

Tulare County Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

Charter School Renewal Findings of Fact: Eleanor Roosevelt Community Learning Center

September 17, 2026

Authorizing Agency:

Tulare County Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & BACKGROUND

- **Petitioner Name:** Eleanor Roosevelt Community Learning Center
- **Target Grade Levels & Population:** TK-12
- **Current Charter Expiration:** June 30, 2027
- **Proposed Renewal Term:** July 1, 2027 – June 30, 2032
- **Submission Type:** Renewal
- **Statutory Timeline Tracker:**
 - **Date Petition Received:** July 23, 2026
 - **Public Hearing (Level of Support):** September 2, 2026
 - **Staff Findings Posted:** September 17, 2026
 - **Board Action Hearing:** October 7, 2026

Executive Overview:

The Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE) review team conducted an evaluation of the renewal petition submitted by Eleanor Roosevelt Community Learning Center (ERCLC) for the five-year term of July 1, 2027, through June 30, 2032. Operating as a direct-funded, non-classroom-based TK–12 personalized learning and homeschool charter school, ERCLC combines home-based instruction with structured on-site enrichment and academic options. Recent site visits by the authorizing team further demonstrated how this model operates in practice. Authorizer observations conducted during the renewal review process provided direct evidence of this educational model in practice. During visits to both the Venice Campus and Downtown Visalia Resource Center in August 2026, reviewers observed students participating in enrichment, academic coursework, career technical education pathways, and collaborative learning experiences across multiple grade spans. The observations demonstrated how ERCLC's educational program extends beyond independent study by intentionally creating opportunities for students and families to engage in a connected learning community.

Feedback received during the September 2, 2026 public hearing further supported the findings of the review team. School leaders provided an overview of ERCLC's programmatic growth, expanding enrichment opportunities, and continued academic improvement. Parent testimony highlighted the value of the school's personalized educational model, describing how the program helped students develop confidence, discover individual interests and talents, and become connected to a supportive learning community. These perspectives were consistent with evidence gathered through site visits, focus groups, and document review.

Key evaluation findings include:

- Designated as a Middle-Performing charter school under Education Code Section 47607.2(b), ERCLC demonstrates steady year-over-year growth in state ELA and Math assessments across all major student groups. Local i-Ready assessments further support this trend with strong proficiency gains, paired with a 100% high school graduation rate and expanding CTE and enrichment programs.
- ERCLC demonstrates operational viability, sound governance, and fiscal stability. The school operates in compliance with state governance and transparency laws while maintaining active educational partner engagement. Fiscally, ERCLC projects multi-year operating surpluses and

fund balance reserves that exceed state standards. Temporary capital expenditure impacts are fully backed by strong cash reserves and credit facilities.

- ERCLC remains committed to equitable access, serving an increasingly diverse student population without exclusionary practices.

An analysis of the statutory charter elements confirms that ERCLC's renewal petition is comprehensive and meets the legal requirements under California Education Code. Staff recommends: Approval of the Eleanor Roosevelt Community Learning Center charter renewal petition for a five-year term, effective July 1, 2027, through June 30, 2032.

LEGAL STANDARDS & EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

In accordance with California Education Code (EC) Sections 47605, 47605.6, 47607, and 47607.2, charter renewals are evaluated using a multi-tiered performance structure and state-mandated metrics. The Authorizer must grant the renewal if it is satisfied that doing so is consistent with sound educational practice, unless specific written findings of fact are adopted.

Performance Tier Designation (EC 47607 / 47607.2):

- **Assigned Tier:** Middle-Performing
- **Statutory Basis:** Under EC 47607(c), charter performance categories are determined using Dashboard results from the two most recent years, applying both Criterion 1 (performance colors across all state indicators) and Criterion 2 (status comparisons for academic indicators). The school did not meet the conditions for High Performing; its Dashboard results did not include all Blue/Green indicators across two years, nor did its academic status scores exceed statewide averages for the majority of student groups. The school also did not meet the conditions for Low Performing, as it did not receive Red/Orange on all indicators nor demonstrate status scores below statewide averages for the majority of student groups. Because the school met neither the High nor Low thresholds under EC 47607(c), it is assigned to the Middle-Performing tier.

