



**OAKLAND UNIFIED  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

*Community Schools, Thriving Students*

# CONSERVATORY OF VOCAL & INSTRUMENTAL ARTS CHARTER RENEWAL DENIAL



Presented by Silke M. Bradford, Ed.D.

06/14/17

[www.ousd.org](http://www.ousd.org)



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# Background

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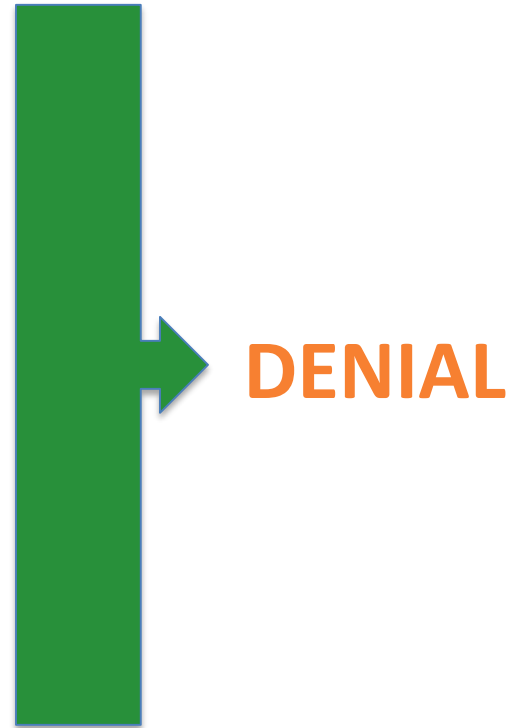
- 08/15/16 Charter Renewal Orientation (Conference Call)
- 12/01/16 Renewal Site Visit
  - Focus Group Interviews
    - Parents (only 2 in attendance)
    - Governing Board (only 1 in attendance), and
    - Teachers, Students and School Leaders
  - Classroom Observations
- 03/23/17 Annual Site Visit
- 04/12/17 Charter Renewal Petition Submission
- 05/10/17 Charter Renewal Public Hearing
- 05/24/17 Charter Renewal Decision Meeting/Postponement
- 06/14/17 Charter Renewal Decision Meeting

# COVA Charter Renewal Petition

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## Identified Deficits:

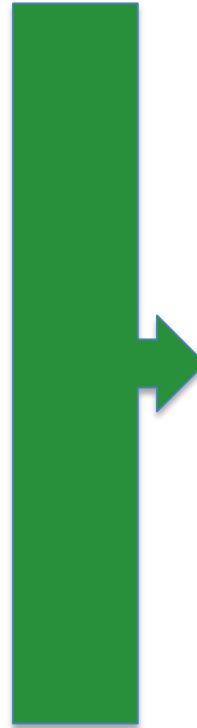
1. Unsound educational program;
2. Demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the program;
3. Did not contain reasonably comprehensive description of the statutorily required 15 charter petition elements



# COVA Charter Renewal Petition

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Unsound Educational  
Program



Areas of Concern include, but are not limited to:

- Poor Measureable Pupil Outcomes (MPOs) Performance
- District Comparison School Student Academic Performance is Higher
- Did Not Meet 2013-14 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Growth Targets
- COVA Lacks Internal Assessment Data/Cycles of Inquiry



# MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOME (MPO) PROGRESS

- COVA met 0/8 Original MPOs from 2012-15
  - Data was not provided for the majority of MPOs
- COVA only met 1/12 Collective MPOs in 2015-16

MPO Summary	2012-15 Previous MPOs	2015-16 Collective MPOs
Met	0	1
Substantial Progress	1	5
Not Met	7	6
No Data/Target Available	0	0

# STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## K-5 ELA SBAC

- COVA students **performed lower than 4 of 6** district-run comparison schools

## K-5 Math SBAC

- COVA students performed **similarly** to district-run schools
  - underperformed 2
  - matched 2\*
  - outperformed 2\*

