I. FOUNDING GROUP

Members of the community of Delano, California; Bard College; the Resnick Foundation; and the Paramount Agricultural Companies are collaborating to meet community interests through the creation of an independent charter school as an alternative educational program to be known as the Paramount Bard Academy. Building from the support of the Resnick Foundation and the Paramount Agricultural Companies and integrating the educational resources of Bard College's Master of Arts in Teaching Program in a public school setting, this group will establish a unique opportunity for students in Delano and surrounding communities by creating a college/public school partnership aimed at increasing the numbers of students who complete a college education. The Paramount Bard Academy not only will provide an early college experience for all of its students, but also will serve as a satellite campus for Bard's innovative Master of Arts in Teaching Program. This integrated college/public school partnership will provide leading models of educational practice, advancing student achievement while educating a new generation of teachers for California schools in the Central Valley.

Members of the Delano Community. Parents, educators, business owners, community leaders, and other residents of the Delano community have stepped forward to share their interest, enthusiasm, and support for this development of the Paramount Bard Academy. Many names are included on the attached petitions and many others have made clear that an alternative educational choice and a model of educational practice that can stimulate conversations and collaborations leading to continued growth across the school district will benefit all students and families in the community. The Paramount Bard Academy looks forward to providing forms of professional development and a forum for considering educational improvement for school districts throughout the region.

The Resnick Foundation and the Paramount Agricultural Companies. The Resnick Foundation and the Paramount Farming Company have been engaged in the improvement of public education since 1998, providing support for programs that advance student achievement in the school districts serving the following California communities: Avenal, Delano, Earlimart, Lost Hills, Richgrove, Pond, Shafter, Wasco, and Woodlake. The Resnick Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation that has given generously not only to these school districts but to schools in Los Angeles and other areas of California. In recent years, the Paramount Farming Company has invested close to two million dollars annually in programs to help address student learning needs and to increase the numbers of students enrolling in postsecondary institutions. Most recently, Paramount Farming Company and the Resnick Foundation have built a preschool facility in Avenal in response to community needs and to support a program of early childhood education that will foster greater success in school. Though many employees of Paramount Farming Company have contributed to the development of this charter proposal, three individuals figure prominently: William D. Phillimore, Tammy Ketelhut, and John Ritchie. William Phillimore is the Executive Vice-President of Paramount Farming Company and brings a lifetime of experience in the areas of business and finance. Tammy Ketelhut is the Educational Funding Coordinator for Paramount

Farming Company and brings years of experience in the development and funding of educational programs, outreach to public schools, and the design and financing of teacher professional development. John Ritchie, as Commercial Property Manager, is well versed in issues of real estate and facilities development and has helped secure the site for the Paramount Bard Academy in its opening years.

Bard College and the Master of Arts in Teaching Program. Established in 1860, Bard College has emerged during the last three decades as a national leader for secondary and postsecondary educational innovation under the direction of President Leon Botstein. Bard College is not only a notable four-year liberal arts college but has demonstrated unprecedented commitments to raising educational standards from public school through college. In 1979, Bard assumed control and ownership of ***Simon's Rock Early College*** (now called ***Bard College at Simon's Rock***), an early college that has allowed Bard to develop a college curriculum and teaching approaches for younger students. ***The Institute on Early College Pedagogy*** at Simon's Rock provides teachers and administrators across the country with workshops and consulting services, building from its own experiences as a national model of best practices for educating adolescents.

In 1982, Bard established the ***Institute for Writing and Thinking*** which continues to impact how teachers engage students in forms of writing and thinking that deepen reasoning and intellectual capacities while developing forms of literacy that are critical to facing the challenges of the contemporary world. In 2001, Bard opened the ***Bard High School Early College*** in Manhattan, a public high school in which all students complete their high school requirements and earn a two-year associate degree in the four-year cycle of secondary education. A second such school, ***Bard High School Early College II,*** will open in the Queens borough of New York City in September 2008.

In 2004, the ***Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Program*** enrolled its first class of graduate students. The MAT Program emphasizes an idea of teacher as scholar and classroom learning as an authentic apprenticeship in the knowledge making that constitutes the life of core academic fields. It is the only program nationally that engages full-time faculty in the disciplines and in education in the work of educating future teachers. By connecting the intellectual life of history, literature, math, or the sciences with what we clearly understand from areas of educational research related to teaching and learning, the MAT Program is educating teacher leaders, committed to raising the quality and expectations of public schooling for all students in any community or neighborhood.

Key faculty members of the MAT Program have been involved in various aspects of this proposal. Ric Campbell, Director of the MAT program, has been an educator and education leader for thirty years with many years of experience as a classroom teacher in public schools and other settings, curriculum consultant, director of educational programs for at-risk populations in New York City, and provider of professional development, especially as an associate of the Institute for Writing and Thinking. He was responsible for the design and implementation of the MAT program, which was approved by the New York State Board of Regents in December 2003. He continues to lead and administer this

program, which has expanded to include a campus in New York City and the upcoming campus in Delano, California. Faculty members Julia Emig, Derek Furr, and Stephen Mucher contributed to the curriculum designs for this proposal. Each of them has doctorate in literacy, literature, and history, respectively as well as years of experience as public school teachers prior to their joining the faculty of the MAT Program. Curriculum Vitae for all these individuals are included in **Appendix D**.

The Board of Directors. The Board of Directors of the Paramount Bard Academy will have at least five members. At the time of this proposal, three of the five board members have been appointed to the Board with the other two members to be nominated and appointed by the Resnick Foundation pending charter approval. The five-member board will be composed as follows:

1. Bill Phillimore, Executive Vice-President, Paramount Farming Company
2. John Ritchie, Commercial Property Manager, Paramount Farming Company
3. Ric Campbell, Director, Bard College Master of Arts in Teaching Program
4. School Board member of the Delano Union School District or member of agency responsible for the approval of the Paramount Bard Academy charter
5. Member of the Delano community who is prominently involved in civic and/or community affairs

Curricula Vitae for the named Directors above can be found in Appendix D.

