RESOLUTION - ACTION REQUESTED 2016-465

MEETING: September 13, 2016

TO: The Board of Supervisors

FROM: Marshall Long, District III Supervisor

RE: Letter of Support for Sierra Foothill Charter School

RECOMMENDATION AND JUSTIFICATION:
Approve a Letter of Support for renewal of the Sierra Foothill Charter School; and Authorize the Board of Supervisors Chair to Sign the Letter (Supervisor Long).

The Catheys Valley Charter School's initial petition submission to the Mariposa County Unified School District (MCUSD) Board of Trustees was five years ago. By approving a letter of support to continue the Catheys Valley Charter School this letter can be included in the Charter School's renewal packet.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:
The Board has routinely approved letters of support for issues that it believes will benefit the citizens of Mariposa County.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:
Do not approve the letter. Individual members of the Board may write their own letters of support.

ATTACHMENTS:
letter of support  (DOC)

CAO RECOMMENDATION
Requested Action Recommended

Mary Hudson, CAO  9/1/2016
RESULT: ADOPTED BY CONSENT VOTE [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Rosemarie Smallcombe, District I Supervisor
SECONDER: Merlin Jones, District II Supervisor
AYES: Smallcombe, Jones, Long, Cann, Carrier
September 13, 2016

Superintendent Hopper and
MCUSD Trustees
P. O. Box 8
Mariposa, CA 95338

Re: Support for Sierra Foothill Charter School’s renewal

Dear Superintendent Hopper and MCUSD Trustees:

The Mariposa County Board of Supervisors supports the efforts of Sierra Foothill Charter School (SFCS) to renew its charter for another five years.

In the years since it first opened, SFCS has proven itself to be a focal point and unifying component in the Catheys Valley community. Hardly a week goes by that we don’t see one or multiple pictures and articles in local media outlets highlighting SFCS students, staff, programs, and achievements, as well as events open to the community.

SFCS has also proven to draw new families into the Catheys Valley community. We have been told that when Catheys Valley Elementary closed, there were 62 students enrolled in kindergarten through sixth grade. At the start of the 2016-2017 school year, SFCS has 136 students that are enrolled in transitional kindergarten through eighth grade. Given that SFCS is a school of choice, this enrollment number speaks to the fact that SFCS is offering something that a number of families in the community are looking for.

UC Merced expects to grow to a size of 10,000 students by 2020. With the influx of University students also comes an influx of new faculty and staff moving to Mariposa and Merced counties. Several faculty and staff have moved to Catheys Valley to take advantage of SFCS and we expect this trend will continue.

SFCS is also the largest employer in Catheys Valley with 21 employees. Providing jobs to local residents is another way that SFCS is an asset to all of Mariposa County.

It is never ideal to have a highly visible and vacant school site; it attracts vandalism and becomes a distraction to families contemplating raising a family within the area. In having made use of the
empty MCUSD site, SFCS has solved this problem, and has kept the site attractive and welcoming.

The Board of Supervisors recognizes that your primary mission as Trustees is to provide a high quality educational experience for every young person in Mariposa County. We know that you will carefully review the Charter’s educational model, track record of success with students, and financial plan. Assuming that SFCS’s renewal plan satisfies your requirements, we believe it will continue to be an asset not only to Catheys Valley, but to all of Mariposa County.

We support SFCS in its renewal process and hope that you do as well.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

JOHN CARRIER
Board of Supervisors Chair
Mariposa County