

# **GRAVENSTEIN SCHOOL**

A California Public Charter School

## **CHARTER SCHOOL PETITION**

3840 TWIG AVENUE  
SEBASTOPOL, CA 95472

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## INTRODUCTION

This charter allows us to have increased flexibility in exchange for heightened accountability to meet the goals set forth by the Legislature in Education Code Section 47601:

*It is the intent of the Legislature, in enacting this part, to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure, as a method to accomplish all of the following:*

- (a) Improve pupil learning.*
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all pupils, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for pupils who are identified as academically low achieving.*
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.*
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.*
- (e) Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.*
- (f) Hold the schools established under this part accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes, and provide the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.*
- (g) Provide vigorous competition within the public school system to stimulate continual improvements in all public schools.*

## AFFIRMATIONS/ASSURANCES

As the authorized lead petitioner, I, Linda LaMarre, hereby certify that the information submitted in this petition for the conversion of a California public school, Gravenstein Elementary School (“GES”) into a California public charter school to be named Gravenstein School (or the “Charter School”), and to be located within the boundaries of the Gravenstein Union School District (the “District”) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; I also certify that this petition does not constitute the conversion of a private school to the status of a public charter school; and further, I understand that if awarded a charter, 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 Charter School shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Section 60605, and any other

statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(c)(1)]

- The District shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of Gravenstein Charter School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O)]
- The Charter School shall be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- The Charter School shall not charge tuition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- 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). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(A)-(B)]
- The Charter School shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- The Charter School shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004.
- The Charter School shall meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)]
- 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 are required to hold. As allowed by statute, flexibility will

- be given to noncore, noncollege preparatory teachers. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(1)]
- 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 Ed. 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 district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card and health information. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(d)(3)]
- The Charter School shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47612.5(a)]
- The Charter School shall, on a regular basis, consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School's education programs. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(c)]
- The Charter School shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605-47605.1]
- The Charter School shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47612(b), 47610]
- The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of the No Child Left Behind Act.
- The Charter School shall comply with the Public Records Act.
- The Charter School shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
- The Charter School shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- The Charter School shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum of school days.[Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11960]

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Linda LaMarre, Lead Petitioner

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Date

**ELEMENT 1: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

*Governing Law: 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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)(i).*

**A. Students to be Served – Whom the School is Attempting to Educate**

Gravenstein School shall serve approximately 600 students in kindergarten through grade seven (K-7). All students will be offered a rigorous academic program along with music, technology and the acclaimed "Artist in the Classroom" experience. The Charter School shall also have a licensed pre-kindergarten program and before/after school care on campus. Most students live in the western, rural section of Sebastopol in Sonoma County and come from primarily English-speaking homes of a variety of socio-economic backgrounds.

The table below provides an overview of the student demographics at Gravenstein Elementary School in 2010-11:

<b>GRAVENSTEIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT POPULATION 2010–2011</b>	
<b><i>Ethnicity</i></b>	<b><i>Percentage</i></b>
African American	0.5%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.5%
Asian	4.4%
Filipino	0.3%
Latino or Hispanic	15.0%
White	74.3%
Multiple/No Response	4.4%
<b><i>Sub-Group</i></b>	
Free or Reduced Lunch Participants	22.1%
English Learners	11.7%
Students with Disabilities	4.1%

**B. Mission, Vision and Core Educational Philosophy**

**Mission:** Gravenstein Charter School is dedicated to academic excellence and the cultivation of individual strengths and talents in a caring and cooperative environment. Our sense of community fosters a high level of ethical, responsible citizenship.

**Vision:** Each child shall master the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to become a contributing and productive citizen. Through the cooperative efforts of home, school, and community, we shall accomplish the following goals:

1. School Environment
  - a. Positive, non-threatening environment with consistent discipline.
  - b. Students will learn the value of respecting oneself, each other and authority.
  - c. Pro-active interventions for at-risk students.
  - d. Strive for optimum class sizes.
2. Curriculum & Assessment
  - a. Develop a set of standards-based (grade-specific) curriculum brochures, report cards, strategies and practices utilizing California state standards.
  - b. Standardize and adopt state board adopted curriculum and materials to ensure student success and to meet high school entrance and exit exam requirements.
  - c. Students will be prepared to meet proficiency standards.
3. Coordination of School and Community
  - a. Articulation and coordination of curriculum with the State of California. Encourage Gravenstein Charter School connection with Governor's Initiative trainings for professional development.
  - b. Volunteerism-students in the community and community in the school.
  - c. Recruit and encourage business and professional interaction with the school.

