

# Nea Community Learning Center Charter School Renewal Petition: Findings and Recommendation

**Chad Pimentel**  
**General Counsel**

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# In a Nutshell

- With reservations, staff recommends renewal
- Based on the renewal petition, site visit findings, board, leadership, parent, and staff interviews, staff has found that:
  - School struggles to integrate its Lower (K-5) and Upper (6-12) Villages into a single cohesive K-12 program
    - School does not consistently retain students from grades 5 to 6 and 8 to 9
    - Significant Upper Village staff turnover
  - Based on academic results and classroom instruction observations, Lower Village, measured alone, clearly warrants renewal
  - Upper Village, measured alone, would not warrant renewal
  - Parents and other stakeholders support the school at all levels
  - School's finances are solid
  - School has sufficient internal oversight

# Renewal Petitions: Process

- Renewal process:
  - Per Ed Code, primary criterion is academic performance
  - Review all areas of schools (academics, finance, compliance, charter language) by variety of AUSD offices (Teaching & Learning, Special Ed, Finance, Legal)
- Materials considered:
  - Petition; SBAC/Dashboard data; LCAP; policies; interviews with board, leadership, staff, parents, students; site visit observations; budget; audit reports; enrollment data; special education/SELPA data; AUSD staff observations from throughout charter term

# Renewal Standard

- Renewal petitions are governed by the same basic standard as initial petitions, but with additional threshold showing.
- Threshold showing: charter school must show demonstrated academic performance “at least equal” to comparable district schools. (EC 47607(b))
  - Comparable schools are the District schools charter students would otherwise have attended and those with similar student populations to the population served by the charter school.
- Schools making threshold showing are then evaluated across the board; emphasis still on academic performance:
  - “The authority that granted the charter shall consider 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.” (EC 47607(a)(3)(A))

# Renewal Standard

- Essentially, if a school has satisfactory pupil achievement, there is a presumption that the petition must be approved
- To overcome presumption, there must be a finding that:
  - The charter school presents an unsound educational program for the pupils to be enrolled in the charter school, or
  - The petitioners are demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the program set forth in the petition, or
  - The petition does not contain reasonably comprehensive descriptions of its academic, financial, and compliance programs
- Findings must be specific, written, and supported by substantial evidence

# AUSD Review Questions

- Is the school academically sound?
- Is the school an effective, viable organization?
- Has the school been faithful to the terms of its charter?
- Are the school's plans for a future charter term reasonably comprehensive?

# AUSD Review Rubric

- AUSD uses criteria set out in attached rubric to measure adherence to standards:
  - Improving Student Achievement
  - Strong Leadership and Responsible Governance
  - Focus on Continuous Improvement
  - Fiscal Accountability
- Criteria subdivided into specific areas of focus
  - Graded on 5-point scale (1/Unsatisfactory, 2/Inadequate, 3/Underdeveloped, 4/Proficient, 5/Excellent)
  - Score of 3 or above required for renewal recommendation

# Nea: The Basics

- First year of instruction in 2009
- Charter renewed for 5 years in 2013-14
- K-12 school managed by CLCS Executive Director, Upper and Lower Village Lead Facilitators
- Overseen by same governing board as Alameda Community Learning Center (ACLC)
  - ACLC serves grades 6-12
- Shares Woodstock site with ACLC; schools have long-term agreement to use facility



# Nea: The Basics

- Currently enrolls 586 students K-12
  - 354 Alameda residents
- Lower/Upper Village enrollment varies
  - K-5: 83% Alameda residents
  - 6-12: 59% Alameda residents
- Measured alone, Upper Village enrolls smallest percentage of Alameda residents of any charter school located in Alameda

# Nea: The Basics

Nea 18-19	Alameda Resident	Non-Resident	Total	Resident %
K	45	1	46	98%
1	33	15	48	69%
2	43	5	48	90%
3	52	2	54	96%
4	40	10	50	80%
5	34	18	52	65%
6	28	32	60	47%
7	9	32	41	22%
8	16	14	30	53%
9	23	29	52	44%
10	19	33	52	37%
11	6	27	33	18%
12	6	14	20	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>60%</b>

