



**The Yuba Environmental Science  
Charter Academy  
(YES Charter Academy)**

*"YES to Excellence in Education"*

**CHARTER PETITION  
Introduction**

Prepared in compliance with the terms, conditions, and requirements of  
The Charter Schools Act, Education Code Section 47600, *et seq.*, and  
related statutes



## **Introduction**

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### **A. Affirmations**

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The Yuba Environmental Science Charter Academy (“YES Charter Academy” or the “Charter School”) will follow any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to the Charter School, including but not limited to:

- The Yuba Environmental Science Charter Academy shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the pupil assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Section 60605, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or any other pupil assessments applicable to pupils in non-charter public schools.
- The Yuba Environmental Science Charter Academy shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act.
- The Yuba Environmental Science Charter Academy will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations.
- The Yuba Environmental Science Charter Academy will not charge tuition.
- The Charter School shall admit all students who wish to attend the Charter School, and who submit a timely application; unless the Charter School receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case each application will be given equal chance of admission through a public random drawing process. Except as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2), admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the student or his or her parents within the State. Preference in the public random drawing shall be given as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B). In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of the Charter School in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(C).
- The Yuba Environmental Science Charter Academy will not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics)..



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- The Yuba Environmental Science Charter Academy will comply with the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (“IDEA”), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973(“Section 504”), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”).
- The Charter School shall meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary.
- The Charter School shall ensure that teachers in the Charter School hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools is required to hold. As allowed by statute, flexibility will be given to noncore, non-college preparatory teachers.
- The Charter School shall at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
- The Charter School shall, for each fiscal year, offer at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D).
- If a pupil is expelled or leaves the Charter School without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the Charter School shall notify the superintendent of the school County Office of Education of the pupil’s last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school County Office of Education with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card and health information.
- The Charter School shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection.
- The Charter School shall, on a regular basis, consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School's education programs.
- The Charter School shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities.
- The Charter School shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment.



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- The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
- The Yuba Environmental Science Charter Academy will comply with the Public Records Act and the Federal Educational Privacy Rights Act (“FERPA”).
- The Charter School shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- The Yuba Environmental Science Charter Academy will continually strive for a healthy, collaborative, synergistic relationship with the County Office of Education Yuba County Office of Education (the “County Office of Education” or “YCOE”) and surrounding school County Office of Educations.

### B. Executive Summary

The Yuba Environmental Science Charter Academy, an independent K-8 public charter school, was originally planned over a period of three years by a group of parents and residents of the Dobbins and Oregon House community to take advantage of the California Charter Schools Act. YES Charter Academy offers elementary school children a high-quality, standards based educational program which focuses on environmental science, including sustainability studies, and agriculture, as well as civic responsibility.

At YES Charter Academy, innovation in education and the desire to use every available tool at our disposal to educate our students are our passions. We are personally accountable for the progress of our students, and, as such, own our own problems and have the responsibility and authority to create solutions for them. As a school, YES Charter Academy will broaden the educational choices available to families in the Yuba County, and to any other California resident who wishes to attend. It will enable students to learn from the distinctive facilities — both natural and manmade — within the Yuba Highlands of the Sierra Foothills. These include mixed conifer forests of the Las Plumas-Tahoe National Forest, local lakes and rivers, and a school garden and animal projects with produce and animals that will offer students a unique range of experiences.

Taking advantage of our physical setting, our curriculum will feature a special focus on agricultural and environmental sciences to encourage high levels of student engagement and achievement. YES Charter Academy will make use of a garden, animals, and local nature reserves to observe and examine natural phenomena in developmentally appropriate lessons and units. In the Academy's highly integrated curriculum, mathematics, science, and language arts will be heavily infused with nature experiences — such as the measurement of plant life, observation and recording of weather, analysis of soil and water, etc. Community service will be

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a fundamental component of the life of YES Charter Academy, related to stewardship of the environment and responsibility to fellow students and the larger community.

The overarching goal of the YES Charter Academy founders is to create a quality, public education option for area families that expands the choices available to them, and to offer a rigorous, focused curriculum that is attractive to this community of parents and learners. With planned space available for under 1% of the total K-8 population spread across the YCOE, YES Charter Academy represents a discerning choice for parents, and desires to pose no threat to local County Office of Education operations or finances.

YES Charter Academy represents a community effort by local citizens to address issues of educational choice within the public education system. The Charter School is incorporated as a nonprofit public benefit corporation and has been granted tax exempt 501(c)(3) status. In addition, the founding group has organized a Council of Directors which includes among its members a variety of community members, parents, and staff members representing community views.

Physical planning for YES Charter Academy has been secured for the period of the charter renewal term. An affordable lease arrangement including a right of first refusal has been secured for this ten- acre prepared site that features a 10,000 square-foot school-ready building that conforms to the Field Act. It is a maintained and relatively recent (2001) facility. It has an occupancy permit for 125 students plus an additional 30 occupants, as required, for staff and administrative personnel. Playing fields and athletic facilities are on the site, along with abundant opportunities for nature study in the 2,500+ acre Las Plumas National Forest that borders the site.

Parents need and deserve options for their children's public education. Schools with focused or specialized curricula offer choices for families within the local public school system. We believe this will create a setting for innovative, personalized instruction, efficient management, and a highly focused, projects based curriculum. The option of YES Charter Academy, where students work in multi-age classrooms with individual learning plans using proven styles of instruction and materials which are progressive and frequently self- correcting, can be a great benefit to students in any community, and particularly in one that supports this educational vision for its children.