Instrumental Partners:

Paramount Bard Academy, the Resnick Foundation, and Bard College

The Paramount Bard Academy is uniquely configured in a partnership with the Resnick Foundation and Bard College. The Resnick Foundation guarantees a financial commitment that supports the Academy's initial development and growth over time and Bard College brings a commitment of educational expertise to ensure the quality of school programs.

The Resnick Foundation. The Resnick Foundation has committed funds for facilities acquisition while simultaneously promising to close budget shortfalls associated with any charter startup and development costs not covered by standard public educational funding or other fundraising efforts during the first five years. This very generous commitment builds on a history of educational funding initiatives that have addressed the needs of students in the San Joaquin Valley and elsewhere. Since 1996, the Resnick Foundation and the associated companies of Roll International have donated more than six million dollars to California public schools with an emphasis on supporting student achievement in high needs districts in the Central Valley. The Resnick Foundation has no financial interests in the Paramount Bard Academy, maintaining a legally distinct role as a source of funding for costs related to educational programs with the sole operational responsibility for determining the composition of the Board of Directors (see Governance Structure, page 45).

Bard College. Bard College will establish a satellite campus of its Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Program on the campus of the Paramount Bard Academy, operating as a financially independent institution while working as an integral partner to the Paramount Bard Academy. The MAT Program offers four primary forms of support to the Paramount Bard Academy:

1. As resident graduate faculty, composed of PhDs in core academic disciplines and key areas in the field of education, the MAT professors provide content area and educational expertise, partnering with Paramount Bard Academy teachers in curriculum development, instructional design, classroom research, and the assessment of student work for purposes of improving student achievement.

2. The MAT faculty members (and Bakersfield College faculty members, see below) are responsible for developing and teaching courses for Paramount Bard Academy students that earn Bard College credits.

3. The MAT faculty members provide professional development opportunities to Academy teachers (and teachers in local schools districts) including but not limited to helping teachers satisfy National Board Certification in their first years of teaching.

4. The MAT Program's graduate students serve as assistant teachers in Paramount Bard Academy classrooms (and other school district classrooms in the region) throughout the school year, supporting instruction and increasing student achievement while satisfying field experience requirements for their California Teaching Credential and their master of arts in teaching degree.

Paramount Bard Academy and Bakersfield College

The Paramount Bard Academy will work closely with Bakersfield College in three specific contexts that advance the work of the charter school and enhance the educational goals of both institutions.

1. ***Facilities development***. The Paramount Bard Academy has signed a lease agreement with Bakersfield College to use and develop the existing community college facilities on 1924 Randolph Street in Delano, which will be vacated and ready for occupancy in November 2008. By September 2011, The Academy will have completed construction of a new facility capable of housing the charter school at its initial capacity of 700 students in grades 6-12. Discussions with Bakersfield College have already begun about the possibility of building this charter school facility on the Bakersfield College campus on Timmons Avenue in Delano. The ability to share commonly used facilities and maximize building usage while reducing costs for both institutions is recognized as a successful model of public school/college collaboration in California with nearby examples in the San Joaquin Valley. Consider that both the Lemoore Union Elementary and High School Districts operate schools on the West Hills College campus or that

the University High School, a charter school established on the campus of Fresno State in fall of 2000, has demonstrated consistent success since it opened.

2. ***College course offerings***. In initial discussions with Bakersfield College, the Paramount Bard Academy has discussed the ways that college courses offered to Paramount Bard Academy students can be offered as Bakersfield and/or Bard College credits, offering students credits that transfer easily into college degree programs in California and nationally. These discussions will continue as the Academy seeks to provide its students with college course options during their high school years that build multiple pathways to higher education and career options. It is a collaboration that builds on the best that each partner institution has to offer around common goals of increasing educational attainment in the Delano community.

3. ***Shared faculty.*** The ability to attract and retain a highly qualified college faculty is enhanced by this partnership. Bakersfield College and Bard College are able to offer full-time positions through dual appointments to faculty positions in both college programs, ensuring a core faculty of highly qualified professors who are committed to the Delano campus and available to both the Paramount Bard Academy and Bakersfield College. The concept of shared faculty allows both colleges to expand local offerings to public school students, local parents and adults, as well as teachers in the region seeking continued educational opportunities.

CONSULTANTS

The following consultants have contributed to the development of this charter proposal and will continue to advise the work and development of the Paramount Bard Academy in the years ahead:

ExED

ExEd is a non-profit organization that assists Southern California charter schools with the essential functions they often find most difficult: securing affordable facilities, dealing with school districts, complying with state and federal regulations, accounting and payroll. ExED was founded in 1998 and their expert team has worked with more than 50 charter schools serving more than 10,000 students. ExED's charter school clients include Arroyo Paseo Charter High School, Century Community Charter School, High Tech High – LA, Kipp Academy of Opportunity, Los Angeles Leadership Academy and New Millenium Secondary School. For a full list of clietns and further descriptions of ExED services and areas of expertise see - http://www.exed.net/.

The Law Offices of Spector, Middleton, Young, and Minney, LLP.

Spector, Middleton, Young & Minney, LLP ("SMYM"): SMYM has been a leader in charter school law for more than a decade, representing over 350 charter schools

throughout the state. SMYM offers superior legal expertise as well as the technical know-how to assist charter schools to effectively resolve problems and prevent operational challenges by utilizing a preventative approach to the law.