# Threshold Showing: Demographics and Comparable Schools

17-18 Demographics	NEA Overall		NEA K-5		NEA 6-8		NEA 9-12		Paden K-5		Maya Lin K-5		WMS 6-8		JJ 6-8		EHS 9-12	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Enrollment	553		300		118		135		374		415		519		295		1034	
English Learners	62	11%	33	11%	17	14%	12	9%	111	30%	59	14%	103	20%	43	15%	147	14%
SED	178	32%		19%		44%		37%	168	45%	97	23%	261	50%				
SWD	48	9%		9%		11%		20%	38	10%	78	19%	80	15%				
Black/African American	93	17%	32	11%	26	22%	35	26%	28	7%	24	6%	54	10%	42	14%	141	14%
Asian	58	10%	35	12%	9	8%	14	10%	102	27%	57	14%	156	30%	57	19%	252	24%
Filipino	19	3%	7	2%	4	3%	8	6%	31	8%	23	6%	47	9%	37	13%	145	14%
Hispanic/Latino	108	20%	39	13%	28	24%	41	30%	64	17%	60	14%	101	19%	52	18%	155	15%
2 or more races	73	13%	42	14%	18	15%	13	10%	52	14%	54	13%	39	8%	22	7%	76	7%
White	165	30%	127	42%	22	19%	16	12%	81	22%	184	44%	108	21%	80	27%	244	24%
Not Reported	34	6%	16	5%	11	9%	7	5%	11	3%	12	3%	4	1%	0	0%	4	0%

# Threshold Showing: CDE Dashboard

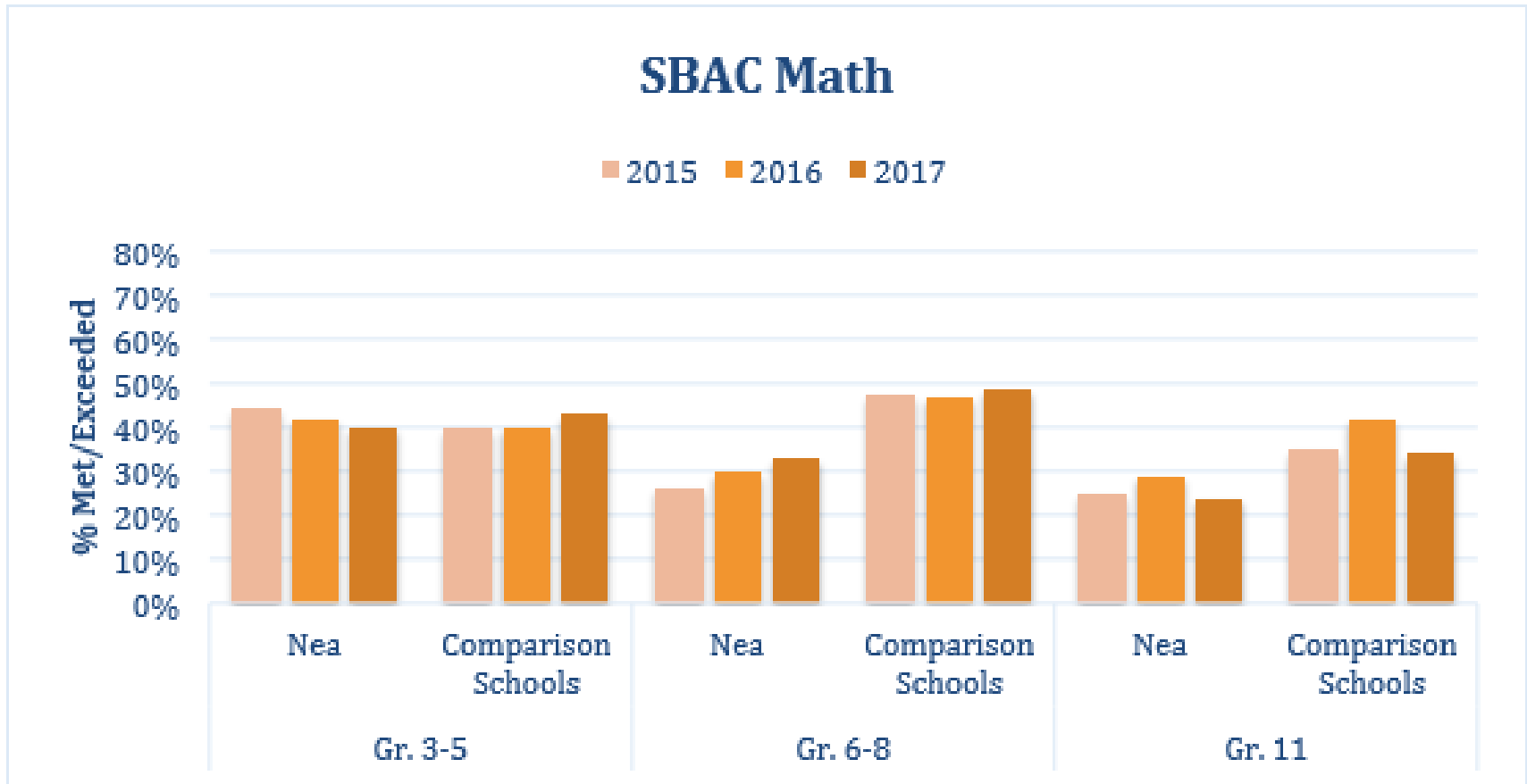
Subgroup	Suspension	ELA	Math
All Students	YELLOW High (5.1%) Declined (-1.3%)	ORANGE Low (22.7 below) Declined Significantly (-24.4)	ORANGE Low (44 below) Declined (-3.4)
