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SCVi Gets Charter Renewed Until 2020

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Ed. Note: This is a news release provided by SCVi.

The William S. Hart Union High School District board unanimously approved charter renewal for iLEAD's founding school, SCVi Charter School on Wednesday, school officials said Friday.

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Promoting a project-based learning environment, SCVi opened seven years ago, operating under the Hart District. In its first year the school opened to maximum capacity at 120 students, a school's second year it moved to its current location and expanded to more than 400 students. Since then, SCVi has been steadily growing and today boasts just over 1,000 learners.

The meeting room at the Hart District headquarters was standing room only, as a crowd of 100 backers arrived to show their support for the school, including members of the SCVi girls' high softball team.

Speaking on behalf of SCVi, founder Amber Raskin spoke about the growth of the school from its beginnings in 2008 until today.

"We pride ourselves in doing what is right for kids," Raskin said. "The state of California has eliminated the use of the API and growth measures because they are insufficient for measuring performance and quality of a school, and in anticipation of the common core assessment that will be implemented. The district should not hold us to a measuring stick that has not only been but they themselves are not being measured by."

Raskin added that the SCVi approach to learning is proven to be effective.

"Our curriculum and deeper learning project-based pedagogy is research-based, and other schools who are using similar methods are significantly outperforming their peers on the new cor assessment pilots," she said. "The reason is simple. Kids understand and retain what they are learning versus regurgitation. We want to be held accountable that we are doing what is right are confident that we are delivering this today and these results will show themselves when the new assessment measurement system is put in place in California."

Board President Robert Jensen asked, "In 30 seconds or less, can you tell us what does SCVi Charter bring to the table for the Santa Clarita community?"

Founder Dawn Evenson replied, "We bring leadership through student-driven projects, educational innovation, and most importantly, choice for families in Santa Clarita."

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It was a learner, who is newer to the SCVi community and transferred just last year after attending more traditional schools in the Santa Clarita Valley, who brought the crowd of enthusiast nearly to their feet.

Senior Laurel Kratz responded to the same question: "They bring a level of personal connection with every student that I have never seen before. They are truly interested in your learning. encourage you to go farther than you thought you could before. They do that with a level of commitment that was apparent from the first day I walked in the door."

Board Member Gloria E. Mercado-Fortine made the motion for the board to approve renewal, and the motion was seconded by Steven M. Sturgeon. The board unanimously voted to approve Charter School for renewal from July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2020. The Hart board consists of Robert P. Hall, Bob Jensen, Gloria E. Mercado-Fortine, Joe Messina and Steven M. Sturgeon.

SCVi offers a project-based TK-12 curriculum that includes individualized learning plans, international themes and leadership development.

The tuition-free charter school emphasizes an inquiry-based, learner-centered approach to education. SCVi's primary goal is to help learners lead a successful and fulfilled life while contrib world around them. More information about SCVi and iLEAD Schools is available at www.ileadschools.org.



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