### **An Educated Person of the 21st Century**

Gravenstein School will provide an environment in which children will develop into confident, self-motivated, resourceful, productive lifelong learners. Gravenstein School students are expected to become socially responsible citizens to better our global community. To meet the challenges of the current century, students at Gravenstein School will acquire the habits and skills necessary to succeed in school and beyond, as contributing citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These habits and skills include:

- Critical Thinking
- Problem Solving
- Inquiry
- Ability to reflect
- Collaboration
- Knowledge of the creative arts and music
- Utilization of positive character traits
- Participates in community service projects

### C. How Learning Best Occurs: Instructional Design and Curriculum

The following combination of key elements comprises Gravenstein Charter School's approach to instruction for the students to be served by the Charter School:

- Academically rigorous instruction
- Strong music program
- Standards-based curriculum and instruction
- Spanish instruction before school
- Kindergarten classes offered full and half-day
- Licensed pre-kindergarten program on campus
- Before/after school care on campus
- Computer lab and media center

All classes at Gravenstein School (K-6) are self-contained. In the primary classes (K-3), we offer an approximate pupil-to-teacher ratio of 20:1. Instructional and temporary support assistants are utilized according to need in the classroom. Instructional assistants work in conjunction with the Special Education Teachers to instruct in Learning Labs. The Learning Labs are operated through combining categorical funding to serve students who need intervention or tutoring. Students are provided service according to their need – regardless of whether they qualify for special education or not. This setting provides additional services in the areas of Reading/Language Arts and Math to identified and/or below-grade-level students. Other services available to Gravenstein School students include the Speech and Language Program and a school psychologist.

#### Integration of Music and the Arts

All students (K-5) receive music instruction one day per week and additional band time by the District's music specialist. Gravenstein School also offers a visual arts program for students, provided by classroom teachers and an art specialist. Our *ENRICH!* Creative Arts Magnet/GATE Program includes additional field trips and visual and performing arts.

#### *ENRICH!* Magnet/GATE Creative Arts Program

The *ENRICH!* program is a creative arts magnet/GATE program that emphasizes strong academics, creative and performing arts and involved parents. Application to the *ENRICH!* program is a separate and additional process to enrollment registration. Criteria considered for enrollment in the *ENRICH!* Program is listed on the application and on the district website. The mission and vision of the *ENRICH!* program is to “support the emerging child in becoming a whole person through integration of strong academics, creative arts, and community involvement in an environment that fosters acceptance and respect for self and others. Our vision is accomplished through the dedication of skilled teachers, program leadership, involved families, enriched activities, collaborative relationships with the school administration and committed financial support.”

### Violence and Bullying Prevention

Gravenstein Charter School utilizes two violence/bully prevention curriculum programs. *Second Step* is a state-approved violence prevention program for grades Preschool through eighth grade. Some of the topics covered in this program include empathy, emotion management, impulse control, problem solving, and anger management.

### Alignment of Curriculum, Instruction and Materials to Content and Performance Standards

All of the curriculum materials we use in the areas of Reading-Language Arts and Math are aligned with the state standards. Report cards are aligned to reflect progress through the standards at each grade level in grades K-5. Curriculum brochures are completed for all grades.

Gravenstein School uses state-adopted Language Arts textbooks for grades K-5 (*Open Court-Imagine It* 2009), Social Sciences for grades K-5 (Harcourt), Science for grades K-5 (Glenco-McGraw Hill), Spanish for grades 4-5 (Wright Group), and Math for grades K-5 (Harcourt).

### Before and After School Program

Gravenstein School offers a Before and After School Program that provides quality child care for students in the District. Our program includes a variety of supervised and age-appropriate activities, and nutritious snacks, arts and crafts, homework time and assistance, computer experience, outdoor sports/recreation, as well as self-directed play. Our program is open from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. every school day.

### Professional Development

Gravenstein School provides ongoing staff development training to ensure all staff are highly trained in current educational practices and educational research. Professional development for our staff is provided on the adopted Language Arts and Math textbooks, as well as Common Planning Day meetings. We regularly assess the needs for staff development and provide necessary in-service trainings.

### School Calendar and Bell Schedule

Attached as Appendix, please find the Gravenstein School calendar and sample bell schedule.

### **D. Serving Students with Disabilities**

The Gravenstein School shall comply with all applicable State and Federal Laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (“Section 504”), the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act (“IDEIA”).

The Charter School and the Gravenstein Union School District will work in cooperation with all local education agencies (LEA's) and special education local plan areas (SELPA's) to ensure that a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment is provided to all students with exceptional needs. The Charter School intends to function as a "public school of the district" for the purpose of providing special education and related services pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b). The Charter School will have special education services available from the District that are equivalent to the other district schools. The special education teacher/classroom caseloads are considered full at 20 - reserving seats for incoming students residing in the attendance area of the school.

The facilities to be utilized by the Gravenstein School shall be accessible for all students with disabilities. The Gravenstein School will not discriminate against any student based upon disability.

The Gravenstein School recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program of the Gravenstein School. Any student, who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits a major life activity including but not limited to learning, is eligible for accommodation by the Gravenstein School. The Charter School shall comply with all applicable policies and procedures of the District related to identification, assessing, and serving students in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Students will be identified for Special Education using procedures currently in place. These procedures include:

- Extensive use of classroom modifications by the teacher
- A referral from the classroom teacher to the Student Study Team
- The Student Study Team recommendation for the child to be assessed.

The results of the testing are then presented in a follow-up meeting with the parents. If the student qualifies for Special Education, an IEP is created and sets individualized learning goals and objectives. IEP meetings are held annually to report student progress and adjust goals.