PERFORMANCE & ACADEMIC DATA ANALYSIS

A. State Performance Indicators ([CA School Dashboard](#))

Priority 4: Pupil Achievement, Academic Indicator--English Language Arts SBAC Average Distance From Standard			
Area	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students	-67.6	-42.5	-26.7
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	-72.6	-39.4	-29.8
Hispanic	-85.6	-49.6	-21

White	-57.9	-34	-25.3
Students with Disabilities	-113	-96.5	-85.7

Priority 4: Pupil Achievement, Academic Indicator--Mathematics SBAC Average Distance From Standard

Area	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students	-107	-89.4	-60.4
Hispanic	-125.3	-104.1	-65.4
White	-95.6	-77.1	-47.9
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	-119.8	-97.4	-71.1
Students with Disabilities	-159.3	-141.4	-130.5

Priority 4: Pupil Achievement, English Learner Progress Indicator Percent Making Progress

Area	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
English Learners	No data < 11 students	No data < 11 students	No data < 11 students

Priority 5: Pupil Engagement--Chronic Absenteeism (%)

Area	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Priority 5: Pupil Engagement--Graduation Rate (%)

Area	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students	92.9%	100.0%	100.0%
White	91.7%	100.0%	100.0%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged		100.0%	100.0%

Priority 6: School Climate--Suspension Rate (%)			
Area	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Priority 8: College/Career Indicator			
Area	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
All Students	50.0%	58.6%	52.0%
White		62.5%	50.0%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged		52.90%	43.80%

B. Local Indicators and Additional Data

Local Indicator	2023	2024	2025
Basic Conditions of learning	MET	MET	MET
Implementation of State Academic Standards	MET	MET	MET
Parent Involvement and Family Engagement	MET	MET	MET
Local Climate	MET	MET	MET
Access to a Broad Course of Study	MET	MET	MET

iReady	2023-2024 % at grade level	2024-2025 % at grade level	2025-2026 % at grade level
All Students - ELA	54%	61%	68%
All Students - Math	38%	56%	55%

4H-Science Pathways	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
# of Students Participating	25	26	96

VAPA	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
# of Students Participating	65	70	82

CTE Pathway CA Dashboard	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
% of students completing at least one CTE pathway	0%	24.10%	36%

Over the past three years, Eleanor Roosevelt Community Learning Center’s state and local performance data reflect a pattern of year-over-year change across multiple academic and college- and career-readiness indicators. Although the school’s *Middle-Performing* designation is based on the most recent two years of Dashboard data, earlier 2022–23 results are included here to provide a fuller picture of longitudinal trends.

Academic Achievement: English Language Arts and Mathematics

State assessment results in both English Language Arts and Mathematics show consistent year-over-year improvement for the overall student population as well as for major student groups. The data reflect movement toward stronger performance each year, with the most recent results representing the school’s highest levels within the three-year span. Students with Disabilities also show gradual improvement over time, though their performance remains lower relative to other groups. English Learner Progress data are not available due to small cohort size.

Graduation Rate

Graduation rates have increased over the three-year period, with the most recent two years showing all students graduating. Subgroup data reflect similar patterns of stability and improvement.

College and Career Indicator

College and Career Indicator results fluctuate across the three years but generally show an upward trend when viewed alongside related pathway participation data. The percentage of students completing at least one CTE pathway increases notably over the period, and participation in enrichment programs such as 4H-Science and VAPA expands each year, indicating broader access to college- and career-aligned opportunities.

