

- Build student motivation
- Show students how subject matter applies, and can be incorporated into their everyday lives;
- Help students apply learned concepts in understanding real, social, civic, and environmental problems, enabling them to make informed and reasoned decisions as responsible, cooperative, and compassionate citizens;
- Promote problem-solving scenarios at the emotional, as well as analytical levels;
- Maximize student potential by providing selected materials that reflect a wide variety of experiences and perspectives;
- Encourage empathy and respect for others.

Parents/guardians agree to facilitate students' educational needs by maintaining ongoing communication, providing transportation, and monitoring student progress. For grades 9-12, special emphasis is placed on mastering the knowledge and skills necessary to pass the California High School Exit Examination, complete San Juan Unified School District graduation requirements and prepare for college.

Curriculum Development

CCS curriculum, as a work in progress, is revised and updated annually. As part of WASC, Focus Groups and Home Groups meet throughout the school year to determine revisions and updates which are implemented during the summer under the direction of our main curriculum writer, Roxanna Summers, who holds a M.Ed. in Curriculum & Instruction w/ an Emphasis in Technology. CCS uses curriculum adopted by the San Juan Unified School Board and follows their adoption schedule for new textbooks. Currently, because of our program investment in technology, Choices is entertaining the viability of using fewer textbooks and moving to e-books in the near future.

Formative Assessment takes place school wide and allows for ongoing adjustments in curriculum and instructional strategies to meet the needs of specific groups of students. CCS uses the Cycle of Inquiry to drive changes in curriculum and instruction, and to point to professional development needs. In 2013-2014, the Mathematics and English Language Arts departments will collaborate about their formative assessment data and will document necessary changes in curriculum and professional development needs based on their findings. 2014-15 Professional Development activities will be based on this process. Professional Development will, in turn, affect future curriculum. In this way, curriculum is constantly evolving to incorporate current trends and more effectively meet the needs of students.

Annual STAR score analysis also drives changes in curriculum pacing and in focus on specific sets of subject area content. WASC Home Groups meet each Fall to analyze STAR results for their subject areas. Teachers study where students scored well and poorly within their subject-area exam and make changes to the current year's teaching plan to more thoroughly address areas of need. The performances of significant subgroups within the student population are also studied; program changes are implemented to target the needs of specific groups who did not score well. Each Fall, specific commitments are made and documented for the coming school year so that teachers remain focused on the changes that have been made, and so that the staff can evaluate the effectiveness of their changes when analyzing STAR results from later in the year. Curriculum and program changes deemed successful will remain in place going forward. Those changes that were not effective will be reevaluated and revised.

The San Juan Choices Charter School Parent/Student Handbook informs parents of the course offerings at CCS and how they relate to high school graduation requirements and college eligibility. The following is an accurate representation of core curriculum areas that are offered in grades 6 through 12:

- **Social Studies:** World History, Honors U.S. History, U.S. History, World Geography, Economics, You and the Law, Government, and Sociology
- **Science:** Earth Science, Biology, Life Science, Physical Science, Psychology, Chemistry
- **Mathematics:** Pre-Algebra, Algebra, Algebra 1A, Algebra 1B, Real Life Math, Geometry, Algebra II, Trigonometry, Pre-Calculus
- **Language Arts:** English 1 - 4, AP English, Honors English, Creative Writing, Journalism, ELA Test Prep
- **Fine Arts:** Painting and Drawing, Advanced Painting and Drawing, Art Workshop, Art History
- **Languages:** Spanish 1, Spanish 2, Spanish 3, French 1, French 2, French 3
- **Health:** Health
- **Electives:** College Success, Careers, 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, Crafts, ROP, Choir, Piano, Drama, Guitar, Child Development, Driver's Education, Financial Literacy

Upon graduation from CCS, students are prepared to enter a university, state or junior college, trade school or the military. They have developed a plan for their future into the next year. Many of our graduates have work experience and have had the opportunity to work with our Community Liaison staff member to develop resumes, practice interview techniques, and learn proper follow-up procedures when seeking employment. Most graduates have participated in our FAFSA workshops and have completed the FAFSA application for college. In 2013, three students took the ACT and two seniors were honored with Golden State Merit status at graduation. All students who took the ACT in 2013 scored at the College Ready level in College English Composition.

Student Records

Under the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), parents/guardians will be provided all rights with respect to their children's education records. Subject to the FERPA, all student records will be kept confidential and available for inspection by the district. Should the school close, all student records will be housed at the San Juan Unified School District Office.

Upon disenrollment, all students' records (cum file) are forwarded to the student's new school. CCS courses are aligned with SJUSD and tied to the CA state standards; students' grades in their courses reflect their level of mastery of those standards. STAR scores also indicate students' levels of academic achievement.

As stated in Education Code 47605(d)(3), Choices Charter School will notify the superintendent of San Juan Unified School District of a pupil's last known address within thirty (30) days if a pupil is expelled or leaves the charter school without graduating or completing the school year for any reason. CCS will provide a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card, and health information.

Anti-Discrimination

No person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of 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, including a prohibition against discrimination against any person based upon the perception that the person has any of those characteristics or is associated with a person who has, or is perceived to have, any of those characteristics.

Staff Records

Should CCS close, all staff employment records will be housed at the San Juan Unified School District Office.

Facilities – In July 2008, CCS moved to Billy Mitchell Elementary School, which closed as an elementary school in June 2008. The school is set in a residential community and provides adequate space for the charter school program. CCS shares the site with Early Childhood Education, Early Learning Academy, Indian Education, and Foster Youth Services (as of 7/1/13). A Facility Use Agreement is renewed annually. 92% of CCS parents surveyed on the 2013 Parent Satisfaction Survey indicated that the facility is clean, well-maintained, and adequate for the program's needs.

Calendar/Attendance System– CCS has adopted its own school calendar and begins school after Labor Day where students attend school for a minimum of 175 days. CCS maintains an approved attendance system as mentioned in its MOU with SJUSD.

Instructional Minutes – Not applicable as a non-classroom based program (E.C. 47612.5[b]).

ELEMENT B: MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES

"The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the Charter School. "Pupil Outcomes", for purpose of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school's educational program." (Education Code Section 47605-(b) (5)(B)

CCS will have the same primary academic/educational student outcomes as San Juan Unified School District: to have every student meet the content and performance standards required by the State of California.

CCS students will participate in learning experiences designed to build strong academic and social skills that will encourage them to develop and demonstrate the character traits necessary to become contributing, responsible, and caring members of a diverse community.

Student Outcomes: In order for students to graduate from San Juan Choices Charter School, they will master the following skills in the core academic areas listed below. Students will also have the opportunity to fulfill the UC and CSU "a-g" course requirements. Finally, students will demonstrate mastery of the non-core skills and content areas and have myriad opportunities to develop their technological literacy. These outcomes are challenging for many CCS students, but realistic; when students complete the work that is assigned and attend classes and tutoring for instruction and support, they succeed at CCS, nearly without exception.