\* schools have higher % of Special Education students and English Learners

# COVA K-5 District-Run Comparison School Data

School	FRPM	EL	SPED	ELA SBAC*	Math SBAC*
Grass Valley Elementary	71.2%	13.5%	30.0%	26%	17%
Lincoln Elementary	70.0%	0.9%	7.3%	55%	66%
Cleveland Elementary	58.3%	0.5%	8.5%	59%	58%
<b>Conservatory of Vocal and Instrumental Arts</b>	<b>42.0%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>53%</b>
Sequoia Elementary	41.5%	0.2%	11.0%	55%	53%
Glenview Elementary	36.1%	5.1%	8.9%	47%	46%
Redwood Heights Elementary	25.9%	4.7%	13.6%	49%	53%

*\*% of students at or above proficient*

# STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE Cont'd

## SBAC

- SBAC scores decreased from 2014-15 to 2015-16 for:
  - African Americans (Math)
  - Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Hispanic or Latino (ELA)
  - White (Math & ELA)



# Academic Performance Index (API) SCORES

- API scores decreased from 2012 to 2013 for:
  - African Americans
  - Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students
- Schoolwide API decreased by 20 points

**ADEQUATE  
YEARLY  
PROGRESS  
(AYP)  
GROWTH  
TARGETS**

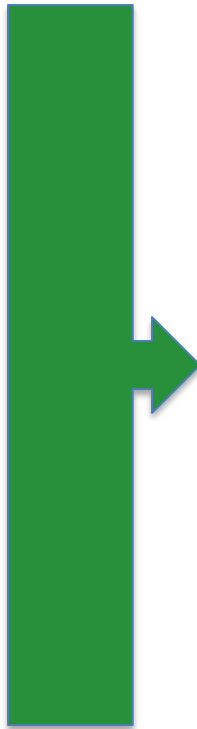
COVA did not meet 2013-14 AYP growth targets for:

- African Americans
  - Math CST
- Socio-economically Disadvantaged Students
  - Math CST
  - ELA CST

# COVA Charter Renewal Petition

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Unlikely to  
Implement  
Successfully



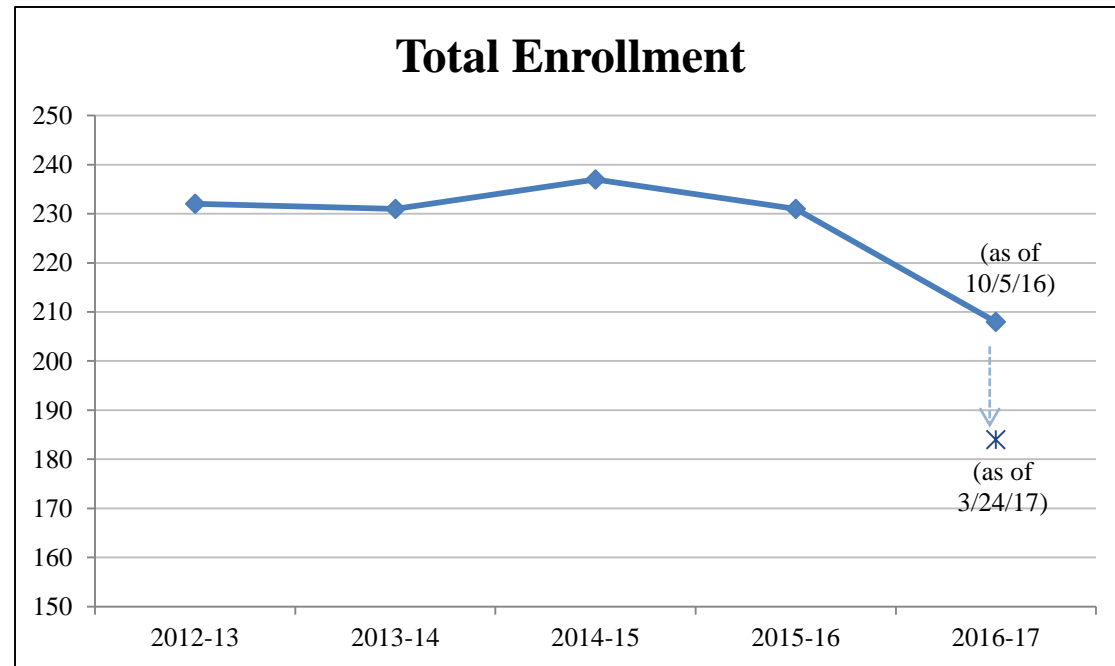
Areas of Concern include,  
but are not limited to:

- Lack of Effective Leadership
- High Teacher and Student Attrition
- Poor Governance, Fiscal Mgmt., Policy, and Operations



# STUDENT ENROLLMENT

- From 2015-16 to 2016-17, there was a 20% decrease
- In this school year (2016-17), there was an 18% decrease (40 students)



# TEACHER & LEADERSHIP TURNOVER

## Teachers

- From 2015-16 to 2016-17, there was 78% teaching staff turnover
- In this school year (2016-17), 33% of academic teachers have already left mid-year

## Leadership

- COVA has had two school leaders in the past two school years
- The former 2016-17 school leader left mid-year

# LACK OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

- Lack of adequate formal observation/evaluation/feed back to staff
- Lack of Professional Development
- No adequate data collection/cycles of inquiry

# LACK OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP Cont'd

- Large volume of complaints from students, families, and staff
  - 22 total; 17 in 2016-17
- Late/incomplete responses to Notices of Concern issued
  - 12 issued in 2016-17
  - 2 remain late/unresolved; 1 pending

School Year	# of Complaints	Area of Concern
2013-14	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership's unresponsiveness to request for Special Education evaluation (504 plan)</li> </ul>
2014-15	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership's unwillingness to meet regarding legality of uniform policy or provide Board contact information to file a complaint (2)</li> <li>• Leadership made inappropriate comments about student</li> </ul>
2015-16	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership did not follow 504 plan</li> <li>• Leadership made inappropriate comments to student/parent</li> </ul>
2016-17	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflicts of interest: roles/qualifications of brother, husband, Board Chair, parent volunteer</li> <li>• Physical/verbal aggressions and traumatizing behavior towards students, parents, and staff</li> <li>• Leadership invades and is disrespectful of students' personal space</li> <li>• Inappropriate, discriminatory, offensive, and aggressive type of student/principal conversations regarding sexual related incidents; inflicting mental distress</li> <li>• Payroll discrimination</li> <li>• Lack of Special Education services</li> <li>• Lack of satisfactory facilities and textbooks</li> <li>• Complaint procedure timeline was not adhered</li> <li>• Students not receiving sexual education</li> <li>• Noncompliant uniform policy, including sending students home for not being in uniform</li> <li>• Noncompliant dismissal/tardy policy</li> <li>• Noncompliant suspension/expulsion policies and procedures</li> <li>• Charging students/families for instruments (including withholding instruments until fees/contributions are paid), materials, and performance tickets</li> <li>• Refusing to allow communication between parent and student during out-of-state trip</li> <li>• Lack of communication with parents regarding teacher resignations and other concerns/incidents</li> <li>• Retaliation/ intimidation of staff; leadership threatens to dismiss employees if they file complaints</li> <li>• Failure to fill out/follow-up on disciplinary reports</li> <li>• Discriminatory disciplinary measures</li> <li>• Leadership tactics to push out students with behavior and academic issues, including special education students</li> <li>• Lack of adequate education program/intervention services</li> <li>• Lack of adequate music program</li> <li>• Lack of teacher professional development</li> <li>• High leadership, teacher, and student turnover</li> </ul>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	Information from some of these complaints resulted in the issuance of eight (8) Notices of Concern.



