



# Valley Oak Charter School

## Information Sheet

The Valley Oak Charter is currently under energetic development, so *everything given below is in early draft and abbreviated form and subject to significant change*, but is provided here at the Valley Oak Carnival on June 8, 2007, to offer parents and community members a sense of what is being proposed. To remain informed and to see official documents as they are created and proposed, and eventually to indicate interest in enrolling your child in the Valley Oak Charter School, be sure to follow developments at

**[vocharter.org](http://vocharter.org)**

### Draft Mission Statement

Valley Oak Charter School exists as a community of learners where everybody belongs. It exists to serve learners in grades kindergarten through six beginning their journey as citizens of a culturally rich, twenty-first century nation and world. We believe education must be directed to the whole child, and that each child enters our community a capable learner, each bringing a family, a cultural heritage and a promising future. Our learning environment must provide the tools for becoming a powerful contributor and leader in our increasingly complex and technological world, along with the skills to function in a diverse, democratic and collaborative global network of learners and creators. Our community dedicates itself to excellence for all in the context of a differentiated and nurturing learning environment.

#### Elements of the Vision:

- Acknowledge and celebrate diversity in the student/staff population, with multicultural, multi-national awareness.
- Cultural wealth is derived from the diversity of the students and staff
- Sustain a community of learners where everybody belongs, where every child is honored and valued.
- The school shall be a community resource, ready and willing to serve the greater needs of the community.
- *Excellence for Everyone* will be the guiding principle throughout the program, with each child receiving the best that can be provided.
- Sustain the well-integrated culture of Valley Oak School through the richness of the neighborhood and wider community.
- Technology access for all is central to twenty-first century education. The *technology gap* must be addressed and closed for all students.
- Curriculum and specific skill development should drive any technology acquisition or application, as technology cannot be an end in itself.

#### A few particulars:

- Incorporate multiple learning modalities in visual and performing arts, technological innovation, with commitment to bridging the digital divide and providing access for active participation in the democratic process in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Students will develop language excellence through opportunities to express themselves orally and publicly, with leadership opportunities and other venues utilizing various modes of creative expression.
- Cultural diversity will be celebrated in the Valley Oak learning community.
- Utilize cooperative learning teaching approaches and techniques to promote interactive work styles and strategies.
- Programs such as PALS, Conflict Managers, lunchtime clubs and student government will provide leadership opportunities and enhancements to school culture.
- Valley Oak will continue to provide core curriculum and aligned with state and district standards, delivered by district credentialed employees, at the same or greater level of achievement as before the charter.
- Provision of safe, productive extended care before and after school will be facilitated by the school in the interest of its client families.
- Valley Oak will continue to participate and contribute to DJUSD curriculum innovation and growth, ensuring the ongoing contribution of Valley Oak staff and the maintenance of programmatic alignment with district secondary schools.
- Technology applications will be provided to support core curriculum, EL, art, music, and enhance home communications.
- Valley Oak will work with all families of children attending the school to acquire an Internet connection so they may use school on-line resources as the school's technology program and links to families grow.

## **Frequently Asked Questions – to view the full FAQ, go to [vocharter.org](http://vocharter.org)**

**Would *Valley Oak Charter* be a public school?** Yes. Charter schools are organized under California Education Code just as regular public schools are. They are subject to state law and are full public schools.

**Would it be free? What would it cost me?** It would be free, just as regular public schools are free. Money to run the school comes from the state, so Valley Oak would be funded just as regular district schools are.

**Will my child still get a good education?** Your child will still receive a quality education, with teaching subject to California Curriculum Content Standards, and aligned with Davis School District curriculum standards. Valley Oak Charter will continue to be subject to STAR testing and any other mandated assessments.

**Who will teach there?** The same credentialed Davis school teachers who currently serve district students. There may be some movement of staff due to the opening of Korematsu Elementary and decisions teachers make about where they wish to teach, but for the most part the staff will remain the same, members of the Davis Teachers' Association, and employees of DJUSD.

**Who is organizing *Valley Oak Charter School*?** A group of Valley Oak parents, teachers and interested community members, with support from the California Teachers' Association, are organizing the charter to keep Valley Oak open. You can follow their progress on this website. If you are interested in being a part of this effort, please visit the website to review work already accomplished and consider how you might take part, then contact one of our representatives.

**Why is the charter school being organized?** The Valley Oak neighborhood needs its school, a school which has proven to be best at meeting the needs of its children. Forming a charter allows parents and teachers to keep Valley Oak open and organized in such a way to best serve student and family needs.

**Why is it called a "charter school"?** "Charter" is a technical term used to describe a school organized under a specific part of California Education Code, the laws which regulate how schools are run in California. If you go to the Links page of the [vocharter.org](http://vocharter.org) website, you can read the laws that define what a charter school can be. "Charter" means different things in different states, so read the California laws describing them.

**Why should Valley Oak seek charter status?** Organizing under a charter would allow Valley Oak to continue to serve the children of its neighborhood. Depending on how the charter is written, it could also become a magnet school that would give other students and families reason to become part of the Valley Oak community.

**Who would be a likely and productive agency to sponsor a charter for VO?** DJUSD would be the authorizing agency. One scenario would be to set up a 501c3 for the school so that it would exist as an independent agency.

**What are some charter-specific ideas currently being floated by members of the community?** The primary goal of a charter for a Valley Oak neighborhood school would be to sustain the excellent programs already in place at Valley Oak for its neighborhood children.

There is interest, particularly among some intermediate and the science staff, in considering a high-tech teaching environment as part of the charter undertaking. There is support available from CSUS Department of Education in that regard, and support from UCD would also be likely. Funding for a high-tech campus could be sought from a wide array of sources. There are ongoing discussions regarding a formal affiliation Valley Oak with the CSUS Education Technology Graduate Program (IMET) to further this development.

**Who makes the decisions that determine what form the charter takes?** Interested individuals in the Valley Oak community, including parents, faculty and staff, and other members of the neighborhood and academic community will be welcome to contribute to the discussion as the charter takes form. Please consult the website for news and more information about the charter.