I. Core Academic Skills. Appropriate grade-level mastery of:

- **History/Social Studies:** Students will understand and apply civic, historical, and geographical knowledge in order to serve as citizens in today's world of diverse cultures.
- **Mathematics:** Students will develop abilities to reason logically and to understand and apply mathematical processes and concepts, including those within arithmetic, algebra, geometry, trigonometry and pre-calculus.
- **Language Arts:** Students will demonstrate strong reading, writing, listening, speaking, and presentation skills, in multiple forms of expression (e.g., written, oral, multimedia), which use communication skills appropriate to the setting and audience. They will comprehend and critically interpret multiple forms of expression, including literature from various time periods and cultures.
- **Science:** Students will successfully use scientific research and inquiry methods to understand and apply the major concepts underlying various branches of science, which may include physics, chemistry, biology, ecology, astronomy, and earth sciences, physical and life science.
- **World Languages:** Students will gain proficiency in speaking, reading, writing, and listening comprehension in at least one language in addition to their native language. Students will understand key aspects of the culture, both past and present, of the second language.

Underlying and utilized throughout each of the above areas will be other core skills such as:

- Critical thinking (e.g., problem-solving, analyzing, and applying knowledge)
- Ability to effectively use technology (take online classes, research on the Internet, create and deliver presentations using various multimedia)
- Creative expression through various forms of the arts (e.g. art interpretation, music, and drama)
- Knowledge of pertinent issues of health and the development of physical fitness, attendance at Physical Education Clinics and participation in fitness gram testing.
- Ability to identify, organize, plan, and allocate resources
- Effective collaboration and understanding of interpersonal relationships
- Ability to acquire and apply information

- Understanding of complex interrelationships and network systems
- II. Lifelong learning skills. Students develop skills which enable them to pursue their own path of learning throughout their adult lives, including:
- Study skills and habits (e.g., note-taking methods, library and online research skills, study strategies, online learning, evaluation of internet research sites)
 - Ability to plan, initiate, and complete projects
 - Ability to reflect on and evaluate one's own and others' learning
 - Technological literacy (students will be able to use technology as a problem-solving resource and communication tool)
 - Artistic appreciation and interpretation
- III. Social/Interpersonal Skills. Students will demonstrate:
- Strong citizenship and leadership skills by participation in student leadership and/or participation in a leadership activity that involves the greater community
 - Ability to collaborate and work effectively with others in cooperative groups
- IV. "Life" Skills. Students will develop skills necessary for a healthy adult life, including:
- Higher education continuance skills (e.g., college applications and entrance exams, financial aid forms)
 - Personal financial management skills (e.g., budget development, balancing check books)
 - Job readiness and career development skills (e.g., developing resumes, job interview skills, and participating in available internships)

At CCS, graduation requirements and number of credits earned for core and elective classes are consistent with other traditional high schools in SJUSD. Choices Charter is WASC Accredited through 2015. Graduation requirements, course credits, and a-g classes are itemized in the Parent Student Handbook.

At CCS, core academic skills and the CCS Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are measured formally through course grades (GPA,) CAHSEE, STAR, and the CCS SLO Rubric. Learning and Social/Interpersonal skills are measured through the use of the CCS Citizenship Rubric and are reflected in students' citizenship grades. Life Skills are evaluated formally in elective courses such as Career Exploration, College Success, Freshman Seminar, Student Leadership, and Business Career Skills. Life Skills are also measured through work permit statistics and senior exit interview data.

State academic requirements and the CCS Student Learning Outcomes will inevitably evolve to incorporate advances in educational approach. As a result, student performance goals will be appropriately modified over time. Goals for student attendance, dropouts, and graduation rate are consistent with targets set by the State of California for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP.)

State Standards – CCS instructional materials and programs/activities/lessons are aligned to Common Core and content standards. For grades 6-12 inclusive, materials adopted by CCS are aligned to Common Core and content standards and the curriculum frameworks for these subjects. Content and performance standards are incorporated within the lessons and projects. Teachers use internally-developed benchmark exams and weekly formative assessment to track students' accomplishment of content standards. With the transition to Common Core, CCS's 6th – 9th grade students are participating in Measures of Academic

Progress (MAP) testing, which gives immediate feedback to students and teachers about individuals' strengths and weaknesses. Teachers and students use this information immediately to adjust their academic focus.

Building Relationships

CCS uses technology as one of many methods to keep students, parents/guardians, and teachers connected.

- **Connecting students** – Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. Students have 24/7 access to all assignments in Edline, a learning management system, where all Choices curricula is housed. Students are able to communicate with teachers, counselors, and other students on matters related to their academic program through Edline. Students attend classes weekly or bi-weekly in core subjects and have access to tri-level tutoring if they need additional academic support. The tri-level tutoring includes one-on-one tutoring during teacher office hours, an on-site tutor available in the Computer Lab M-Thu from 9:00AM to 2:00 PM for all subjects; and volunteer tutors who meet with students bi-weekly in designated subjects.
- **Connecting Teachers** – Everything teachers need to positively impact their students' achievement is online and readily available through Data Director and Zangle. More importantly, however, CCS uses Edline, a learning management system, to house our curriculum and inform our teaching. All student work is completed in Edline and graded in Edline by teachers. Item Analysis, an assessment tool incorporated into each Edline assignment, provides instant feedback of student learning strengths and weaknesses. Teachers are able to quickly ascertain the concepts students understand and the concepts that require re-teaching. In addition, the English curriculum for grades 9-11 is organized so that state standards are specifically reflected in questions 11-14 in every assignment; again, this enables teachers to quickly determine student understanding. Grade Reports are updated weekly providing students and parents/guardians with student progress in each discipline. In an effort to boost test scores and assure student and parent awareness of students' STAR results, beginning in the Fall of 2014, students' most recent STAR scores will be included on the Weekly Grade Reports. Edline provides a platform where teachers are able to efficiently and seamlessly communicate with students and their parents/guardians.
- **Connecting Parents/guardians** – Parents/guardians have an instant view into their children's daily educational experiences, from weekly assignment results including teacher feedback to posted weekly cumulative grade averages in all subjects via Edline, phone calls, and/or site visits. Progress reports are currently mailed and emailed mid-semester. A formal intervention process is in place for students whose parents and/or teachers request additional support for student success. During the intervention process, students, parents/guardians, and teachers meet to discuss issues and challenges; proposed strategies are documented, followed-up, and students closely monitored throughout the intervention process. If the intervention process is unsuccessful, recommendations are made for the student to return to traditional school or a school better suited to serve the student's individual academic challenges.

CCS will continue to examine and refine student outcomes over time to best reflect the school's mission. Any such changes will be presented to the SJUSD Board of Education at the annual report to the board.