School Year	# of Notices of Concern	Area of Concern	Sent	Response Due	Response Received
2014-15	0	-	-	-	-
2015-16	0	-	-	-	-
2016-17	12	Failure to Adhere to Complaint Policy (2)	10/28 & 11/2	11/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11/2 (incomplete)</li> <li>• 11/6 (incomplete)</li> <li>• 12/1 (resolved)</li> </ul>
		Credentialing/Sub permits	10/20	10/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10/23 (resolved)</li> </ul>
		Fiscal Concern	11/21	11/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11/21 (incomplete)</li> <li>• 11/30 (resolved)</li> </ul>
		Charging for Instruments, Uniform Outerwear, and Performances	12/5	12/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12/13 (incomplete)</li> <li>• 12/19 (incomplete)</li> <li>• 2/21 (incomplete)</li> <li>• 3/1 (compliant uniform policy)</li> <li>• 3/10 (resolved; updated uniform policy)</li> </ul>
		Website Audit (requested medical information/SARC not posted)	12/28	12/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2/13 (resolved)</li> </ul>
		Charging for Instruments and Noncompliant Dismissal/ Tardy Policy*	1/6	1/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2/28 (incomplete; dismissal/tardy policy not addressed)</li> <li>• 4/12- new petition still lists noncompliant dismissal/tardy policy</li> </ul>
		Lack of Adhering to Expulsion Notification and Documentation Requirements	2/10	2/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2/13 (incomplete)</li> <li>• 3/18 (resolved)</li> </ul>
		Ombudsperson Conflict of Interest	2/21	2/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3/1 (incorrect/nonworking email provided)</li> <li>• 3/9 (email activated)</li> <li>• 3/10 (correspondence hand-delivered)</li> <li>• 3/14 (communicated to parents)</li> <li>• 3/17 (resolved)</li> </ul>
		Violation of Labor Code	2/21	2/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2/21 (requested 3/01 extension)</li> <li>• 3/17 (response from Lawyer)</li> <li>• 4/16 (resolved)</li> </ul>
		Violation of Bylaws	2/21	2/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3/10 (resolved)</li> </ul>
		Violation of Student's Civil Rights*	4/26	4/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4/28 (incomplete)</li> </ul>
Credentialing	5/16	5/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pending</li> </ul>		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1- Complete/Timely Response</b> <b>8- Incomplete/Late Responses</b> <b>2 - Remain Unresolved/Late (*)</b> <b>1 - Pending</b>			

**POOR  
GOVERNANCE,  
POLICIES, FISCAL  
MANAGEMENT,  
AND  
OPERATIONS**

- Late and incomplete responses to data/document requests
- Lack of organization and adherence to self-set timelines
- Fiscal and/or ethical conflicts of interest

**POOR  
GOVERNANCE,  
POLICIES, FISCAL  
MANAGEMENT,  
AND  
OPERATIONS  
Cont'd.**

- Governance conflicts of interest
  - Superintendent and substitute administrator are also voting members of the Board; leading to lack of Supt. and school leader accountability
  - 3 out of 5 current/former Board members are employed by/have a relative that is employed by the school

## COVA'S NEW BOARD

APPROVED NEW  
POLICIES IN LATE  
MAY/EARLY JUNE

(Not Present in  
Renewal Petition  
and no evidence of  
updated  
Staff/Family  
Handbook)

COVA'S new board members created policies to address some of the legal and ethical issues identified in the Notice of Concerns issued since 2016.

- COVA leadership and board had a myriad of opportunities to remedy these concerns throughout the entire 16-17 school year, and only did so in the last two weeks
- These recent policy changes do not change the findings of fact related to this renewal denial recommendation, which covers evaluation of the last 5 years; not just the last two weeks.