#### **E. Serving Academically Low-Achieving Students**

Gravenstein School offers a Learning Lab to provide assistance for students who qualify for special education services as well as students who score below proficient in English Language Arts and/or Math. Gravenstein School utilizes instructional aides who spend a majority of their time working with students who are low performing. These aides allow for focused assistance to students in a small group or individual setting. We also offer tutoring before and after school, and at lunchtime for any student who needs additional remediation assistance and support. Summer school programs are also offered to focus on remediation. Finally, Gravenstein School has adopted state-approved English Language Arts intervention materials in grades 3-8 for students scoring two years below grade level (*Jane Greene-LANGUAGE!*). We have also adopted *Fast Forward* Math intervention materials for grades 4-7.

Gravenstein School holds parent conferences and Student Study Team meetings to provide additional support to students and families in need of additional assistance. Within the SST meetings recommendations are made for outside support services or additional academic plans are outline and implemented.

**F. Serving Academically High-Achieving Students**

Gravenstein Charter School offers GATE activities one day a week at lunchtime in the areas of English Language Arts and Math for all high-achieving students – *ENRICH!* students or traditional program students scoring at the top on STAR.

High-achieving students at Gravenstein Charter School also have the opportunity to enroll in the *ENRICH!* Creative Arts Magnet/GATE Program if he/she:

- is at a proficient level or above in Language Arts and Math
- has the ability to maintain self-control and/or resolve behavior issues
- has an interest or potential for the creative arts and would enjoy having more enrichment classes in the school day
- has a good school attendance record

*ENRICH!* Program students have a 45 minute longer school day than the traditional program students. All *ENRICH!* students and teachers utilize the same state and district adopted standards-based Math, Language Arts, Social Studies and Science materials but the *ENRICH!* classes may move at a quicker pace since this is a GATE program and students are screened through test results and/or teacher observation to be proficient or above at their grade level. The teachers may add materials to the core materials. Enrichment classes have included hands-on science, Spanish (two classes a week), chorus, art, African drumming, drama, poetry, dance, newspaper, yearbook, and computer skills, among others. In the visual arts, students have enjoyed silk painting, cartooning, papermaking, and art history.

The *ENRICH!* classes at Gravenstein Charter School are self-contained, as are all grades at Gravenstein. The *ENRICH!* classroom students participate in all grade-alike activities, such as, recesses, lunch, spelling bees, science fairs, etc. and assemblies. All *ENRICH!* students join the regular education students in lunch recess and intramural games, after school sports programs, dances, after-school drama, before school jazz band, before school strings program, spelling bees, and any other program or activity available to regular program students.

There is at least one field trip a month in the *ENRICH!* program. Past field trips for *ENRICH!* students have included hands-on learning activities at Ft. Ross, the Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon, Yosemite National Park, other overnight trips, various museums, orchestral and operatic programs in San Francisco, and many more. The younger grades stay closer to home with various trips mainly in Sonoma County.

## **G. Serving English Learners**

Gravenstein School will meet all applicable legal requirements for English Learners (“EL”) as it pertains to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, EL and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, re-classification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and standardized testing requirement. The Charter School will implement policies to assure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding ELs and the rights of students and parents.

### **Home Language Survey**

The Charter School will administer the home language survey upon a student’s initial enrollment into the Charter School (on enrollment forms).

### **CELDT Testing**

All students who indicate that their home language is other than English will be California English Language Development Test (“CELDT”) tested within thirty days of initial enrollment<sup>1</sup> and at least annually thereafter between July 1 and October 31<sup>st</sup> until re-designated as fluent English proficient.

The Charter School will notify all parents of its responsibility for CELDT testing and of CELDT results within thirty days of receiving results from publisher. The CELDT shall be used to fulfill the requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act for annual English proficiency testing.

### **Reclassification Procedures**

Reclassification procedures utilize multiple criteria in determining whether to classify a pupil as proficient in English including, but not limited to, all of the following:

- Assessment of language proficiency using an objective assessment instrument including, but not limited to, the CELDT.
- Participation of the pupil’s classroom teachers and any other certificated staff with direct responsibility for teaching or placement decisions of the pupil to evaluate the pupil’s curriculum mastery.
- Parental opinion and consultation, achieved through notice to parents or guardians of the language reclassification and placement including a description of the reclassification process and the parents’ opportunity to participate, and encouragement of the participation of parents or guardians in the reclassification procedure including seeking

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<sup>1</sup> The thirty-day requirement applies to students who are entering a California public school for the first time or for students who have not yet been CELDT tested. All other students who have indicated a home language other than English will continue with annual CELDT testing based upon the date last tested at the prior school of enrollment.

their opinion and consultation during the reclassification process.

- Comparison of the pupil’s performance in basic skills against an empirically established range of performance and basic skills based upon the performance of English proficient pupils of the same age that demonstrate to others that the pupil is sufficiently proficient in English to participate effectively in a curriculum designed for pupils of the same age whose native language is English.
- The Student Oral Language Observation Matrix will be used by teachers to measure progress regarding comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar usage.