ELEMENT C: Outcome Measurements

"The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured."
(Education Code Section 47605 (b) (5) (C))

Student progress toward meeting Common Core and state content standards will be annually assessed using the following mandated tests:

1. STAR (grades 6-11)
2. SMARTER BALANCE (grades 6-11 starting in 2014)
3. CELDT (GRADES 6-12)
4. CAHSEE (grade 10)

Overall program evaluation will be determined by school performance on the AYP, API, and meeting the San Juan Unified district targets. These targets will be based on continuous student progress toward state standards. **In 2013, CCS's API score grew by 6 points. CCS's Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students' API score grew by 65 points. CCS's Students with Disabilities' API score grew by 154 points.**

Mastery for special needs students, students with 504 plans, and English Language Learners (EL) students will be defined appropriately according to their Individualized Education Plans and English proficiency levels.

CCS will provide opportunities for EL students to develop their English language ability using state-adopted materials to transfer from Limited English Proficient (LEP) to Fluent English Proficient (FEP). Annual assessment on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) will be used along with benchmark tests, formative and summative assessments to show growth. Highly qualified by teaching credentials, administrative credentials, and post-graduate degrees in curriculum and technology, CCS Teachers and the CCS Director work together collaboratively to decide which tools are most effective in measuring student progress at CCS.

Methods to Assess Student Progress Toward Outcomes	
Outcome	Types of Assessment Tools Used
Proficiency in core subject areas: English/Language Arts History/Social Sciences Sciences Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• California Standards Tests, Smarter Balance (2014) and CAHSEE• Benchmark exams, presentations, and unit reviews• Ongoing teacher assessment, chapter/unit tests• Pre- and post-tests• Portfolios of student work graded to district rubrics• Individual projects• Exhibitions/ Research Projects• Item Analysis in Edline and Math XL• CCS Rubrics
Proficiency in non-core academic areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre- and post-tests• Presentations/research projects on subject area topics• CCS Rubrics

Assessment is divided into three stages at CCS: diagnostic assessment, formative assessment, and summative assessment. CCS uses diagnostic assessments to establish the "starting point" of student understanding. Formative assessment provides information to help guide the instruction throughout the course, unit, and activity. Summative assessment

informs both the student and the teacher about the level of conceptual understanding and performance capabilities that the student has achieved. Formative and summative assessments are administered after a predetermined period of enrollment and as students complete chapters and units of instruction. Together, this diagnostic, formative and summative assessment process enables teachers to focus on an individual student's growth in specific subject areas, as well as provide data that can be used to modify the instructional approach and/or materials if necessary. The use of a diverse set of data collection formats will yield a deeper and more meaningful understanding of what students know and are able to perform. Data Director, Zangle, and Edline will yield timelier, accurate data on student achievement. With the increased amount of data available to teachers, the learning curve will be on teachers and administration to put the data to use.

Diagnostic Assessment

CCS administers math, reading and writing tests to entering students in order to determine appropriate placement and skill level. These tests are scored immediately with results reviewed with the student's parent/guardian. Test results are kept in the student cum file for teachers to peruse. In addition to these entry-level tests, CCS also uses course diagnostic tests, STAR scores, and input from previous teachers to accurately formulate a student baseline.

Formative Assessments

Student progress toward meeting summative outcomes is monitored using multiple formative assessment measures. Formative assessments are an integral part of the CCS instructional program and are used to help refine and improve instructional strategies and the learning environment in general. Formative assessments provide regular feedback to students about the particular qualities of their work, with advice, suggestions and modeling as to how they can improve. Students are encouraged to think and explain their reasoning, focusing on themes and concepts and the connections between them, rather than on isolated information. In 2014-2015, Professional Development will be based on formative assessment data and departmental collaboration in Mathematics and English Language Arts.

Formative assessments may include but are not limited to the following strategies:

- **Edline's "Item Analysis" feature** which reveals the most frequently missed questions on student assignments. This formative assessment feature informs both teachers and students about student understanding at a point when timely adjustments can be made. These adjustments help to ensure students achieve targeted standards-based learning goals within a set time frame.
- **Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Testing** is now in place for 6th through 9th grades. Staff members have been trained on administration of the test and analysis of the data that it provides. Student scores will be used to guide changes in curriculum and instruction to fit the needs of students.
- **Internally-Developed Benchmark Exams** guide instruction in Mathematics and English Language Arts. These benchmark exams are standards-based and aligned with the pacing of CCS curriculum; the test data accurately describes to what degree students have mastered the content that has been covered in class.
- **Course assignments and exams**- student results guide teachers in their short and long-term curriculum and instruction planning.

- **Criteria and goal setting** with students engages them in instruction and the learning process by creating clear expectations. Goals for each lesson are often included in classroom instruction and on student assignments. In order to be successful, students need to understand and know the learning target/goal and the criteria for reaching it. Establishing and defining quality work together, asking students to participate in establishing norm behaviors for classroom culture, and determining what should be included in criteria for success are all examples of this strategy. Using student work, classroom tests, or exemplars of what is expected helps students understand where they are, where they need to be, and an effective process for getting there.
- **Observations** go beyond walking around the room to see if students are on task or need clarification. Observations assist teachers in gathering evidence of student learning to inform instructional planning. This evidence can be recorded and used as feedback for students about their learning or as anecdotal data shared with them during conferences.
- **Questioning strategies** should be embedded in lesson/unit planning. Asking better questions allows an opportunity for deeper thinking and provides teachers with significant insight into the degree and depth of understanding. Questions of this nature engage students in classroom dialogue that both uncovers and expands learning. An "exit slip" at the end of a class period to determine students' understanding of the day's lesson or quick checks during instruction such as "thumbs up/down" or "red/green" (stop/go) cards are also examples of questioning strategies that elicit immediate information about student learning. Helping students ask better questions is another aspect of this formative assessment strategy.
- **Student access to weekly grade reports** helps students better understand their own learning progress as evidenced by their classroom work. Student awareness of their grades not only engages students, it also helps them, beyond a "grade," to see where they started and the progress they are making toward the learning goal.
- **On-line evaluation tools such as Math XL and Edline provide students with descriptive feedback** as they learn. Research shows descriptive feedback to be the most significant instructional strategy to move students forward in their learning. Descriptive feedback provides students with an understanding of what they are doing well, links to classroom learning, and gives specific input on how to reach the next step in the learning progression.

Each teacher assesses student progress in curricular areas through a variety of assessment strategies including diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments. Technology literacy and authentic assessment strategies are embedded within assignments.