Local Indicators and Internal Measures

All Local Indicators have been met consistently since last renewal. Internal assessment data (iReady) show steady increases in the percentage of students performing at grade level in both English Language Arts and Mathematics. Participation in specialized programs and pathways also increases over time, reflecting growth in the school’s instructional and extracurricular offerings. These expanded opportunities were evident during site observations. Reviewers observed active participation in career technical education, visual and performing arts, and hands-on enrichment opportunities that align with the school’s stated emphasis on applied learning and college and career readiness. Students demonstrated engagement in learning environments designed to promote creativity, collaboration, and practical skill development.

FISCAL, GOVERNANCE & OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS

Governance & Leadership:

Eleanor Roosevelt Community Learning Center operates as a California 501(c)(3) nonprofit public benefit corporation governed by an independent Board of Directors and maintains autonomy as a direct-funded charter school authorized by the Tulare County Board of Education. The petition identifies a three-member governing board composed of Lauren Farris, Eddie Valero, and James McDonnell, whose collective backgrounds include education, public service, business, and community leadership. The board provides fiscal, operational, and strategic oversight, while school operations are administered by the Superintendent and leadership team. During the renewal review process, authorizer staff observed the Board's August 11, 2026 regular meeting. The meeting included discussion of school operations, updates on program activities, fiscal reporting, the 2026-27 board meeting calendar, and acknowledgement of the charter renewal submission. Board materials were publicly posted in advance of the meeting, quorum was established, and business was conducted through open session action items and reports consistent with the governance structure described in the petition. The petition further affirms compliance with the Ralph M. Brown Act, Government Code Section 1090, and the Political Reform Act, and includes adopted bylaws and conflict-of-interest policies to promote transparency, ethical governance, and accountability.

The governance structure includes multiple opportunities for educational partner engagement, including a School Advisory Council (SAC), parent participation in the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) process, booster club activities, regular parent-teacher meetings, and ongoing school-home communications. The petition also outlines procedures for establishing an English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) should enrollment thresholds require one. Observations conducted during the renewal review process reinforced the strength of this family partnership model. During visits to both campuses, reviewers observed parents actively engaged in the educational environment, including participating alongside students in learning activities, collaborating with staff, and connecting with other families while on campus. The school environment reflected a culture in which families are viewed as active educational partners.

Review of the petition and evaluation rubric found the governance structure to be compliant with statutory requirements, with clear delineation of board and administrative responsibilities, parent involvement processes, and public meeting requirements. The effectiveness of these engagement structures was further reflected during the public hearing for charter renewal, where parents voluntarily provided testimony regarding their experiences with the program. Their comments emphasized strong communication with staff, meaningful involvement in their children's education, and appreciation for the school's community-oriented approach to learning.

Fiscal Health & Sustainability:

Eleanor Roosevelt Community Learning Center operates as a direct-funded public charter school authorized by the Tulare County Office of Education. As a direct-funded charter, ERCLC maintains independent fiscal administration, employee governance, and financial management. Based on the review of the school's financial documentation, audit history, and multi-year projections, staff finds that ERCLC demonstrates financial viability and the ability to sustain its operations over the projection period.