### C. Charter Renewal

The following shall serve as documentation confirming that the Charter School meets the statutory criteria required for renewal set forth in Education Code Section 47607(b):

- The Charter School has met or exceeded its API growth target in last year.

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Year	API Score	Growth Target	Actual Growth
2012	728	5	11

Therefore, the Charter School has met the minimum criteria for renewal by exceeding its API growth target in 2012.

### D. Council of Directors Qualifications

The founding group of YES Charter Academy was composed of community members with professional knowledge of — and experience in — leading, supporting, and managing public service entities, private businesses, and, most importantly, educational organizations. Their combined capacities have enabled us to start full-scale design plans for a school culture and curriculum that will offer superior, site-based general education. Some of these members served on the corporate board until their resignation, upon which time they were replaced in accordance with Charter School bylaws. The current Council of Directors are:

**Tony Barber** is a Certified California electrician; he holds NICET Fire alarm certification and certificates from the Small Business Association as well as being licensed as ACO for alarms. He is currently the owner and operator of All Phase Systems Integration and is proud to have had his children in the first and third graduating classes of YES Charter Academy. Mr. Barber Has lived in the Yuba Foothills for most of his life: he attended Marysville High School, where he met his wife, and raised his children in the town of Loma Rica. Mr. Barber directed the North Yuba Little League for several years, participated in Boy Scouts with his son, and currently has children involved in sports and drama programs through MCAA and Marysville High School. He is excited to be a part of helping the County Office of Education Yuba County Office of Education offer a positive science based public school option.

**Mr. Barber serves as the CEO / President of YES CHARTER ACADEMY.**

**Paul Mc Govern** graduated from University College Dublin with a major in International Marketing and Finance. He is currently CEO of Database Republic (DBR), a technology consultancy based in Oregon House that develops business process management and environmental compliance applications. Mr. McGovern is a founding member of the YES Charter Academy Council of Directors who saw his son move through YES Charter Academy classes when it first opened. He has recently become the proud parent of an MCAA graduate and looks forward to continuing to support quality public school options in the Yuba Foothill area.

**Mr. McGovern serves as the CFO of YES CHARTER ACADEMY.**

**John Slomke, BA** in Management of Technical Operations with a minor in Logistics. Mr. Slomke has lived in the Foothills for ten years, but in the Yuba Sutter area since 1988. He was honorably discharged from the Air Force after 14 years active duty service defending our nation in the Desert Shield, Desert Storm and other conflicts. Mr. Slomke provided avionics support

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for the T38, SR71, KC135, U2 and Global Hawk weapon systems. He is currently a Department of Defense contractor supporting the 9<sup>th</sup> Operations Group, 9<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Group, and 9<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Wing. As a father of two students at YES Charter Academy, John is pleased to be coordinating many activities from his position on the Council to improve the academic, organizational, and internal structure of YES Charter Academy.

**Mr. Slomke serves as Vice President of YES CHARTER ACADEMY.**

**Katheryn Smith, MA Special Education, MA Educational Leadership**, Chico State University. Prior to her last three years at YES Charter Academy, Ms. Smith served as a special education teacher in Marysville Joint Unified School District as well as Yuba City Unified School District. She has also managed a family style residential care facility for adolescent children. Her post graduate work at Chico State University focused on Democratic Education and Instruction for Special Student Populations as she earned her Administrative, Multiple Subject with CLAD, and Education Specialist II credentials. She has a total of 6 years in education and nearly 20 years working with children in non profit settings.

**Mrs. Smith** serves as Director/Principal of YES Charter Academy.

**Terra Kosako**, certified Thai Massage Therapist. Areas of study - Agriculture, advertisement, internet marketing, literature and parenting. Certificates - Small Business; Thai Yoga Massage. Ms. Kosako grew up on a self-sufficient farm with garden, cows, goats, chicken, pigs, and horses in Oregon House/Dobbins for 20 years. She spent many hours over many years riding and training horses, rock hopping the Yuba River, camping and drawing, studying nature, wild plants and herbs. Her work experience includes: assistant to a Chiropractor, assistant manager of an organic garden, orchard, bees and (natural) but not organic cattle herd, establishing a day care exchange, teaching P.E. at a private elementary school, during which time she practiced Love and Logic and studied Peace Builders and became the PTA President. When her children enrolled at YES Charter Academy she was invited to join the Council of Directors of Yuba Environmental Science Charter Academy. At this time Ms. Kosako is self-employed doing Thai Massage, helping run her husband's business, re-starting their homestead and raising three teenagers, all of whom attend MCAA. She is a member of North Yuba Grown and mother to two Boy Scouts, with her oldest a Life Scout about to become Eagle.

**Alyson Giardini, MA, LMFT** with a BA in Human Biology, Stanford University, an MA in Cultural Anthropology, Stanford University, and an MA Counseling Psychology, New College of California. Ms. Giardini has been living in the Foothills since the Fall of 2004. She is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in CA, the parent of two Kindergartners, former Women's Self Defense Instructor, and former Agricultural Apprentice with an interest in sustainable farming practices and environmental science. Ms. Giardini currently is working part time in Private Practice in the Bay Area and raising her two girls. She is dedicated to improving the social and behavioral aspects of YES Charter Academy through working with Character Development and Bully Prevention Programs, both on campus and on the bus. She has a particular interest in

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establishing a caring and respectful school community with an eye to incorporating the diverse student and community backgrounds into the learning community.