Formative assessments indicate what the student has learned overall and what he or she still needs to master. The corrective or re-teaching activity occurs in a different modality and/or different format than was done initially. Examples of correctives include:

- Peer support groups

- Teacher/cross age tutoring
- Alternative teaching materials
- Small group instruction
- Reorganizing assignments into the smallest, understandable parts
- Changing the learning context or focus
- Increasing parent/guardian involvement
- Organizing cooperative learning projects
- Developing high interest, real life materials
- Giving students clear, achievable goals

Summative Assessments

CCS shall meet all statewide and district standards, and conduct the pupil assessments required pursuant to Section 60605 of the Education Code, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute or pupil assessments applicable to pupils in non-charter public schools. CCS will utilize the State and SJUSD mandated testing: STAR, SMARTER BALANCE (starting in 2014) CELDT, CAHSEE, and the district's interim assessment system. Assessment for a summative purpose (i.e., grading, placement, and accountability) will provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate conceptual understanding in all subject areas, to apply their understanding of these important ideas to solve new problems, and to draw on what they have learned.

Summative Assessments and Professional Learning Communities

While individual teachers are responsible for the summative results of their students, all CCS teachers will play an active role in the overall assessment of student progress. On a weekly basis, CCS teachers meet to discuss and review the progress of all CCS students, and to determine appropriate follow-up remediation or individual program adjustment for students who do not exhibit adequate progress based upon formative evaluations and remediation. Weekly attendance and student work progress meetings are held with teachers and tutors to exchange student progress information, discuss student improvements and arrange interventions. Teachers work together in WASC Home Groups to analyze school-wide and department-specific STAR results and base curriculum changes on this data. Data from annual surveys, such as the Parent and Student Satisfaction Surveys, the STAR Test Student Survey, and the Senior Exit Interview, are reviewed annually by the entire staff; the Leadership Team decides what changes are necessary based on what has been learned from the survey results.

Summative assessment include: Mid-term and final exams, bench mark tests, state standardized tests, CAHSEE, STAR, and 7th and 9th grade writing tests. All students are required to participate in state-mandated testing as a requirement for continued enrollment at CCS.

Credits and Grades

Students earn credits and grades to support their advancement to the next grade level and make progress toward graduation. Students have opportunities to make up credit deficiencies. Attainment of credits and grades based on student effort, progress, and completion of a standards based curriculum is one indicator of meeting measurable objectives for student learning. Demonstration and documentation of student progress on standards is a school wide, district, state, and national focus. Each CCS course is 18 weeks long. Students can complete more than one week of work at a time as long as quality remains high and work is a B or above. Students meet statewide performance standards through coursework that is aligned with content standards. Students are required to successfully complete coursework (course grade of "D" or above) in order to demonstrate their achievement of the standards. Some higher-level courses also require the completion

of prerequisite courses. Teachers use standard grading policies that are outlined on course syllabi, weekly grade reports, and progress reports sent to parents and students via email through Edline. Final semester grades are consistent with the teachers' standard grading policies and are sent home via US Mail. In the event that a student leaves the Choices program, all completed credits and grades, and credits and grades in progress, are documented and forwarded to the receiving school in the student's file.

The average cumulative GPA of CCS students is approximately 2.0, or a "C" average. The CCS Faculty is optimistic that this average will improve with this year's implementation of the new homework policy, which will keep students current on their homework, improving both their homework and test scores.

CCS Students' Average Cumulative GPAs by Grade Level:

Close of Fall Semester 2012-13

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Average Cumulative 9-12 GPA</u>
9	1.99
10	2.08
11	2.24
12	2.15

The English Language Learner Program

CCS provides instruction for students learning English and school information is translated into Ukrainian, Russian and Spanish the largest language groups in the district. Incoming ELL students are assessed through district language tests prior to meeting with Choices' counselors and signing a Master Agreement. CCS has curriculum materials that will help language learners to achieve mastery. ELL students take the CELDT annually to measure their language growth until the student is re-designated as Fluent English Proficient (FEP). ELL students participate in state mandated tests. The goals of the program are:

- 1) Equal access to education for English Language Learners
- 2) Appropriate English Language Development
- 3) Proficiency in content standards
- 4) Culturally relevant curriculum
- 5) Sufficient parent/guardian involvement

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)

CCS meets the timelines and requirements of NCLB, as it pertains to a charter independent study delivery system.

Consistent with NCLB, CCS ensures: all students are taught by highly qualified teachers; all students attain proficiency in reading and mathematics, including students with disabilities and English learners; and that all English learners become proficient in English.

CCS is committed to ensuring that all students have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain high-quality standards based education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging California academic achievement standards and state academic assessments. CCS meets the annual measurable objectives and shows annual yearly progress as set forth in NCLB.

NCLB: Professional Development and Highly Qualified Teachers

CCS meets the Highly Qualified Teaching requirements of NCLB for alternative, independent charter schools.

Professional development for all staff includes ongoing training in strategies and best practices to increase student learning results. Staff works in Professional Learning Communities to evaluate student work, review test data, and share best practices.

CCS Reporting System under NCLB

All NCLB guidelines, procedures and published reports are communicated to the SJUSD Board of Education as delineated in Element Nine: Annual Audit. CCS publishes reports that are clear and understandable. Upon parent/guardian request, qualifications of their child's teachers and, if applicable, paraprofessionals, will be provided. Additional information to be reported includes:

- Comparison of students at various levels of achievement on assessments
- Comparison of actual academic achievement for all groups of students as compared to annual objectives
- Professional qualifications of teachers
- How CCS meets teacher and paraprofessional qualification requirements

CCS Local Accountability Plan under NCLB

Under NCLB, students are required to meet adequate yearly progress as defined by the State of California in its state accountability plan. Each year, CCS strives to meet the following requirements:

- Growth in percentage of students meeting or exceeding state standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics
- Student testing participation rate of at least 95%
- Growth on the Academic Performance Index (API)
- Graduation Rate Annual Targets

California's Academic Performance Index (API):

CCS's state API continues to grow as encouraged by annual targets. In 2013 CCS's API grew by 6 points.

ELEMENT D: THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

"The Advisory structure of the school including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure parent/guardian involvement." (education Code Section 47605(b) (5) (D))

Governing Board

Choices Charter School is a public charter school currently under the local supervision of the San Juan Unified School District. **The governing board of CCS is the San Juan Unified School District Board of Education.** The SJUSD Board of Education formally approves all hiring and separation of employment of Choices Charter School personnel.

Choices Charter School is non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and other operations and shall not charge tuition. No person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of 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, including a prohibition against discrimination against any person based upon the perception that the person has any of

those characteristics or is associated with a person who has, or is perceived to have, any of those characteristics.

Choices Charter school shall operate as an extension of the San Juan Unified School District and be responsible to the San Juan Unified School District board, as per our annual Memorandum of Understanding (MOU.) For the purposes of special education, Choices operates its special education program as an arm of the district. As described in detail in the MOU, the SJUSD receives all special education funds and allocates funds to CCS for the provision of special education programs and services.

