

CAPISTRANO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
**STAFF REPORT**

Board Item: Material Revision to Charter of California Connections Academy Southern California Charter School

Board Meeting Date: April 17, 2024

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**HISTORY**

California Connections Academy Southern California (CalCA SoCal) charter school followed District protocol and submitted a request for a material revision to their charter petition on January 19, 2024. The network of virtual charter schools offering the California Connections Academy online program consists of 6 charter schools, including CalCA SoCal. This network currently serves students in 33 counties in California, including the 5 counties served by CalCA SoCal: Orange, San Diego, Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino. This network of schools, overseen by a non-profit governing board, California Online Public Schools, is undergoing a transition as it separates from California Connections Academy, dba Pearson. The charter school seeks approval to change its name to California Online Public Schools Southern California (CalOPS SoCal) and to revise the charter school’s operations to show operation independent of Connections. The proposed new name aligns with the charter school’s vision for the future without Connections Academy. When discussing the entire network of schools, the name “California Online Public Schools” will be used.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

During the term of its charter, a charter school may wish to amend its current approved charter. The District must approve any proposed change to the provisions of a charter before the change may be implemented. While any non-material change can be handled administratively by the Charter Office, any desired revision considered “material” must be approved by the governing board of the charter school and the District’s Board of Trustees (Board) in accordance with Education Code § 47607, subdivision (a)(1). Material revisions are governed by the same standards and criteria that apply to new charter petitions. (Education Code, § 47607, subd. (a)(2).) Therefore, the District must determine whether the charter, as amended, would be reasonably comprehensive, educationally sound and likely to be successfully implemented. (Education Code, § 47605, subd. (b)(1)-(2), (5).)

The District considers the following to be among, but not limited to, those changes constituting material revisions:

1. Substantial changes to a charter school’s educational program, mission or vision.
2. Changing or adding a non-classroom-based program.

3. Changes in enrollment that increases or decreases by one or more classrooms the enrollment originally projected in the charter petition in any given year.
4. Addition or deletion of grades or grade levels to be served.
5. Changing the location of the charter school, or opening of resource centers, meeting spaces or other satellite facilities, including the opening of a new facility. Temporary locations rented for annual student testing purposes or a temporary meeting place for up to five students does not require a material revision of the charter.
6. Changes to admissions requirements or procedures.
7. Changes to governance structure, including but not limited to, number of board members, method of new board member selection, and provisions relating to resolution approval.
8. Entering into or revising a contract with an Educational/Charter Management Organization (E/CMO).

CalCA SoCal's material revision is based on bullet point number 1, as a name change and revision of the charter school's operations to show operation independent of Connections are significant material changes to the charter petition.

The California Online Public School governing board has been in support of the school's name change and termination of their contract with Connections Academy, dba Pearson. The governing board has been taking actions on transition items since the February 28, 2023, regularly scheduled meeting. Details of these actions can be found in all of the corresponding meeting minutes.

In the redlined version of the charter petition, the following edits have been made:

- The name Connections has been changed to CalOPS
- The term "Live Lessons" has been changed to "Direct Instruction"
- Any mention of Connexus has been changed to the Education Management System (EMS)
- Any reference to the Executive Director has been replaced with the title of Superintendent

The material revision also includes reasonably comprehensive descriptions of any new requirements of charter schools enacted into law after the charter was originally granted or last renewed.

### **CURRENT CONSIDERATIONS**

The Charter School has requested a material revision to its Charter to reflect a name change from California Connections Academy Southern California to California Online Public Schools Southern California and to revise the Charter School's operations to show operation independent of Connections. The changes are reflected in the proposed materially revised petition submitted on January 19, 2024.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There is no financial impact.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended the Board of Trustees approve the Material Revision to the Charter of California Connections Academy Southern California Charter School.

**PREPARED BY:** Heidi Crowley, Director I Alternative Programs

**APPROVED BY:** Gregory Merwin, Associate Superintendent, Education and Support Services