English Learners	GREEN Medium (3.9%) Declined Significantly (-5.8%)	ORANGE Low (61.3 below) Declined Significantly (-38.5)	ORANGE Low (77.3 below) Declined Significantly (-18.7)
SED	YELLOW Very High (11.3%) Declined Significantly (-2.7%)	RED Very Low (74.5 below) Declined Significantly (-24.6)	ORANGE Low (94.6 below) Declined (-5.9)
SWD	YELLOW Very High (10.9%) Declined Significantly (-5%)	N/A Very Low (116.7 below) Declined Significantly (-16.7)	N/A Very Low (123.8 below) Increased Significantly (19.7)
African American	YELLOW Very High (14.4%) Declined Significantly (-3.9%)	ORANGE Low (68.1 below) Declined Significantly (-17.3)	RED Very Low (98.7 below) Maintained (-1.6)
Asian	ORANGE Medium (3.9%) Increased Significantly (3.9%)	N/A Low (8.7 below) Declined Significantly (-34.6)	N/A Medium (23.3 below) Declined Significantly (-32.3)
Hispanic	GREEN Medium (3.9%) Declined Significantly (-2.6%)	ORANGE Low (45.1 below) Maintained (-.5)	YELLOW Low (66 below) Increased Significantly (17.7)
2 or more races	YELLOW High (6.1%) Declined Significantly (-2.4%)	N/A Low (20 below) Declined Significantly (-28.8)	N/A Low (26.1 below) Declined Significantly (-18.9)
White	GREEN Low (1.7%) Declined (-.4%)	GREEN High (14.7 above) Declined Significantly (-30.5)	YELLOW Medium (11.8 below) Declined (-3.8)