A Charter Advisory Council will **advise** the director, and will act as the voice of the constituencies they represent. The Charter Council will increase in representation as school ADA increases. The Charter Advisory Council currently consists of the following:

- (1) Director
- (4) Teachers
- (3) Secondary students
- (3) Parent/guardian or community members
- (1) Classified staff
- (1) District charter liaison from K-12

Regardless of enrollment, the Charter Council will maintain at least seven members and meet quarterly with additional meetings as needed. Charter Council members, except for the district liaison, the director, and classified staff, will be selected from among those interested in serving on the council.

Internal decisions are made at CCS through a process that usually begins with staff discussion during staff meetings, WASC meetings, or weekly attendance meetings. Topics that have been discussed in whole group are often refined and decided upon by the Leadership Team in Leadership Team Meetings. Sometimes, topics first discussed in Leadership Team Meetings are then taken to the entire staff for input. If staff consensus is clear, decisions are sometimes made in whole-group meetings. Ultimately, all decisions are approved by the Director, with the input of all school stakeholders in mind.

Parents/guardians

Parents/guardians are encouraged to participate at CCS in a variety of ways. They are included in the initial student intake interview, and must sign the educational "Master Agreement". Parents/guardians are welcome to attend weekly meetings with their student's teacher and are required to attend the initial meeting. Choices invites parents/guardians to participate in a yearly Back to School Night, WASC committees, quarterly social events, and in the Career Fair. Parents/guardians may volunteer as tutors upon completion of required paper work. Returning parents are asked to provide their feedback each Fall, through an online Parent Satisfaction Survey. In 2013, the overwhelming majority of parents surveyed praised the beautiful school facility and stated that CCS's program met their expectations.

Conflict of Interest

A CCS Conflict of Interest disclosure shall be completed by parent/guardian and community members of the Advisory Council. Under no circumstances will a member vote or participate in a discussion relating to a matter in which he/she has a personal financial interest. The laws on conflict of interest also precludes CCS itself from entering into any contracts in which any member has a financial interest, and makes such contracts void and illegal.

The Brown Act

CCS Charter School and the CCS Advisory Council shall be subject to the Brown Act. All meetings of the Advisory Council shall be held in accordance with the Brown Act.

Public Records Act

CCS is subject to the Public Records Act. The Public Records Act shall apply to all minutes from CCS meetings and CCS records that are not exempt from the Public Records Act.

Director/ Leadership Team

The Director's supportive leadership nurtures open communication with teachers and staff to encourage shared understandings of the charter mission and purpose. The Director serves as the educational leader, and articulates a vision of what the charter could and should be like. The Leadership Team is led by the Director and is comprised of the WASC Focus Group leaders (Teachers) and the WASC Coordinator. The Leadership Team members assist the Director in communication with the staff and decision making.

The Director is in charge of daily operations. When the Director is absent for any reason, a CCS staff member with an administrative credential assumes responsibility. Designated staff members are on hand to support either the Director or the Teacher in Charge, in case of emergency. Thanks to a small campus and student population, teachers are able to work together on a daily basis to supervise student behavior on campus.

The Director evaluates all staff members annually, using a rubric which is distributed to employees in advance. Evaluations are based, in part, on classroom observations. Staff members meet with the Director individually to discuss their evaluations.

When a new staff member is needed, the Leadership Team initially identifies the need, and a position is advertised on Edjoin. Submitted resumes are reviewed by the Leadership Team, and interviews are conducted by the Leadership Team members and Director. The Leadership Team suggests best candidates, and the Director ultimately makes a hiring decision.

The management documents governing CCS and its relationship with the San Juan Unified School District include the Charter, the Memorandum of Understanding, and the SJUSD Administrative Regulations and Board Policies, all included in the Appendix to this document. Amendments to the Memorandum of Understanding may be made as needed, collaboratively, with representatives of SJUSD and of Choices; all amendments must be made in writing and must be approved by both parties. Choices rents its location from the San Juan Unified School District; the details of this arrangement are outlined in the Facility Use Agreement, also included in the Appendix. The Director and the SJUSD liaison have exclusive authority to sign for school-related expenditures, as is outlined in the Authorized Signatures Memorandum (see Appendix.) An organizational chart illustrates an environment in which teachers and the administration communicate openly and regularly about program needs and solutions. The administration supports teacher needs, while the teachers support program needs as communicated by the administration.

Business Operations Manager

The Business Operations Manager provides services as needed by the Director. The Business Operations Manager Budget Analyst has expert knowledge of business practice procedures, basic accounting procedures, categorical programs and charter schools and is computer literate. The Business Operations Manager minimum requirements include:

- Knowledge of charter school law
- Knowledge of business practice procedures

- Basic accounting procedures, and categorical programs
- Comprehensive understanding of California school finance and regulations
- Skills in the areas of fiscal forecasting, personnel management, fringe benefits, workers compensation, and insurance management

Funding

CCS operates as a dependent, charter school. As its basic revenue, for each unit of Average Daily Attendance CCS receives the State certified Charter School Block grant rate. CCS receives full funding for the categorical block grant. It receives full allocation in all other state categories such as lottery, etc. It also receives state and federal funds as per the district formula for special education and all other categorical programs not covered under the categorical block grant. CCS may pursue procurement of additional revenues through a variety of alternatives such as fundraising, grant, partnerships, and donations.

Communications

CCS Advisory Council meetings shall be scheduled and an agenda posted at least one week prior to the meeting. Meeting minutes shall be prepared and submitted to the director following the meeting. Minutes from the regularly scheduled meetings will be available for review in the CCS office in accordance with the Public Records Act. Annually, CCS will present to the SJUSD Board of Education a comprehensive report, as delineated in Element Nine: Annual Audit, consisting of the results of the annual site assessment, demographic information and the follow-up action steps to address the academic and social needs of all students.

Administrative Services

The administrative staff and daily administrative operations of CCS will be independent of SJUSD. SJUSD will provide the supervisory oversight for CCS in exchange for **1% of CCS's** general purpose revenue and categorical block grant revenue.

CCS may also contract with SJUSD for the provision of administrative and other services, such as payroll, attendance accounting, special education services, etc. Such arrangements would provide SJUSD with additional sources of revenue.

ELEMENT E: EMPLOYMENT QUALIFICATIONS

"The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the school." (Education Code Section 57605 (b) (5) (E))

The Director will serve as full time administrator and have the responsibility for implementing the policies and procedures of the charter. The duties include:

- Provide annual report to the SJUSD Board of Education
- Coordinate and implement policy
- Develop budget
- Chair Charter Advisory Council meetings
- Serve as instructional leader
- Supervise and evaluate staff members
- Recommend hiring and dismissal of personnel
- Prepare yearly school accountability report
- Oversee facilities and resources
- Oversee student discipline
- Supervise team implementation of assessment and curriculum design
- Develop and implement program and curriculum
- Supervise student admissions process

CCS's employee information is described in detail in the Choices Charter School Employee Handbook (see Appendix.) San Juan Choices Charter School is an at-will employer. CCS is free to conclude the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice, with or without cause. Employment is for no specified period of time. New employees are chosen by the Leadership Team, which is led by the Director. All new employees are subject to criminal background checks as a condition of employment. The Choices Charter School Pay Schedule outlines salaries and hourly wages of all credentialed teachers and counselors. Teachers working a Full Time Equivalent of 50% or more are eligible for health care, retirement savings, and disability programs described in the Employee Handbook. A Classified Employee Handbook serves as a supplement to the Employee Handbook, and outlines a work calendar and set of benefits specific to administrative roles.