- **ADA & Enrollment Trends:** Enrollment exhibits strong growth, expanding from 416 students in 2023-24 to a projected stabilization of 700 students by 2026-27. This growth is directly supported by facility expansions at the Venice Campus and the acquisition of the Downtown Visalia Resource Center. Attendance rates remain consistently high at 98% of enrollment with minimal projection variance.
- **Multi-Year Projections:** ERCLC is not projecting a structural deficit. The multi-year projections reflect revenues exceeding expenditures in each projected year, generating annual net operating surpluses:
 - 2026-27: Net increase of \$521,538
 - 2027-28: Net increase of \$649,235
 - 2028-29: Net increase of \$610,954
- **Reserve Levels:** ERCLC maintains strong reserve levels of 52.83% to 59.59% of annual expenditures (ending FY 2028-29 with \$7.25M in fund balance), far exceeding the 4% state standard.
- **Monthly Cash Flow & Days Cash on Hand:**
 - Monthly Cash Balance: Ending cash balances remain positive across all 12 months.
 - Days Cash on Hand:
 - **2026-27:** Averages 30.64 days cash on hand due to initial facility investments and seasonal state apportionment timing (dipping to a low of 10.52 days in Nov-26).
 - **2027-28 & 2028-29 Projections:** Projections demonstrate a significant growth, exceeding the 60-day authorizer benchmark every month, ranging from 76.09 days (Aug-27) to 145.00 days (May-29).
 - **Liquidity Mitigation:** The projected short-term cash-flow challenges in 2026-27 are helped by ERCLC's available \$250,000 line of credit with Valley Strong Credit Union.
- **Overall Fiscal Finding & Summary:** Based on the financial and operational review, ERCLC demonstrates sufficient financial capacity and organizational health to support its ongoing operations and projected enrollment growth. Site observations confirm that the new Downtown Visalia Resource Center actively advances the charter's mission, serving as an effective hub for student enrichment, instruction, and family engagement while expanding access to the homeschool program. Although 2026–27 cash-flow projections reflect temporary periods of limited liquidity, ERCLC maintains positive monthly cash balances, has access to an available \$250,000 line of credit, and projects sustained operating surpluses and strong fund balance growth. Staff therefore finds that ERCLC demonstrates adequate fiscal health and operational sustainability to support continued operation.

Serving All Pupils:

ERCLC demonstrates a commitment to serving all pupils and does not exhibit exclusionary enrollment or admission practices. The petition affirms that ERCLC is nonsectarian, tuition-free, and open to all students. Enrollment data show that the school's demographics have become increasingly reflective of the surrounding community. Hispanic students now represent the largest racial/ethnic

subgroup, approximately 60% of enrolled students are identified as socioeconomically disadvantaged, and the school continues to serve a comparatively high percentage of students with disabilities, many of whom are attracted to the school's alternative educational model. The petition further documents outreach efforts designed to reach underrepresented populations through multilingual communications, community partnerships, and targeted recruitment activities.

Parent testimony during the public hearing also provided examples of how the school's flexible instructional model meets the needs of students who may not have thrived in more traditional educational settings. Parents described the availability of personalized learning opportunities and enrichment experiences as important factors in supporting both academic success and student engagement. Their comments aligned with feedback gathered during focus groups (March 2026) and site visits (March and August 2026), which highlighted the value families place on both flexibility and connection. Families consistently described a program that allows students to learn at their own pace while remaining part of a supportive educational community. Authorizer observations further confirmed the importance of these connections, as students and parents were observed participating in enrichment activities, collaborating with staff, and engaging with other families across both campuses. Together, these experiences reflect a school model that expands access to educational choice while fostering a strong sense of community and belonging. The combination of individualized learning pathways, family partnership, academic supports, and diverse enrichment opportunities provides families with multiple avenues to engage in the educational program and supports students with varied learning needs, interests, educational goals, and circumstances.

PETITION COMPREHENSIVENESS MATRIX ([EC 47605\(b\)\(5\)\(A\)-\(O\)](#))

Element / Requirement	Status	Summary of Review / Staff Notes
Educational Program	Meets	The petition outlines a TK–12 personalized learning independent study and homeschool model with many options for in-person enrichment and academic support. The petition outlines an educational program that serves all targeted student populations, including low-income students, English Learners, and Students with Disabilities, through multi-tiered support systems and tailored learning pathways. The educational model centers on four foundational pillars: ERCLC "Core" Academic, Exploratory Hands-on Learning, Parents as Learning Partners, and Small Safe School Culture. Guided by constructivist principles, gifted education strategies for all scholars, multi-age enrichment, and design thinking, ERCLC empowers parents as primary educators supported by credentialed Education Coordinators. Observations conducted during the renewal review process provided evidence of these program elements in action. At the Venice Campus, reviewers observed middle and high school students participating in enrichment and academic learning opportunities that incorporated hands-on instruction, collaboration, and career exploration. Programs including woodshop, performing arts, music, and other enrichment