# Threshold Showing: SBAC Data

<b>MATH SBAC 2017</b>	Nea Overall	AUSD Overall	Nea 5th	Paden 5th	Maya Lin 5th	Nea 8th	WMS 8th	EJSHS 8th	Nea 11th	EJSHS 11th
All Students	34%	60%	41%	57%	45%	31%	49%	59%	50%	64%
English Learners	11%	36%			23%		29%	13%		17%
SED	19%	40%		39%	35%	27%	47%	29%		31%
SWD	18%	18%			20%		7%	8%		0%
Black/African American	15%	26%				18%	35%	29%		20%
Asian	44%	71%		64%	55%		72%	53%		52%
Filipino		51%					42%	38%		32%
Hispanic/Latino	22%	44%	27%	27%		8%	28%	46%		33%
2 or more races	45%	66%								40%
White	48%	68%	48%		54%		46%	50%		52%

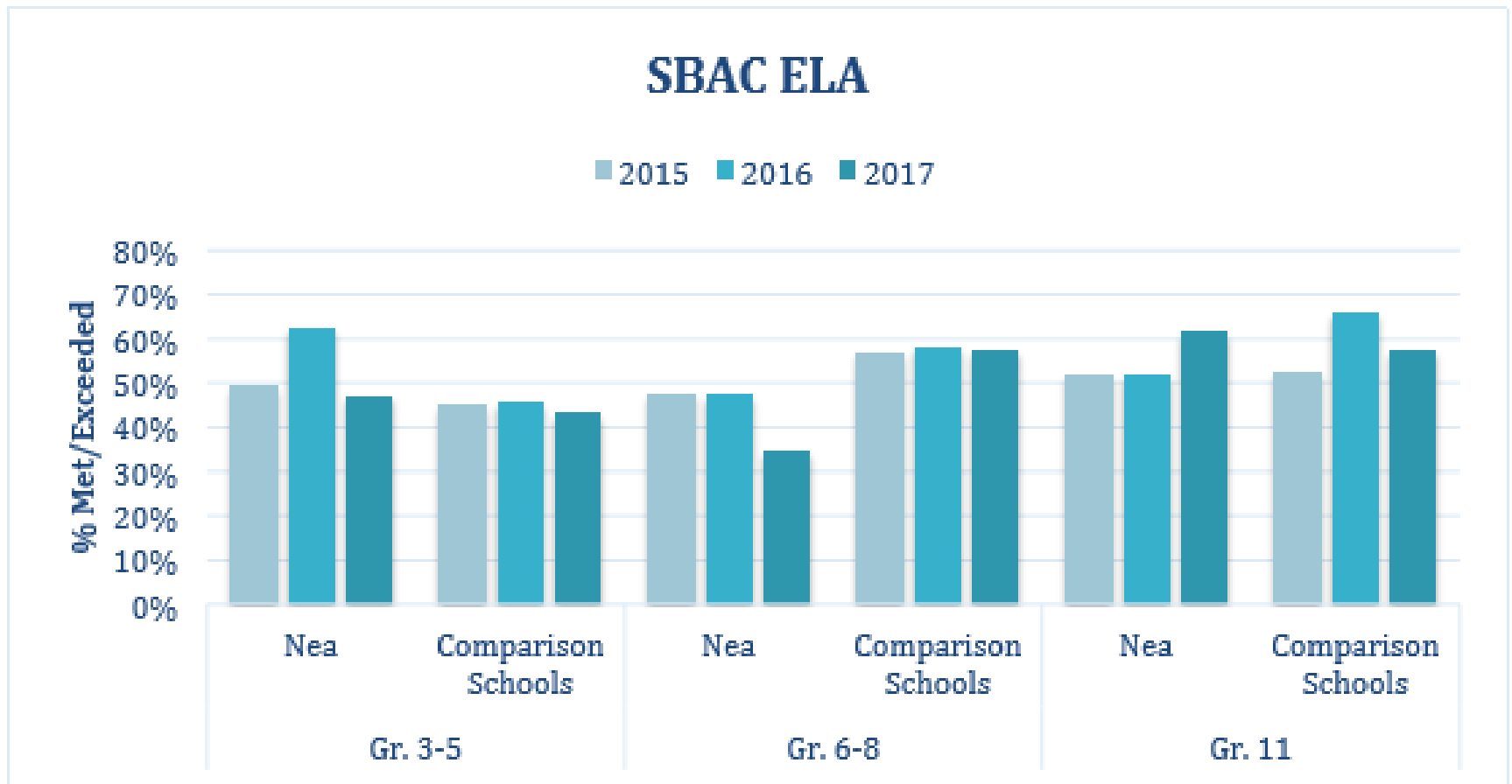
<b>ELA SBAC 2017</b>	Nea Overall	AUSD Overall	Nea 5th	Paden 5th	Maya Lin 5th	Nea 8th	WMS 8th	EJSHS 8th	Nea 11th	EJSHS 11th
All Students	44%	68%	57%	66%	36%	47%	61%	44%	30%	43%
English Learners	14%	32%			8%		32%	20%		20%
SED	31%	48%		39%	25%	36%	60%	45%		43%
SWD	15%	22%			0%		6%	15%		21%
Black/African American	28%	34%				45%	39%	43%		32%
Asian	60%	73%		64%	27%		69%	68%		63%
Filipino		65%					69%	62%		55%
Hispanic/Latino	33%	57%	36%	45%		25%	52%	54%		58%
2 or more races	45%	71%								60%
White	66%	78%	71%		54%		69%	73%		82%

# Threshold Showing: SBAC Math Results



Source: Nea Renewal Petition

# Threshold Showing: SBAC ELA Results



Source: Nea Renewal Petition

# Threshold Showing: Graduation Rates

- Nea's graduation rate has consistently lagged behind Encinal's during the most recent charter term:

	17-18	16-17	15-16	14-15	13-14
Encinal	93.0%	90.5%	87.0%	89.2%	86.7%
Nea	86.7%	82.8%	80.0%	84.6%	84.0%