Some teachers are designated as Supervising Teachers, while others are designated as Classroom Teachers. Some teachers fill both of these roles at once. Supervising Teachers have primary responsibility for student work and attendance as noted on students' master agreements. Classroom Teachers teach one or more specialty classes and have responsibility for student work and attendance for all of his/her subject classes noted on the master agreement. All Supervising Teachers and Classroom Teachers contribute to STRS.

Teachers at CCS shall be required to hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. These documents shall be maintained on file at the charter school and shall be subject to periodic inspection by the chartering authority. All CCS teachers are NCLB compliant, as verified by an NCLB specialist. It is the intent of the Legislature that charter schools be given flexibility with regard to non-core, non-college preparatory courses (Education Code Section 47605 (I)). Paraprofessionals shall be required to hold an AA degree and encouraged to develop a career path toward earning a teaching credential. The CCS Counselor must be credentialed in counseling. The Director is required to hold an Administrative Credential. All CCS employees are subject to state and federal employment laws.

Professional Development

CCS teachers are committed to students attaining mastery of the California grade level curriculum and standards. Teachers are actively involved with all stakeholder groups and participate in planning and implementation of staff development program. CCS teachers are committed to the charter school program and its continuous improvement through teacher participation in Professional Learning Communities and professional development.

Teacher duties include:

- Teach California standards-based curriculum in a way that engages and motivates students toward mastery of academic standards and skills
- Meet student needs as outlined in the master agreement
- Assess student progress and set improvement goals
- Create a nurturing environment for learning which fosters creativity and critical thinking
- Understand cultural differences and the needs of "at risk" youth
- Use methods that incorporate different learning styles
- Create the maximum learning environment through action-based research and state of the art technology to identify effective teaching techniques
- Align high standards for achievement with innovation in curriculum and instruction; traditional and alternative assessments; professional development; and attention to the unique learning styles, abilities, and needs of each student

- Model democracy by valuing multiculturalism, respecting human rights, developing civic responsibilities, and demonstrating personal responsibility

All staff will be required to offer medical clearance including proof of medical exam and tuberculosis (TB) screening consistent with federal and state laws. Employees will attend an orientation to discuss personnel policies and employee handbook and professional development sessions on student supervision and safety, safety training for staff, additional immunization screening, and emergency preparedness. CCS reserves all rights to change or enhance any personnel policies in compliance with federal and state labor laws, including workers' compensation laws.

ELEMENT F: HEALTH AND SAFETY

"The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237." (Education Code Section 47605(b) (5) (F))

CCS has developed a site safety plan and training program, which encompasses a comprehensive set of health, safety, and risk management policies. The plan includes:

- 1) A requirement that all enrolling students and staff provide records documenting immunizations to the extent required for enrollment in the comprehensive public schools
- 2) Policies and procedures for response to natural disasters and emergencies
- 3) Policies relating to preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens
- 4) A policy requiring instructional and administrative staff to receive training in emergency response
- 5) Policy relating to the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines
- 6) Assurance that the school will be housed in facilities that have received state Fire Marshal approval and have also been evaluated by a qualified structural engineer who has determined that the facilities present no substantial seismic safety hazard
- 7) A policy stating that the school functions as a drug, alcohol, and tobacco free workplace
- 8) Requirements that each employee of the school submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record as required by Education Code §44237
- 9) Procedure to notify SJUSD in an emergency situation (per the Safe School Plan; see Appendix)
- 10) Requirement that all volunteers (including parents) must be fingerprinted if they will be with students without the direct supervision of a CCS staff member
- 11) Requirement that all visitors, including parents, check in at the front desk and wear a name tag while on campus

All staff will be fingerprinted and cleared by the Department of Justice, as required by state law. All staff will be required to offer medical clearance including proof of medical exam and tuberculosis (TB) screening. Employees will attend an orientation to discuss personnel policies and employee handbook and professional development sessions on student supervision and safety, safety training for staff, additional immunization screening, and emergency preparedness. CCS reserves all rights to change or enhance any personnel policies in compliance with state labor laws.

These policies and procedures are incorporated as appropriate into the school's Parent/Student Handbook and the Employee Handbook and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in the school's staff development efforts and advisory board policies.

Charter School Location

This charter authorizes the operation of San Juan Choices Charter, which shall operate in one site within the geographic boundaries of the San Juan Unified School District. The site is located at 4425 Laurelwood Way, Sacramento, California 95864. The site is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

ELEMENT G: The Means to Achieve A RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE

"The means by which the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted." (Education Code Section 47605 (b) (5) (G))

CCS will implement a student recruitment strategy that includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following elements or strategies to ensure a racial and ethnic balance among students that is reflective of the district:

- An enrollment timeline and process that is scheduled and adopted to allow for a broad-based recruiting and application process
- The distribution of promotional and informational materials to a broad variety of community groups and agencies that serve the various racial, ethnic, and interest groups represented in the district
- Outreach throughout the region to reach prospective students and parents/guardians
- SJUSD Parent Handbook in Russian and Spanish available to all families

All English Learner students are tested and designated by the district's bilingual program, and take the CELDT test every Spring. When necessary, ESL supplemental instruction can be provided to students.

Ethnic diversity at CCS and in the SJUSD is very similar, as shown in the following table.

**2012-2013 Student Enrollment by Ethnicity
Choices Charter School & San Juan Unified School District**

<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>% of CCS Enrollment</u>	<u>% of SJUSD Enrollment</u>
Hispanic/Latino	22	20
American Indian or Alaska Native	3	1
Asian	1	5
Pacific Islander	0	1
Filipino	0	1
African American	8	8
White	63	61
Two or More Races	3	3
Not Reported	0	0
	100	100

ELEMENT H: ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

"Admission requirements, if applicable." (Education Code Section 47605(b) (5) (H))

1. ELIGIBILITY

CCS will be open to all students and will actively recruit a diverse student population from the district and surrounding areas who understand and value the school's mission and are committed to the school's instructional and operational philosophy. Students will be considered for admission without regard to ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, or achievement level. No person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of 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, including a prohibition against discrimination against any person based upon the perception that the person has any of those characteristics or is associated with a person who has, or is perceived to have, any of those characteristics.

CCS will not charge fees or tuition and will be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions, and policies. CCS will comply with Charter School Law 47605(d), including holding a lottery if the school is over subscribed.

