PARAMOUNT BARD
ACADEMY

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KERN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVES DELANO CHARTER SCHOOL PROPOSAL

PARAMOUNT BARD ACADEMY APPROVED 5 TO 2 TO OPEN IN AUGUST 2009.

Bakersfield, CA (February 11, 2009) The Kern County Board of Education votes five to two in support of the Paramount Bard Academy proposal to open as a public charter school in Delano, CA. Immediately following the initial presentation made on January 13th the County Board, in collaboration with the Academy developed a Memorandum of Understanding to address questions and work through the charter school petition incorporating additional checks and balances, adding to the school's overall effectiveness and increasing accountability at the County level.

With the County approval the Charter School will begin to actively recruit faculty and students in preparation for a fall term. "The Kern County Board's decision means we can begin the work of recruiting a broad range of students in Delano to take advantage of the smaller class sizes, increased instructional time, and overall college-going culture that helps make the Paramount Bard Academy so special," stated Brent Malicote, Principal of the Academy.

Based on comments made at the hearing, board members such as James Bartleson and Mary Little noted the proposal meeting all the required regulations and charter school laws and the opportunity this will bring to Kern County. "In the time leading up to this very important vote of approval for the Paramount Bard Academy (PBA), we have developed an outstanding working relationship with the Kern County Board and their

staff," explained Bill Phillimore, from the Paramount Farming Company. "We will continue to work with the County as well as reach out to both Delano Districts for opportunities to work and grow together." The Academy remains dedicated to students, staff, and families working collaboratively to raise expectations and create a culture of success.

The Academy will open in August 2009 in Delano, California as a joint project between the Delano community, Paramount Agricultural Companies, and Bard College's Masters of Arts in Teaching program. The Academy will recruit 12 new teachers in the next weeks and open with 200 students, one hundred sixth and one hundred ninth-graders, expanding to full K-12 capacity in 2019. Class sizes will not exceed 22 students, instructional hours will be longer than in traditional public schools, and students will have the opportunity to take up to 30 units of college credit before graduating from high school. The Paramount Bard Academy has a clear mission with central themes of individualized attention and college preparation. Any child would be eligible to attend; a lottery would determine admission if more students are interested than space is available. Bard College will run a master of arts in teaching program on site to improve valley education long-term.

Paramount Bard Academy

The Paramount Bard Academy is a public charter school that will be registered with the California Department of Education and is scheduled to open in August 2009 in Delano, California. The Paramount Bard Academy is a joint project between the Delano community, Paramount Agricultural Companies, and Bard College. The Paramount Bard Academy is committed to graduating students that are prepared to advance to college and complete post secondary degrees. A primary goal of the Academy is to graduate no less than 95% of all students with the expectation that 75% or more of these students will go on to graduate from college.

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