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Woodland Hills**Education Activist Wins Grant for Charter School**By *KRISTINA SAUERWEIN*

The California Department of Education has awarded a former math teacher and school reform activist a \$35,000, 18-month grant to develop a charter elementary school in the southwest San Fernando Valley.

Organizers hope to open the Multicultural Learning Center during the fall of 2001 in the Canoga Park-West Hills area with 265 kindergartners through fourth-graders.

Eventually, the school will accommodate about 320 students, including fifth-graders, said Toby Bornstein, a Woodland Hills resident who has 35 years of experience in education working as an elementary and middle school teacher, and for organizations advocating math reform and using arts to teach literacy.

Although still refining the school's plan, Bornstein, who would be the school's director, said the charter school would integrate writing, reading, science, math and art based on a theme, for example pollution. Two teachers would work in each classroom, and students would become literate in English and Spanish.

Students also would be required to complete community projects, such as recycling newspapers or growing a garden.

In the next few months, Bornstein said, she plans to locate a site for the school as well as draft a charter-school petition to the Los Angeles Unified School District. Ultimately, the school would need approval from the Board of Education.