Admission is open on a first-come first served basis up to the enrollment capacity of the program. Students who reside in the district do not receive preferred enrollment privileges. When applications exceed the capacity, a waiting list system will be used to determine admissions on a first-come first-served basis.

A student interested in enrolling at Choices first attends an orientation where he/she is given diagnostic tests in Math, Reading, and Writing. If the parent decides that CCS is the best fit to meet the student's needs, the student and parent(s) complete enrollment paperwork and attend an enrollment appointment, during which the student is enrolled and assigned a course schedule.

During the enrollment process, a master agreement will be reviewed and signed by the student, parent/guardian, teacher, and administrator or counselor. The Master Agreement will serve as a contract between the school and the student and parent/guardian. The agreement may be modified or updated as necessary.

By signing this contract, the student and parent/guardian indicate they understand the charter school philosophy, program, discipline procedures, attendance requirements, and responsibility of parent/guardians and students.

This enrollment process takes place over the span of one week or less.

Once enrolled, if, as evidenced by data, a student is unable to work alone without supervision, is not making academic progress toward the next grade level, and is not benefiting sufficiently from supplemental tutoring services, it may be concluded that CCS's independent study model does not fit the student's academic needs. In this case, CCS may not re-enroll the student for the next term, and will provide the student with a list of alternative programs, including their home school.

2. SPECIAL EDUCATION

CCS will **not** be its own LEA and **will operate** under the SJUSD single district SELPA. An MOU between CCS and the District to provide services to special education students will be developed and will include:

- 1) A complete description of special education policies and procedures, governing the identification, assessment, determination of special education eligibility and provision of service(s) to individuals with exceptional needs attending CCS;
- 2) The method for funding necessary services to individuals with exceptional needs;
- 3) A plan for serving students with low incidence, severe or intensive needs that may not be appropriately served in an independent study program;
- 4) A provision for providing necessary special education services that may involve substantial costs (such as sign language interpreting, non-public agency services, non-public school placements, medical supports, instructional assistant support, etc.)

ELEMENT I: Financial Audit

"The manner in which an annual, independent, financial audit shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering authority."
(Education Code Section 47605(b) (5) (I))

As part of the district's annual audit, an independent financial auditor, who has knowledge of charter school and independent study audit requirements and practices, will complete an annual independent financial audit of CCS by December 15. The audit will follow generally accepted accounting principles. Upon its completion, the audit will be provided to the Chief Financial Officer of the district, County Superintendent of Schools, the state Controller, and the California Department of Education. No audits during the past five years have found exceptions. In the case that an exception is found, CCS will provide the district with a written report detailing proposed actions to be taken to prevent exceptions from recurring. Audit exceptions or deficiencies will ultimately be resolved through the joint efforts of the school's director and the chief financial officer of the San Juan Unified School District.

CCS contracts with the district for use of the district financial system including budget development and follows the district budget development schedule and policies.

CCS, with the guidance of its Business Manager, works with the district and maintains outside contacts to develop and monitor the budget. Outside sources include: California Department of Education, California Charter Advisory Board, School Services of California, Charter School Development Center, and the California Charter School Association.

Monthly meetings take place between the CCS Director and the Business Manager to discuss the latest budget developments. The budget is updated monthly and key indicators are reviewed. Formal board updates occur at first, second, and third interim reporting periods.

ELEMENT J: PUPIL SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

"The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled." (Education Code Section 47605(b) (5) (J))

In accordance with California Education Code Section 48900, CCS will develop and maintain a comprehensive set of parent/guardian/student behavior policies consistent with the chartering district. These policies will be printed and distributed as part of the school's student handbook and will clearly describe the school's expectations regarding attendance, mutual respect, substance abuse, violence, safety, and work habits. Each student and his

or her parent/guardian will be required to verify that they have reviewed and understand the policies prior to enrollment. Policies regarding suspension or expulsion will follow SJUSD guidelines and will conform to applicable state and federal laws regarding all students. Prior to expulsion, students will be accorded due process unless the student's conduct presents an immediate threat to the health and safety of others.

CCS will notify the district of any expulsions and will include suspensions and expulsion data in its annual performance report described in Element I (Annual Audit). Students may be withdrawn from CCS by the school administrator and referred back to their district of residence for noncompliance with the terms of the charter. All expelled students' cumulative records will be returned to the school district of residence. Placement for district residents, within San Juan Unified School District, will be determined as space is available. All discipline matters will be conducted in compliance with constitutional due process. Students may be recommended for expulsion upon a determination that the student has committed one of the acts listed below while on school district property or engaging in a school related event or in the presence of their credentialed teacher while any activities related to home schooling or independent study instruction are being conducted in the student's home or other place of public meeting between the student and Master Teacher. The following grounds for suspension or expulsion may change yearly subject to updates to the California Education Code and the San Juan Unified School District Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion.

- Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
- Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.
- Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished a firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object, unless, in the case of possession of an object of this type, the pupil had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, which is concurred in by the principal or the designee of the principal.
- Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind.
- Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell a controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11053) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and either sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to a person another liquid, substance, or material and represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.
- Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion
- Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
- Stolen or attempted to steal school property or private property.
- Possessed or used tobacco or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets, and betel. However, this section does not prohibit use or possession by a pupil of his or her own prescription products.
- Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitat profanity or vulgarity.
- Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Section 11014.5 of the Health and Safety Code.
- Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.

- Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- Possessed an imitation firearm.
- Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault or sexual battery.
- Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a pupil who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of either preventing that pupil from being a witness or retaliating against that pupil for being a witness or both.
- Committed sexual harassment as defined in Section 212.5.
- Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence as defined in subdivision (E) of section 33032.5.
- Intentionally engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidation directed at school district personnel or pupils, that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual and reasonable expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder, and invading the rights of either school personnel or pupils by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment.
- Made terrorist threats against school officials or school property or both.

Students shall be expelled as set forth in the policies and procedures of the San Juan Unified School District. CCS students recommended for expulsion will have all the rights and constitutional due process afforded any student enrolled in San Juan Unified School District. All staff, students and parents/guardians shall be given written notice of this charter school's policies and procedures related to discipline. All discipline procedures will follow due process guidelines. Students and their parents/guardians shall be so notified in writing at the time of their enrollment. Parents/guardians will be expected to work closely with CCS staff to reinforce the school rules and behavioral expectations.

ELEMENT K: STAFF RETIREMENT SYSTEM

"The manner by which staff members of the Charter School will be covered by the State Teachers' Retirement System, The Public Employees' Retirement System or Federal Social Security." (Education Code Section 47605 (b) (5) (K))

San Juan Choices Charter School is an "at will" employer. The school can terminate any of its employees at any time. Likewise, employees may resign at any time without notice. Though the teachers at CCS recognize that they have the right to join or form a union, they do not choose to exercise this right at this time.

In cooperation with SJUSD, CCS has established a salary schedule and benefits, described in the Employee Handbook. Labor procedures that apply to all CCS teachers are outlined in the Employee Handbook, as well.