### **Strategies for English Learner Instruction and Intervention**

Gravenstein School offers a Learning Lab to provide assistance for English Learners, as well as instructional aides who allow for focused assistance to students in a small group or individual setting.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation of Program Effectiveness**

The evaluation for the program effectiveness for ELs in the Charter School will include:

- Adhere to Charter School-adopted academic benchmarks by language proficiency level and years in program to determine adequate yearly progress.
- Monitoring of teacher qualifications and the use of appropriate instructional strategies based on program design.
- Monitoring of student identification and placement.
- Monitoring of parental program choice options.
- Monitoring of availability of adequate resources.

### **ELEMENT 2: MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES**

*Governing Law: The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. “Pupil outcomes,” for purposes 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).*

**AND**

### **ELEMENT 3: METHODS TO ASSESS PUPIL PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING OUTCOMES**

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

Gravenstein School is dedicated to documenting student achievement of the state content standards each year through state-mandated pupil assessments. As is required by Education Code Section 60605, students will participate in the Statewide Testing and Reporting program (CST, CAT6, SABE) and all other mandated accountability programs (PFT, CELDT, etc.). Through these assessments, Gravenstein School shall demonstrate student mastery of state standards. Standardized assessments allow us to compare student performance with the rest of the state.

Gravenstein Charter School shall pursue the following pupil outcomes:

<b>MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES</b>	<b>METHODS OF MEASUREMENT</b>	<b>FREQUENCY OF MEASUREMENT</b>
Meet or exceed API growth target	API	Annually
Maintain 95% attendance rate	Attendance records	Monthly
80% of students score Proficient or Advanced in State Standards for Reading, Math, Science, and Social Science	STAR Tests	Annually
The percent of students who score below Proficient in the areas of Reading, Language and Math will improve by a minimum of 5 percent	STAR Tests	Annually
Continual English Language Development growth	CELDT Writing samples Teacher observations	Annually Unit Assessments At Trimester Report Cards
Grade level writing proficiency, scored holistically and discussed school wide	Benchmark tests	Twice a year
Grade level reading assessments to assess whether students have reached expected benchmark skills	Benchmark tests	Unit Assessments
Grade level math assessments to assess whether students have reached expected benchmark skills	Benchmark tests	Unit Assessments
Demonstration of healthy living	Physical	Annually

including nutrition and physical education	education	
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**Measuring Student Progress**

All teachers participate in grade level meetings to align curriculum to State Standards and review assessment information on a monthly basis. Teachers submit English Language Arts unit assessments to the Principal as they are completed, which allows for additional monitoring of student growth (or lack of) to assure intervention is provided.

The Gravenstein School/District Site Council shall analyze the available year-end student performance data for all students annually. The Charter School utilizes STAR data, group data, and other indicators to determine if the school has achieved its outcome goals. This data is also analyzed throughout the school year in order to determine if there are any patterns. When areas are identified, teachers and staff at Gravenstein School are directed to look at the core programs and possible interventions that will address these areas. Resources and professional development are utilized to address the need and enhance or change programs if necessary.

**School Accountability Report Card (“SARC”)**

Additionally, Gravenstein School will publish student results annually through the School Accountability Report Card (“SARC”), in compliance with the California Constitution, California Education Code, and NCLB criteria. The report includes pertinent facts and data about the school and will be made available to the public as required by law.

**ELEMENT 4: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOL**

*Governing Law: The governance structure of the school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed to ensure parental involvement. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(D).*

Gravenstein School will be non-sectarian in its programs, policies, employment practices, and all other operations; shall not charge tuition; and shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). The Charter School will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws that are applicable to public charter schools.

**Gravenstein Union School District Board of Education**

The Charter School shall be governed by the District Board of Education in accordance with its adopted bylaws. All duties and operations regarding the Charter School shall be considered a duty of the District Board unless otherwise delegated by the Board. These duties include but are not limited to:

- Hire, supervise, evaluate, discipline, and dismissal of the Superintendent/Principal of the Charter School;
- Hire, promote, discipline and dismiss all employees of the Charter School after consideration of a recommendation by the Superintendent;
- Approve all contractual agreements;
- Approve and monitor the implementation of general policies of the Charter School. This includes effective human resource policies for career growth and compensation of the staff;
- Approve and monitor the Charter School's annual budget and budget revisions;
- Act as a fiscal agent. This includes but is not limited to the receipt of funds for the operation of the Charter School in accordance with applicable laws and the receipt of grants and donations consistent with the mission of the Charter School;
- Contract with an external independent auditor to produce an annual financial audit according to generally accepted accounting practices;
- Establish operational committees as needed;
- Regularly measure progress of both student and staff performance;
- Involve parents and the community in school related programs;
- Execute all applicable responsibilities provided for in the California Corporations Code;
- Engage in ongoing strategic planning;
- Approve the school calendar and schedule of Board meetings;
- Review requests for out of state or overnight field trips;
- Participate in the dispute resolution procedure and complaint procedures when necessary;
- Approve charter amendments and requests for material revisions as necessary;
- Approve annual independent fiscal audit and performance report;
- Appoint an administrative panel or act as a hearing body and take action on recommended student expulsions.

