



## SAN LORENZO VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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**Dr. Laurie Bruton**  
Superintendent

**Board of Trustees**

Mark Becker

Laura Dolson

Gail Levine

Jacqui Rice

George Wylie

January 18, 2019

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Happy New Year! I would like to take this opportunity to clear up some misrepresentation regarding the District and to apprise you of some additional steps we are taking to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of our students in SLV.

Over the last year, Integrative Leadership Academy (ILA) Charter has submitted three Charter petitions to the SLVUSD Board of Education to start a new charter school within the boundaries of our district. The ILA Charter is sponsored by outside investors connected to Transcendental Meditation professionals. Under California law Charter petitions must describe all significant aspects of a planned new school including academic program, staffing, budget, and facility details. The school board is then required to scrutinize a petition to determine if it has all of the required elements and meets the guidelines of the law as it relates to charter schools. The Board is required to identify any and all specific elements that will prevent a charter school from being successful with students or they must approve the petition.

The SLVUSD Board of Education reviewed the ILA Charter petition in January, August and December of 2018 and denied the petition each time, noting numerous and significant deficiencies with detailed examples. The Board denied each of the petitions with the material findings indicating that the petition presented an inconsistent and unsound education program, relied heavily on invested funds from outside sources, and was demonstrably unlikely to succeed. After the second denial by the SLVUSD Board, ILA submitted an appeal to the Santa Cruz County Board of Education, which also found significant deficiencies in required elements and concluded that the charter was demonstrably unlikely to succeed. After the third denial by SLVUSD, ILA again submitted another appeal to the County Board of Education and is currently encouraging SLVUSD families to support their cause and petition. Based on feedback from various stakeholders, we have concerns that misleading information is being provided by ILA regarding the involvement of the District and District staff in relation to the implementation of the proposed charter.

During this process, the Board members have heard from a few parents who are interested in additional educational programs for their children, especially at the middle school level. The SLV Charter programs (Coast Redwood High and Middle Schools, Nature Academy, Quail Hollow Integrated Arts, Fall Creek, and Quail Hollow Homeschools) are programs directly funded and overseen by SLVUSD. SLV Middle School is focused on enhancing a positive school culture that provides a support system for all students, while teaching science, engineering, and technology skills; and art, music and sports in a comprehensive middle school program.

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SLVUSD is currently expanding programs throughout the district to better meet the academic and social-emotional needs of all students, and both SLV Charter and SLV Middle School (SLVMS) are working on adding programs for the 2019-20 school year. SLV Charter and SLVMS are highly dedicated and experienced, and participate in numerous and comprehensive staff development sessions and advanced education classes to enhance their skill and craft. Above all, our teachers and schools are deeply committed to the success of every SLV student.

Let me encourage you to consider the outstanding teachers and programs in the San Lorenzo Valley USD before you support or enroll your student in an outside charter program that is heavily funded and influenced by investors not from the San Lorenzo Valley.

As always, thank you for your continued support for our students and our SLV community.

If you have questions or want to speak specifically about your educational concerns for your student, please contact me at 831-336-5195.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurie Bruton". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Laurie Bruton  
Superintendent