



ORANGE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Staff Report for the Renewal of Unity Middle College High School

February 16, 2021

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to summarize significant findings based on a comprehensive review by Orange County Department of Education staff of the renewal petition for Unity Middle College High School in compliance with Education Code sections 47607 and 47607.2, and to provide recommendations for consideration by the Orange County Board of Education (the Board).

II. BACKGROUND

Unity Middle College High School is a 9-12 grade charter school operating within the boundaries of Orange Unified School District. The initial petition was denied by Orange Unified School District on June 4, 2015, and was submitted on appeal to the Board. After conducting the required public hearing and review, the Board approved the charter petition for a five-year charter term from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2021.

On December 2, 2020, Unity Middle College High school submitted a charter renewal petition. The Board held a public hearing on January 6, 2021, on the provisions of the charter to consider the level of support for the petition in accordance with Education Code section 47605.

III. LEGAL STANDARD

Pursuant to Education Code sections 47607 and 47607.2, a chartering authority may grant one or more subsequent renewals to a charter school. Charter school renewals are governed by the standards and criteria described in Education Code section 47605, and shall include, but not be limited to, a reasonably comprehensive description of any new requirements of charter schools enacted into law after the charter was originally granted or last renewed. The Board shall consider the school's fiscal and governance performance and whether the school is serving all pupils who wish to attend. Additionally, the chartering authority shall consider the performance of the charter school on the state and local indicators included in the California School Dashboard, giving greater weight to performance on measurements of academic performance. The California Department of Education annually publishes a data file that provides the performance categories for all non-DASS charter schools to be used for charter school renewal. The California Department of Education annually publishes a data file that provides the performance categories for all non-DASS charter schools to be used for charter school renewal.

IV. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Based on standards outlined in Education Code section 47607 and 47607.2 and in accordance with a three-tiered system based on the charter school's performance, Unity Middle College High School falls in the middle performance category and is eligible for a five-year charter term. Overall, the charter school presented a comprehensive petition for renewal and the past performance of the school indicates the likelihood of future success.

V. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Orange County Department of Education staff recommend that the Board approve Unity Middle College High School for a five-year charter term from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2026.

VI. CONCLUSION

The Board has three options for action regarding a charter petition renewal:

- Option One: Approve the charter petition for a five-year term from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2026.
- Option Two: Approve the charter petition with conditions for a five-year term from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2026. This action would result in approval of the charter and require the charter school to address the concerns raised by the Board by established timelines.
- Option Three: Deny the charter petition.

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