### **The Superintendent**

The Superintendent will be the leader of the Charter School. The Superintendent will ensure that the curriculum is implemented in order to maximize student-learning experiences. The Superintendent reports directly to the Board and s/he is responsible for the orderly operation of the Charter School and the supervision of all employees in the Charter School.

The Superintendent shall perform assigned tasks as directed by the Board and shall be required to undertake some or all of the tasks detailed below. These tasks may include but are not limited to the following:

- Ensure the Charter School enacts its mission;
- Supervise and evaluate teachers and staff;
- Communicate and report to the Board of Education;
- Oversee school finances to ensure financial stability;

- Participate in and develop professional development workshops as needed;
- Serve or appoint a designee to serve on any committees of the Charter School;
- Interview and recommend employee hiring, promotion, discipline, and/or dismissal;
- Ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and help secure local grants;
- Communicate with parents, recruit new families and students, and assure families of academic growth;
- Take responsible steps to secure full and regular attendance at school of the students enrolled in accordance with policies established by the Board of Education;
- Complete and submit required documents as requested or required by the charter and/or the Board of Education;
- Identify the staffing needs of the Charter School and offer staff development as needed;
- Maintain up-to-date financial records;
- Ensure that appropriate evaluation techniques are used for both students and staff;
- Establish and maintain a system to handle organizational tasks such as student records, teacher records, teacher credentialing information, contemporaneous attendance logs, purchasing, budgets, and timetables;
- Hire qualified substitute teachers as needed;
- Ensure the security of the school building;
- Promote Gravenstein Schools in the community and promote positive public relations and interact effectively with media;
- Encourage and support teacher professional development ;
- Provide all necessary financial reports as required for proper attendance reporting;
- Develop the school annual performance report and the SARC;
- Present independent fiscal audit to the Board of Education and after review by the Board of Education present audit to the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller and the California Department of Education;
- Manage student discipline, as necessary participate in the suspension and expulsion process;
- Participate in IEP meetings as necessary.

The above duties, with the exception of personnel matters, may be delegated or contracted as approved by the Board of Education to a business administrator of the Charter School or other appropriate employee or third party provider.

### **School Site Council**

The Gravenstein School Site Council consists of staff members and parents. The School Site Council is responsible for approving of the Comprehensive Site Plan which is then adopted by the GUSD Board.

### **Parental Involvement**

Gravenstein School provides opportunities for parent involvement through School Site Council, volunteering in classrooms, working in the library, attending Back to School Night, Open House, parent-teacher conferences, and field trips. Gravenstein School also has two parent foundations that support programs in the school, the Gravenstein Schools Foundation (GSF), and Magnet Program Foundation (MPF).

**ELEMENT 5:           EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS**

*Governing Law: The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the school. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(E).*

Employees of the Gravenstein School will remain District employees and thus any movement between the Gravenstein School and the District is subject to the applicable collective bargaining agreements of the District. No public school district employee shall be required to work at the Charter School.

The Gravenstein School will not discriminate against any employee on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). The Gravenstein School will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. Neither the Gravenstein School nor the District will require any employee to work at the Gravenstein School.

**A.           Background Checks and Tuberculosis Testing**

The Gravenstein School will adhere to Education Code Section 44237 and 49406 regarding fingerprinting, background clearance, and tuberculosis testing of employees prior to employment.

**B.           Teacher Qualifications**

Teachers will meet all requirements for credentialing and background as required by the No Child Left Behind Act (“NCLB”) and California Education Code Section 47605(1). Accordingly, the Gravenstein School teachers shall hold a California Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other documentation equivalent to what a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. Furthermore, in accordance with the provisions of NCLB, teachers will meet applicable highly qualified criteria in core courses. New teachers, who are new to the profession, receive BTSA and other support to ensure they will earn this status within two years.

Appropriate records, and supporting documentation, of credentials held by the Gravenstein Charter School teachers will be monitored and maintained by the District.

**C.           Superintendent/Principal Qualifications**

The Charter School Superintendent serves as the educational leader of the Charter School. The Superintendent shall be responsible for direction of the instructional program, evaluation of staff, operation of the school facility, participation in school activities, community leadership, collaboration with staff as well as other relevant duties assigned.

The Superintendent of Gravenstein School shall have taught for a minimum of three years in a California public school; must possess a valid California Teaching Credential (preference given to a K-12 Multiple Subject Credential); must possess a valid California Administrative Services Credential; and shall have earned a Master of Arts/Science in a field related to education or administration.

**D. Human Resources**

The following guidelines are in addition to the Human Resources Policy and Procedures of the District.

It is the intent of the District to continue to employ all current certificated employees, subject to the effects of declining enrollment and/or reduction in funding.

All employees of the District who work at Gravenstein Elementary School, prior to the establishment of the charter, will be offered the opportunity to work in the Gravenstein School with no loss of pay, benefits or employment status. Once the charter gets approved by the District Board of Education, all employees shall continue to be deemed District employees with seniority, sick leave, and other rights and privileges intact.

Existing employee bargaining units, agreements, contracts and policies relating to District personnel will continue to be in effect. Prior to hiring, all new employees will be informed of the charter status of the Charter School. If the charter is revoked or the Charter School is otherwise closed, all employees will revert to their status as employees of the District.