Credentials are monitored annually by CCS's Administrative Assistant. When a staff member's credential will soon expire, the Administrative Assistant provides the teacher with advance notification. Coursework that qualifies for movement on the salary schedule must be submitted for verification by October 1 in order to be considered for the current school year.

In the case that an employee has a complaint regarding his/her employment at CCS, he/she may first submit the complaint in writing to the Director. If the problem is not solved to the satisfaction of the employee, he/she may address the complaint to the SJUSD liaison to CCS. From this point forward, the complaint is resolved at the district level. All employees have the right to due process.

The CCS school calendar is not always exactly aligned with SJUSD. The calendar is designed by the CCS staff to meet the needs of the CCS families and program and is submitted to SJUSD for approval.

Employees of CCS will participate in STRS, PERS, or Social Security depending upon each individual's eligibility, as described in the Employee Handbook. CCS may contract with San Juan Unified School District for all requested personnel services and benefit programs including, but not limited to STRS, PERS, or federal Social Security, health and welfare benefit programs, workers' compensation, and unemployment insurance.

ELEMENT L: ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVE

"The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district who choose not to attend the charter school." (Education Code Section 47605 (b) (5) (L))

Enrollment at CCS is entirely voluntary on the part of the students. Students who live within the San Juan Unified School District, who opt not to attend the charter school may attend other district schools based on space available. Students who reside outside of the San Juan Unified School District boundaries may pursue an inter-district transfer, in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of San Juan Unified School District or county of residence.

ELEMENT M: DISCRIPTION OF EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

"A description of the rights of any employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school." (Education Code Section 47605 (b) (5) (M))

Charter school staff that has left employment within the district to work at CCS will **NOT** have return rights to the district. If interested in returning to the district, CCS employees must apply with the district and be selected through the district's regular recruitment process.

Employees of CCS are "at will" employees and will participate in STRS, PERS, or Social Security depending upon each individual's eligibility, as described in the Employee Handbook. All employee rights are communicated to prospective employees during the interviewing process. For their ongoing reference, new employees receive the information in writing in the Employee Handbook.

ELEMENT N: DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

"The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter." (Educational Code Section 47605 (b) (5) (N))

The intent of 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 to avoid disputes regarding oversight and renewal matters.

The resolution process for students and parents/guardians is as follows:

(1) Student/parent/guardian will talk to their master/specialty teacher about the problem.

- (2) If they cannot reach agreement, teacher and student/parent/guardian will discuss the issue with the director.
- (3) If the parent/guardian and student are not satisfied with the decision of the director, they may take their dispute to the district's liaison to the charter school.
- (4) If the problem remains unresolved, the district liaison may take the dispute to the Superintendent's Cabinet.

Disputes between teachers or between the director and a teacher would follow a similar procedure.

Disputes between the SJUSD Board of Education and CCS relating to provisions of the charter will be addressed promptly and fairly. If the SJUSD Board of Education believes that it has reason to revoke the CCS charter, the SJUSD Board of Education agrees to notify the CCS Advisory Council and grant CCS reasonable time to respond to the notice and take appropriate corrective action prior to revoking the charter. If corrective action fails to resolve the dispute, CCS and the SJUSD Board of Education agree to submit the matter to the Superintendent of the Sacramento County Office of Education, whose decision will be advisory. Timelines for dispute resolution will be agreed upon at the time of mediation. The final decision regarding any such disputes rests with San Juan Unified School District Board of Education. CCS retains all rights for redress under the law.

Oversight, Reporting, Revocation, and Renewal

The SJUSD may inspect or observe any part of the school at any time, but shall provide reasonable notice to the director of the charter school prior to any observation or inspection unless such notice would prevent the performance of reasonable oversight functions. The SJUSD shall endeavor to provide such notice at least three working days prior to the inspection or observation. Inspection, observation, monitoring, and oversight activities may not be assigned or subcontracted to a third party by the SJUSD without the mutual consent of the governing board of the school.

CCS will submit fiscal reports in accordance with the timelines stated in the charter school law. CCS and SJUSD will jointly develop a timeline of other required ongoing monitoring documents, including deadlines of when the documents will be submitted, when reviewed, when feedback will be given to the charter school, and by when corrective action will occur. The charter school will be given reasonable time to take appropriate corrective action, unless the alleged violation presents an immediate threat to health or safety.

ELEMENT O: LABOR RELATIONS

"A DECLARATION WHETHER OR NOT THE Charter School shall be deemed the exclusive Public School Employer of the employees of the Charter School for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act." (Education Code Section 47605 (b) (5) (O))

CCS shall be deemed to be the exclusive public school employer of the employees at the charter school. It is up to the employees to exercise their rights under the Education Employment Relations Act (EERA). Included in those rights, should the **employees** choose to assert them, is the right to select their own exclusive representative. At this point, CCS Teachers are aware that they have the right to form a union and do not choose to exercise that right.

ELEMENT P: SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURES

"A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records." (Education Code Section 47605 (b) (5) (P))

1. In the event that Choices Charter School closes, the assets and liabilities of the school will be disposed of by the school's director and CCS will be responsible for all closure activities. The director shall ensure that a final audit of the school's assets and liabilities is performed. All assets and liabilities will revert to the district.
2. CCS will notify parents/guardians of students of the following information:
 - o Date of closure
 - o Contact information for inquiries
 - o District residence for pupil
 - o How parents may obtain copies of pupil records
3. CCS will provide San Juan Unified School District a list of all CCS students that includes, grade level, district of residence, and courses completed.
4. Parent/guardians will be provided with a printed or electronic transcript of their student's academic progress at the school, along with other relevant information. Thus, in the event of school closure, parents/guardians and students will possess an independent copy of potentially necessary pupil records. All pupil records and all state assessment results, along with all special education records will be transferred to San Juan Unified School District to be maintained.
5. All CCS personnel records for employees will be transferred to San Juan Unified School District.
6. The director of CCS will ensure the completion of an independent final audit within six months after the closure of the school that may function as the annual audit and includes:
 - a. An accounting of all financial assets, including cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment and other items of material value.
 - b. An accounting of liabilities, including accounts payable and any reduction in apportionments as a result of audit findings or other investigations, loans or unpaid staff compensation.
 - c. An assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to CCS.
7. The disposal of any net assets remaining after all liabilities of the charter school have been paid or otherwise addressed, including but not limited to the following will be the property of San Juan Unified School District:
 - a. The return of any grant funds and restricted categorical funds to their source in accordance with the terms of the grant of state and federal law, as appropriate which may include submission of final expenditure reports for entitlement grants and the filing of any required Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports.
 - b. The return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any conditions established when the donation of such materials or property was accepted.

8. CCS will be responsible for filing an annual report required pursuant to Education Code section 47604.33.
9. CCS will be responsible for the payment of any closure activities.