**COVA's NEW BOARD  
CREATES NEW  
POLICIES IN LATE  
MAY/EARLY JUNE  
Cont'd.**

An outstanding concern in the “New” COVA policies include the attendance policy that states:

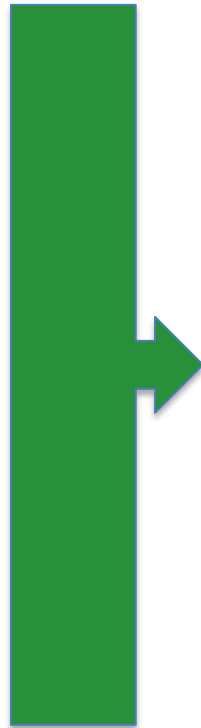
“If the conditions of the SART contract are not met, the student may incur additional administrative action up to and including disenrollment from the school and notification of the disenrollment sent to the student’s district of residence.”

- Expulsion aka disenrollment due to poor attendance is not sound policy, or supportive of struggling students/families

# COVA Charter Renewal Petition

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Did not contain  
reasonably  
comprehensive  
description of the  
statutorily required  
15 charter petition  
elements



Areas of Concern include,  
but are not limited to:

- Element B
- Element D
- Element E
- Element G
- Element J



## ELEMENT B

### Measurable Pupil Outcomes (MPOs)

- Lack of rigorous performance targets for some MPOs
- In some cases, the target for the upcoming charter term is lower than the current performance

## ELEMENT D

### Governance Structure

- Conflicts of interest
  - Superintendent and substitute administrator are also voting members of the Board
  - 3 out of 5 Board members are employed/have a relative that is employed by the school
- By-Laws are out-of-date
  - References former Board members



## ELEMENT E

Qualifications  
to be met by  
individuals  
employed at  
the school

- Budget plans indicate that the Superintendent will also act as the Principal
  - Paid as 1.5 FTE
- Superintendent's un-credentialed husband is paid as an elective teacher
  - No Board approved contract was provided

## ELEMENT E

# Qualifications to be met by individuals employed at the school Cont'd

- List of duties for the campus security includes “substitute teaching”
  - Lacks teaching credential
- Office Managers at COVA/H have higher salaries than all of the credentialed teachers at COVA
- COVA’s rent payment includes two custodians that clean the campus daily, yet COVA still elects to pay \$63K a year to a 3rd custodian who is: 1) reportedly a relative of the COVA Superintendent and 2) he does not have daily duties according to reports by current and former staff members

## ELEMENT G

### Means for achieving racial and ethnic balance

- Recruitment plan does **not** include any outreach to Latinx agencies or organizations, even though these students, as well as ELs are grossly under-represented at the school
- No evidence of translation services for Spanish-speaking families at the school (barrier to enrollment and inclusion)

## ELEMENT J

# Suspension and Expulsion Procedures

- Notices of Concern issued:
  - noncompliant dismissal policy (01/06/17)
  - Noncompliant suspension policy (04/26/17)
- Proposed renewal petition contains the same noncompliant dismissal policy

*Continuing students are guaranteed a space at COVA for the subsequent school year as long as they have met the basic requirements of attendance. Students must attend regularly missing no more than 7 days in a school year and have no more than 12 tardies in a school year (p. 249)*

# Education Code section 47607(a)(3)(A):

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The District “considers increases in pupil academic achievement for all groups of pupils served by the charter school as the most important factor in determining whether to grant a charter renewal.”

# Findings

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- COVA has not experienced consistent or broad pupil subgroup growth
  - API- decrease in the score for all pupil subgroups during the last administration
  - SBAC- increase in performance on the SBAC of some subgroups are outweighed by significant decreases by others

# Conclusion

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Charter Renewal Petition should be denied:

1. Unsound educational program
2. Demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the program;
  1. Did not contain reasonably comprehensive description of the statutorily required 15 charter petition elements

# EVERY STUDENT THRIVES!



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