Certificated personnel shall be members of the certificated bargaining unit, and shall be covered by the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Gravenstein Union Teachers Association and the Gravenstein Union School District. Certificated personnel shall also be covered by all existing provisions in the Education Code pertaining to working conditions of certificated public school employees including tenure and dismissal. In addition, as members of the certificated bargaining unit, Government Code Section 3540 *et seq.* will apply. Certificated staff assignments outside credential authorization will be based on mutual agreement between the administration and the certificated staff member. The current collective bargaining agreement and past practices regarding certificated staff assignments in regard to request and seniority will be maintained.

**E. Staff Development**

The Gravenstein Charter School recognizes the importance of staff to be trained and educated in the philosophies and programs that supports the values and mission of this charter. In order to support staff in providing students with the best education possible Gravenstein Charter School will provide staff development to staff members as identified by staff.

**ELEMENT 6: PUPIL AND STAFF HEALTH & SAFETY**

*Governing Law: 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).*

The Gravenstein School, as a conversion charter school, will continue to implement District policies and procedures required to ensure the health and safety of all students and staff.

The Gravenstein School will continue to adhere to the existing state laws as well as current District Board policy when implementing its comprehensive set of health and safety policies. These policies at a minimum will address the following topics:

- Fingerprinting and criminal record summary of employees and contractors pursuant to Education Code Section 44237 and 45125.1
- Role of staff as mandated child abuse reporters
- Tuberculosis testing
- Documenting immunizations for students (including whooping cough) and staff
- Diabetes information
- Responding to natural disasters and emergencies
- Preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens
- Administering prescription drugs and other medicines
- Maintaining a drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free workplace
- Testing for vision, hearing, and scoliosis pursuant to Education Code Section 49450, *et seq.*

All information related to the above-referenced policies will be included in the parent/student and employee handbooks and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, as determined by District Board policies.

The Comprehensive School Safety Plan is attached as Appendix **[INSERT]**, and includes a written plan comprised of all mandatory components, a physical tour of the campus to include some staff, school board members and parents, a review of the fire alarm system, and workshops attended by some of the District's safety committee.

**ELEMENT 7: RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE**

*Governing Law: 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 district to which the charter petition is submitted. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(G).*

The Gravenstein School will implement a recruitment process to achieve racial and ethnic balance among its students that reflects the general population residing in the geographic boundaries of the District. The Charter School will monitor this balance each year and will take necessary recruitment steps to achieve this goal. This process involves the following:

- Hosting an annual Open House
- Advertising by way of electronic media, the school’s website, and an ad at least once per year in the local newspaper.

As such, the Charter School shall implement a student recruitment strategy, which shall include, but is not necessarily limited to, the following elements or strategies:

- An enrollment process that is scheduled and adopted to include a timeline that allows for a broad-based recruiting and application process.
- The development of promotional and informational material that appeals to all of the various racial and ethnic groups represented in the District.
- The appropriate development of promotional and informational materials in languages other than English to appeal to limited English proficient populations.
- 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.

**ELEMENT 8: ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

*Governing Law: Admission requirements, if applicable. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(H).*

The Gravenstein School will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, and all other operations. The Charter School will admit all students residing in California who wish to attend, subject only to capacity as outlined in Education Code 47605(d)(2). The District Board shall have the sole authority to determine the capacity of the Charter School. The determination of Charter School capacity shall be based on the Charter School’s academic program, the Charter School’s fiscal viability, the educational needs of currently enrolled students, the capacity of the school site, and the level of interest shown by students who want to attend the Charter School.

The Gravenstein School will not charge tuition and will not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or

association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). There shall be no admission criteria, testing, or other evaluation required of any applicant. The Charter School will comply with all laws establishing minimum and maximum age for public school attendance in charter schools.

An open application period will be publicly announced each year. The Charter School's application process is comprised of the following:

1. Completion of a student admissions application

Registration packets for students who are admitted will also gather the following:

1. Proof of Immunization
2. Home Language Survey
3. Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form
4. Proof of minimum age requirements, e.g. birth certificate
5. Release of records

### **Public Random Drawing**

The Gravenstein School shall admit all pupils who wish to attend the Charter School. However, if the number of pupils who wish to attend the Charter School exceeds the Charter School's capacity, attendance shall be determined by a public random drawing, except for existing pupils of the charter school. If a public random drawing is necessary, preference for admission in the lottery will be given in the following order:

1. Students attending Gravenstein Elementary School at the time of conversion to charter school status
2. Students residing in the attendance area of the Gravenstein Elementary School prior to the conversion
3. Siblings of existing students
4. Children of school employees
5. Children on the *ENRICH!* Program waitlist
6. District residents
7. Students who reside outside the District

In the public random drawing, all applicants are drawn and listed in order, separately, for each grade level. Once the Charter School's capacity is met, the remaining applicants will continue to be drawn randomly and placed in the order they are drawn on the waiting list. Any vacancies during the school year after the public random drawing will be filled with the students on the waiting list. Grades Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade (not ENRICH! program) will be considered full at 19, except for and/or reserving seats for incoming students residing in the attendance area of the school. Grades 4-8 classrooms (not ENRICH! program) will be considered full at 28, except for and/or reserving seats for incoming students residing in the attendance area of the

school. The special education classroom caseloads are considered full at 20 - reserving seats for incoming students residing in the attendance area of the school.

