Introductory Statement

The charter renewal application for the Holly Drive Leadership Academy (HDLA) Charter School is presented to the Board of Education for approval.

Background

On July 13, 1999 the Board of Education approved the petition and charter for the Holly Drive Leadership Academy Charter School. On August 5, 2003, the Board of Education approved verification that the conditions for approval of the amendment to the Holly Drive Leadership Academy Charter were met.

On July 1, 2003, the Holly Drive Leadership Academy Charter School charter renewal application was submitted by Alysia Shaw on behalf of the charter petitioners. A copy of the petition and the proposed charter are included with this report as Attachment A.

Education Code section 47605(b) provides that a school district governing board shall hold a public hearing on the provisions of a charter school petition at which time the governing board shall consider the level of support for the petition by teachers employed by the district, other employees of the district, and parents. The proposed charter for the Holly Drive Leadership Academy Charter School was presented to the Board of Education for a public hearing on January 13, 2004. This public hearing satisfies this statutory provision.

Education Code section 47605(a)(1)(B) states that a petition for a charter school may be signed by a number of teachers that is equivalent to at least one-half of the number of teachers the charter school estimates will be employed at the school during its first year of operation. The number of teachers to have signed the petition exceeds the statutory signature requirement.

Representatives of the Holly Drive Leadership Academy Charter School have submitted a charter renewal application to the district to continue operation of the school through 2008-09. The petition states that the school will remain a K-8 school. The school converted to charter status effective at the beginning of the 1993-94 school year and has a current enrollment of approximately 200 students. The school targets for recruitment students who reside within neighborhoods of mid-city San Diego. The school had an API score of 567 for the year 2002 and a score of 578 for the 2003 school year. The school did not meet API Growth targets based on the 2002-03 growth and missed AYP goals. The API score for 2003 was a 1 with a similar schools rank of 2. Holly Drive Leadership Academy is currently participating in the third year of a High Priority School Program Grant.

The school operates as an arm-of-the-district charter school. The school proposes to continue to remain part of the district’s SELPA and will continue to exercise Option 1 for purposes of delivering special education services.

The school program is based on academic standards that emphasize: 1. Literacy Standards which include basic reading, writing, listening, speaking and mathematics; 2. Character and Ethics Standards which promote responsibility for one’s actions and deeds, self-esteem, sociability, collaboration, integrity and honesty; and 3. Balanced Life Standards addressing participation in fitness and wellness as a life long habit while utilizing all aspects of intelligence. The Holly Drive Leadership Academy Charter School charter petition states that the
school’s curriculum will address the California Content Standards adopted by the California State Board of Education. The school will comply with all state assessment requirements that are applicable to charter schools.

Education Code section 47605 generally requires that, following the initial review and public hearing on a petition, a school district governing board shall either grant or deny the charter petition renewal within sixty days of receipt of the petition. However, that date may be extended by an additional 30 days if both parties agree to the extension. District staff has determined the submitted charter is in compliance with all applicable law and with the district’s Charter School Policy and Guidelines.

Consistent with the Charter School Policy and Guidelines, during its consideration of the renewal application, staff has taken into account the school’s record of success or failure during the prior chartering period in order to determine whether the petitioners are demonstrably likely to successfully implement the charter during the requested renewal period. Specifically, staff has determined the school has:

1. Improved pupil learning.
2. Increased learning opportunities for all pupils, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for pupils who are identified as academically low achieving.
3. Encouraged the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
4. Created new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.
5. Expanded choices for students and parents/guardians in the types of educational opportunities available within the district. Following staff’s review of the petition, any objections to the proposed charter, or revisions recommended by staff will be communicated to the petitioners.
6. Operated in a fiscally sound manner.
7. Complied with all applicable laws.
8. Complied with the terms of the original charter

Instructional Program Implications

The curriculum and instructional program are described in the charter proposal. Approval of the charter petition will not impact district instructional programs.

Facilities Implications

Holly Drive Leadership Academy Charter School is currently operating in a leased facility located at 4999 Holly Drive in the city of San Diego. For 2003-04 and 2004-05, the school submitted requests for facilities under Proposition 39.

Budget Implications

The computation, allocation and disbursement of public funds for charter schools is now governed by Education Code section 47630 et seq. Generally, the State Superintendent of Education is required to annually compute and allocate to each charter school the school’s general purpose entitlement and categorical block grant. The San Diego Unified School District Revenue Limit Rate is $4,711.10 per student. However, the district must disburse to each charter school it has authorized funding provided by the Charter School General Purpose Block Grant at the following rates: $4,512.00 per K-3 student; $4,571.00 per 4-6 student; $4,695.00 per 7-8 student; and $5,451.00 per 9-12 student.
A charter school may elect to receive its general purpose entitlement and block grant funds directly from the state or through the sponsoring school district. Holly Drive has chosen to receive its funding direct from the state. In addition, a sponsoring school district must annually transfer to each of its charter schools the school’s prescribed share of property taxes.

Public Support and Engagement Implications

Education Code section 47605(b) provides that a school district governing board shall hold a public hearing on the provisions of a charter school petition at which time the governing board shall consider the level of support for the petition by teachers employed by the district, other employees of the district, and parents. Holding a public hearing on January 13, 2004, fulfilled the district’s responsibilities in this regard.

Board Policy Implications

Approval of an adequate charter, or denial of a charter where warranted, is consistent with existing Board of Education policy contained in H-1800.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board approve the renewal of the petition and charter for the Holly Drive Leadership Academy Charter School with the following provisions: 1. HDLA shall provide business management services with an in-house person or a contracted out-source provider, effective July 1, 2004. 2. HDLA shall contract with an independent professional/s at the school’s expense for a yearly programmatic audit, to be received no later than April 1 of each year of renewal contract. This audit shall focus on programs and strategies for improving student achievement.

Report prepared by the Chief of Staff

Attachment A: Holly Drive Leadership Academy Charter School Petition and Charter