		offerings reflected the petition's emphasis on experiential learning and student choice. Parent testimony presented during the public hearing reinforced the effectiveness of the program elements described in the petition. Families described how the combination of home-based learning, enrichment opportunities, hands-on experiences, and supportive relationships allowed students to pursue personal interests, develop independence, and engage more meaningfully in their educational experiences.
Measurable Student Outcomes	Meets	The petition and ERCLC LCAP define measurable student academic and behavioral goals that align with California's eight Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) priorities and California School Dashboard indicators. The petitioner defines clear Learner Outcomes, striving to develop scholars who are Explorers, Resourceful scholars, Communicators, Learners, and Caring Citizens. Progress is measured through standards-aligned growth metrics, authentic assessments, and continuous improvement tracking to ensure scholars graduate prepared for future success. While academic outcomes are measured through multiple state and local indicators, parent testimony also described student growth in areas reflected within ERCLC's Learner Outcomes, including communication skills, confidence, independence, and the development of individual talents and interests.
Student Progress Measurement	Meets	Student progress is monitored through a variety of authentic, diagnostic, and state-mandated assessments. ERCLC utilizes the i-Ready diagnostic system for ELA and math, alongside writing benchmarks and portfolio assessments, to evaluate individual growth. In addition, ERCLC participates in CAASPP and ELPAC assessments, incorporating data from regular parent-teacher consultations to adjust personalized instruction.
Governance Structure	Meets	ERCLC is organized as a 501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation governed by an independent Board of Directors. The Board provides fiscal, operational, and strategic oversight in compliance with the Brown Act, Section 1090, and the Political Reform Act. School leadership, led by the Superintendent, collaborates with key advisory groups, including the School Advisory Council to ensure active parent and staff involvement in decision-making. The petition outlines the processes for an English Learner Advisory Committee and recognizes that the school will establish the committee if 21 or more scholars designated as English Learners are enrolled at the Charter School.

Employee Qualifications	Meets	ERCLC has established qualifications, credentialing requirements, and defined responsibilities for all employee classifications. The petition includes a plan for staff recruitment, development, evaluation, and ongoing learning to support program implementation. Although meeting statutory minimum standards for the petition, TCOE recommends/suggests updates to the following: ● Update Superintendent Certifications: ○ Valid California Administrative Services Credential ○ Valid teaching credential/PPS credential ● Update Superintendent Experience Required: ○ Minimum 5 years teaching experience/counseling ● Update Director of College Career Counseling ○ Certifications: Valid teaching credential/PPS credential ○ Experience: Minimum of five (5) years of successful teaching or counseling experience at the Secondary level. ● Update Education Coordinators/Teacher Certifications: ○ Remove: The CTC certificate, permit or other document required for the teacher's certificated assignment ○ Replace with: Hold valid California teaching credential appropriate for assignment ● Update Experience/Certifications for Student Intervention Specialist and Paraprofessional/Instructional Aide ○ Remove: Pass proficiency test or meet educational requirements ○ Replace with: Associates degree or 48 semester units from an accredited college/university or Instructional Aide Exam or CBEST with a passing score
Health and Safety Procedures	Meets	The petition outlines the school's maintenance of comprehensive health and safety policies to ensure a secure learning environment across its facilities. Procedures cover emergency preparedness, fire safety, child abuse reporting compliance, immunization monitoring, and facility safety inspections. Background checks and fingerprinting are required for all employees, designated volunteers, and contractors prior to engaging with scholars.
Means to Achieve Balanced Enrollment	Meets	ERCLC implements a recruitment and outreach plan designed to reflect the diverse ethnic, racial, linguistic, and socio-economic demographics of Tulare County. Outreach strategies focus on reaching underrepresented groups, low-income families, English Learners, and scholars with special needs through multi-lingual materials and community engagement, ensuring equitable access to the charter program.