**ELEMENT 9:           FINANCIAL AUDIT**

*Governing Law: The manner in which annual, independent, financial audits 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).*

The Gravenstein School will adhere to policies and administrative regulations adopted by the District Board of Education Policies and Administrative Regulations and will participate in the District Board's annual audit of fiscal and programmatic operations. The District will continue to provide administrative services and budget development for the Charter School. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope will be expanded to include items and processes specified in any applicable Office Management and Budget Circulars. The District and the Charter School will comply with Sonoma County Office of Education audit and accountability practices, though the Charter School will retain its rights under the parameters of charter school law.

The District and Gravenstein School shall resolve any audit exceptions and/or deficiencies in accordance with District policies and procedures and to the satisfaction of the District. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel (“EAAP”) in accordance with applicable law.

The independent financial audit of the Charter School is public record to be provided to the public upon request.

**ELEMENT 10:           SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

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

The Gravenstein School will follow District Board Policy with regard to the suspension and expulsion of students. The Gravenstein School will develop, and the Board of Education will approve, the behavior guidelines that govern students including chronic behavior issues. These policies will be printed in the parent/student handbook and will be available on request at the Charter School office. Parents will be notified of serious or repeated behavior infractions. Students will always be treated with respect, listened to attentively, and have access to due process in all instances of serious behavior infractions. Suspensions will follow District and Education Code requirements. A student who commits an expellable offense will receive a hearing by the District Board of Education pursuant to District Board Policy.

**ELEMENT 11:           RETIREMENT PROGRAMS**

*Governing Law: The manner by which staff members of the charter schools 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).*

The employees at the Charter School will participate in the State Teachers' Retirement System ("STRS"), the Public Employees' Retirement System ("PERS"), and social security in accordance with his or her position. The District shall be responsible for ensuring that the required contributions and deductions are made.

**ELEMENT 12: PUBLIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES**

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

The Gravenstein School is a school of choice and no students shall be required to attend. Pupils who reside in the District and choose not to attend the Gravenstein School may choose to attend other public schools through an intra- or inter-district transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of the District. Parents and guardians of each student enrolled in the Gravenstein School will be informed on admissions forms that the students have no right to admission in a particular school of the District as a consequence of enrollment in the Gravenstein School, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the District.

**ELEMENT 13: EMPLOYEE RETURN RIGHTS**

*Governing Law: 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).*

Employees of the Gravenstein School will remain District employees and shall retain the right to return and gain seniority through the District. Therefore any movement of employees between the Gravenstein School and the District is subject to the applicable collective bargaining agreements of the District.

**ELEMENT 14: DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

*Governing Law: The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to the provisions of the charter. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(N).*

The Gravenstein School agrees to resolve all disputes regarding this charter in accordance with the District's adopted policies, State Board of Education guidelines, and the Education Code. The intent of these policies is to:

- Resolve disputes within the Charter School pursuant to the District's policies

- Minimize the oversight burden of the District
- Ensure a fair and timely resolution to disputes.

Parents, students, volunteers, and staff at the Gravenstein School will be provided a copy of Charter School/District policies and the dispute resolution process, and will agree to work within it. The District agrees to work to accomplish all tasks necessary to fully implement this charter, including the submission of any necessary and duly prepared waiver requests to the State Board of Education.

The following outlines procedures to be followed in the event a dispute arises between the Charter School and the District:

The Charter School and the District will be encouraged to attempt to resolve any disputes amicably and reasonably without resorting to formal procedures.

In the event of a dispute between the Charter School and the District, Charter School staff and the District agree to first frame the issue in written format (“dispute statement”) and to refer the issue to the District Superintendent and Principal of the Charter School. In the event that the District Board of Education believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter in accordance with Education Code Section 47607, the Charter School requests that this shall be noted in the written dispute statement, although it recognizes it cannot legally bind the District to do so. However, participation in the dispute resolution procedures outlined in this section shall not be interpreted to impede or act as a pre-requisite to the District’s ability to proceed with revocation in accordance with Education Code Section 47607.

The Principal and Superintendent shall informally meet and confer in a timely fashion to attempt to resolve the dispute, not later than 10 business days from receipt of the dispute statement. In the event that this informal meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the Superintendent and the Principal may meet to jointly identify a neutral third party mediator to engage the Parties in a mediation session designed to facilitate resolution of the dispute. The format of the mediation session shall be developed jointly by the Superintendent and the Principal. Mediation shall be held within sixty business days of receipt of the dispute statement. The costs of the mediator shall be split equally between the District and the Charter School. If mediation does not resolve the dispute, or is not engaged in, either party may pursue any other remedy available under the law. All timelines and procedures in this section may be revised upon mutual written agreement of the District and the Charter School.