Source: CDE Dashboard/CDE DataQuest cohort data



# Summary of Findings:

## Criteria 1 (Student Instruction)

- Criterion score: 3.1/5.0
- Observed strengths:
  - Lower Village students equal or outperform comparable schools
  - Uses the results of evaluation and assessment as the basis for future allocations of appropriate resources to promote high levels of student achievement. From 2017-18 to 2018-19, examples include:
    - Expansion of Reflex Math from 4th grade pilot to 1st-8th grades
    - Increasing the number of Chromebooks
  - Has identified reclassification criteria for English Learners
  - Site visits observed appropriate classroom management and evidence of collaboration and standards-based instruction in the Lower Village
  - Families and students expressed satisfaction with school culture and safety
  - Regularly involves a range of stakeholders in accountability reviews and routinely reports out on the school's progress toward goals
  - Community behavior norms clear

# Summary of Findings:

## Criteria 1 (Student Instruction)

- Observed weaknesses:
  - Upper Village performance lags behind comparable schools
  - Disconnect between observed instruction in Lower Village and Upper Village, calling K-12 model into question
  - During site visit, instruction in the Upper Village was largely teacher-led and involved routinized tasks, inconsistent with petition description of project-based, technology-rich learning model
  - No evidence that data is being collected on long-term or high-risk English learners
  - Suspension rates, while improving, remain high as measured against comparable schools

# Summary of Findings:

## Criteria 2 (Leadership & Governance)

- Criterion score: 3.4/5.0
- Observed strengths:
  - School mission and vision clearly understood at all levels; board actively involved in shaping mission
  - Board regularly receives professional development and has developed onboarding instruction for new members
  - Staff professional development is well-considered, targeted to observed needs of staff, and incorporates staff feedback
  - School has adopted complaint and conflict of interest policies consistent with applicable law and regularly updates bylaws

# Summary of Findings:

## Criteria 2 (Leadership & Governance)

- Observed weaknesses:
  - School remains out of compliance regarding AUSD board representative
  - There are material teacher credentialing issues in the Upper Village
  - While complaint policies exist, they have not been clearly communicated to stakeholders, repeatedly leading to those with complaints to seek guidance from AUSD
  - While leadership effectively communicated the mission and vision of the school to staff, implementation of the vision at the classroom level was inconsistent, particularly in the Upper Village

# Summary of Findings:

## Criteria 3 (Improvement/Data Use)

- Criterion score: 4.0/5.0
- Observed strengths:
  - School uses summative and formative assessments in both math and ELA; measures and progress on those assessments tracked through the school's LCAP
  - School establishes short- and long-term goals linked to measurable metrics which can be monitored over time, and there is evidence that the school is monitoring and evaluating the success of the program through analysis of the established LCAP goals/metrics
- Observed weaknesses
  - Goals for subgroups are set lower than those for all students; over time this will increase the already significant achievement gap observed for the subgroups

# Summary of Findings:

## Criteria 4 (Fiscal Accountability)

- Criterion score: 5.0/5.0
- Observed strengths:
  - School has adequate reserves
  - School assessed as low-risk using California Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) oversight checklist
  - Audit conducted in accordance with industry standards; audit showed no material weaknesses
  - Spending linked to LCAP and tracked by school

# Summary of Findings: Recommendations

- Detailed recommendations in completed rubric
- Most important are the structural considerations regarding Upper Village:
  - Constant turnaround efforts require disproportionate organizational time and attention
  - Previous turnaround attempts have not stabilized the program
  - With Nea now co-located with ACLC, questions exist regarding wisdom and feasibility of running two secondary schools side-by-side
- For now, K-5 strengths outweigh 6-12 weaknesses

# Summary of Findings: Recommendations

- Key Recommendation:
  - Closely monitor Upper Village performance through the end of the 19-20 academic year
  - If performance does not materially improve, Nea needs to create strategic plan for how to handle Upper Village going forward and provide that plan to AUSD
  - Options include:
    - Charter revision to create separate charters for Nea Upper and Lower Villages
    - Merging Upper Village with ACLC
    - Closing Upper Village



# Timeline

- Findings will return for action at the Board's next meeting
- If AUSD rejects a petition, petitioner has the right to appeal to County Board of Education
- Could then appeal to State Board of Education as well
- December 2018 - Spring 2019: Appeal proceedings before County, State (if needed)

# Questions?