		The addition of the Downtown Visalia Resource Center further supports accessibility for families by providing another location where students can participate in enrichment activities and where parents can access support, resources, and opportunities to connect with other homeschool families. Observations during the renewal review suggest that the facility has strengthened access to the program for families seeking both flexibility and community.
Admission Requirements & Lottery	Meets	ERCLC is non-sectarian and non-discriminatory, open to all TK–12 scholars residing within Tulare County and contiguous counties. The petition details a public random drawing (lottery) process with defined statutory preference categories in the event that applications exceed available capacity.
Annual Financial Audits	Meets	The petition outlines a process for selecting an independent certified public accountant from the State Controller’s approved list to conduct annual fiscal audits. Includes timelines and procedures for submitting completed audit reports and addressing any identified audit findings or exceptions to the authorizer.
Student Discipline Procedures	Meets	The petition features a discipline policy that details offenses that may lead to suspension or expulsion, progressive discipline steps, due process rights, notification procedures, and hearing processes. Procedural safeguards are maintained for scholars with IEPs or 504 plans.
Staff Retirement Systems	Meets	The petition provides for certificated employees’ participation in STRS and participation in PERS or Social Security for eligible classified employees. Responsibility for ensuring appropriate system enrollment is assigned to the Superintendent.
Public School Alternatives	Meets	The petition includes language confirming that parents and guardians are informed that attendance at the charter school is entirely voluntary. Parents and guardians are informed that scholars who choose not to attend ERCLC maintain the right to attend public schools within their resident school district or pursue other charter alternatives available in the area.
Employee Return Rights	Meets	The petition states that no public employee is required to work at ERCLC and clarifies that employees leaving TCOE for charter employment have no automatic right of return unless specifically authorized by TCOE. Any employment rights, leave arrangements, or return rights are subject to agreements established by TCOE and applicable law.
Dispute Resolution Process	Meets	ERCLC’s petition establishes mechanisms for resolving conflicts internally and between the school and TCOE. Internal disputes involving parents, scholars, or staff are addressed through

		structured administrative remedies. Formal disputes regarding charter terms or oversight between ERCLC and the Tulare County Board of Education/Office of Education follow a defined step-by-step resolution protocol.
Employer Status / Labor Relations	Meets	The petition outlines a process for the charter and the authorizer to settle disputes related to the charter and how the charter will resolve internal complaints or disputes.
Closure Procedures	Meets	ERCLC outlines a closure protocol governing notification to parents, authorizers, and the state, as well as the transfer of pupil records and health documentation. The petition provides procedures for financial audits, asset liquidation, and debt settlement in the event of school closure.

CONCLUSION and STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Leadership Support Services Charter Authorization Team reviewed the renewal petition for ERCLC utilizing the criteria for charter approval set forth in Education Code sections 47605, 47607, and 47607.2.

It is the recommendation of the Leadership Support Services Charter Authorization Team that the Eleanor Roosevelt Community Learning Center Charter be renewed for a five-year term, effective July 1, 2027, through June 30, 2032.

REVIEW TEAM SIGN-OFF

Department / Role	Reviewer Name	Signature	Date
Educational Program & Governance Co-Lead	Karen Costa, LSS Administrator		[Date] Sep 18, 2026
Educational Program & Governance Co-Lead	Michelle Ramirez LSS Administrator	 Michelle Ramirez (Sep 18, 2026 08:15:22 PDT)	[Date] Sep 18, 2026
Fiscal & Business Coordinator	Christina Loys LSS Fiscal Coordinator	 Christina Loys (Sep 18, 2026 08:04:28 PDT)	[Date] Sep 18, 2026
Special Education / SELPA	Tammy Bradford Asst. Superintendent		[Date] Sep 18, 2026
Human Resources	Dedi Somavia Asst. Superintendent	 Dedi Somavia (Sep 18, 2026 11:06:32 PDT)	[Date] Sep 18, 2026
Health & Safety	Bob Mayo Director		[Date] Sep 18, 2026