**ELEMENT 15:      PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYER**

*Governing Law: A declaration whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act (Chapter 10.7 (commencing with Section 3540) of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code). Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O).*

The District will be the exclusive public school employer of all employees of the Gravenstein Charter School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act (“EERA”). The District shall comply with the EERA.

**ELEMENT 16: SCHOOL CLOSURE**

*Governing Law: 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).*

Closure of the Gravenstein School will be documented by official action of the District Board of Education. The action will identify the reason for closure. The official action will also identify an entity and person or persons responsible for closure-related activities.

The District will promptly notify parents and students of the Gravenstein School, the Sonoma County Office of Education, the California Department of Education, the SELPA, and the retirement systems in which the Charter School’s employees participate (e.g., Public Employees’ Retirement System, State Teachers’ Retirement System, and federal social security) of the closure as well as the effective date of the closure. This notice will also include the name(s) of and contact information for the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure; the pupils’ school districts of residence; and the manner in which parents (guardians) may obtain copies of pupil records.

The Board will ensure that the notification to the parents and students of the Gravenstein School of the closure provides information to assist parents and students in locating suitable alternative programs. This notice will be provided promptly following the Board’s decision to close the Gravenstein School. The Board will also develop a list of pupils in each grade level and the classes they have completed, together with information on the pupils’ districts of residence, which they will provide to the entity responsible for closure-related activities.

All transfers of student records will be made in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) 20 U.S.C. § 1232g. The District will store original records of the Gravenstein School students. All records of the Gravenstein School shall be transferred to the District upon charter School closure and maintained in accordance with law.

The Gravenstein School will revert back to non-charter status upon closure of the charter unless otherwise closed by the District. As soon as reasonably practical, the District will prepare final financial records. The District will also have an independent audit completed within six months after closure. The audit will be prepared by a qualified Certified Public Accountant selected by the District. The final audit will include the following:

- An accounting of all financial assets, including cash and accounts receivable
- An inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value
- An accounting of the liabilities, including accounts payable
- Any reduction in apportionments as a result of audit findings or other investigations, loans, and unpaid staff compensation
- An assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to the Gravenstein School.

The District will complete and file any annual reports required pursuant to Education Code section 47604.33.

On closure of the Gravenstein School, all assets of the Gravenstein School, including but not limited to all leaseholds, personal property, intellectual property and all ADA apportionments and other revenues generated by students attending the Gravenstein School, remain the sole property of the District. Any assets acquired from the District or District property will be promptly returned upon closure to the District. The distribution shall include return of any grant funds and restricted categorical funds to their source in accordance with the terms of the grant or 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, as well as the return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any conditions established when the donation of such materials or property was accepted. As specified by the attached Budget, the District will utilize the Charter School's reserve fund to undertake any expenses associated with the closure procedures identified above.

**ELEMENT 17: ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

**A. Liability and Indemnity**

*Governing Law: Potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the school and upon the District. Education Code Section 47605(g).*

The Charter School shall remain under District insurance coverage. Insurance amounts will be determined by recommendation of the District and its insurer for schools of similar size, location, and student population.

The District will institute and maintain appropriate risk management practices.

**B. Term of Charter**

The requested term of the charter shall be for five years, from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2017.

**C. Material Revisions**

Any material revisions to this Charter must be formally approved by the District Board in accordance with Education Code Section 47607.

**D. Financial Plan**

*Governing Law: The petitioner or petitioners shall also be required to provide financial statements that include a proposed first-year operational budget, including startup costs, and cash flow and financial projections for the first three years of operation. Education Code Section 47605(g).*

Attached, as Appendix **INSERT**, please find a first year budget, including start-up costs, and cash flow projections for the first three years of operation.

The Charter School shall provide reports to the District as follows, and may provide additional fiscal reports as requested by the District:

1. By July 1, a preliminary budget for the current fiscal year. For a charter school in its first year of operation, financial statements submitted with the charter petition pursuant to Education Code 47605(g) will satisfy this requirement.
2. By December 15, an interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through October 31. Additionally, on December 15, a copy of the Charter School's annual, independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year shall be delivered to the District, State Controller, State Department of Education and County Superintendent of Schools.
3. By March 15, a second interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through January 31.
4. By September 15, a final unaudited report for the full prior year. The report submitted to the District shall include an annual statement of all the Charter School's receipts and expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.

**E. Centralized Administrative Services**

*Governing Law: The manner in which administrative services of the school are to be provided. Education Code Section 47605(g).*

Centralized administrative services at the Gravenstein School will be run in a substantially similar fashion to those at other schools in the District. All "back office" services will be handled by the District.

**F. Facilities**

*Governing Law: The facilities to be utilized by the school. The description of the facilities to be used by the charter school shall specify where the school intends to locate. Education Code Section 47605(g).*

Gravenstein School will be located within the District boundaries, and will operate from the existing Gravenstein Elementary School and Hillcrest Middle School sites at 3840 Twig Avenue and 725 Bloomfield Rd. Sebastopol, California. The Gravenstein Elementary School site comprises 23 classrooms, a speech/school psychologist room, a library, school office, district office, and a multipurpose room. Hillcrest Middle School has 15 classrooms, school office, principal office, and Hillcrest Hall.