VALLEY CHARTER
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Charter Renewal Petition
Submitted October 10, 2014

For the term July 1, 2015 through
June 30, 2020
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**Assurances and Affirmations**

Valley Charter Elementary School (also referred to herein as “VCES” and “Charter School”) shall:

- Be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. California Education Code (hereinafter “Ed. Code”) § 47605(d)(1).


- Not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in section 422.55 of the Penal Code. Ed. Code § 47605(d)(1).

- Except as provided in Ed. Code section 47605(d)(2), admission to a charter school shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the pupil, or of his or her parent or legal guardian, within this state, except that an existing public school converting partially or entirely to a charter school under this part shall adopt and maintain a policy giving admission preference to pupils who reside within the former attendance area of that school. Ed. Code § 47605(d)(1).


- Except for existing students of the charter school, determine attendance by a public random drawing if the number of pupils who wish to attend the charter school exceeds the school’s capacity. Preference shall be extended to pupils currently attending the charter school and pupils who reside in the Los Angeles Unified School District (also referred to herein as “LAUSD” and “District”). Ed. Code § 47605(d)(2)(B).

- If a pupil is expelled or leaves the charter school without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the charter school shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil’s last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card, and health information. Ed. Code § 47605(d)(3).

- Meet all statewide standards and conduct the pupil assessments required pursuant to Ed. Code sections 60605 and 60851 and any other statewide standards authorized in statute or pupil assessments applicable to pupils in non-charter public schools. Ed. Code § 47605(c)(1).

- Consult, on a regular basis, with the charter school’s parents, legal guardians, and teachers regarding the school’s educational programs. Ed. Code § 47605(c)(2).

NOTE: This charter contains specific “District Required Language” (DRL), including the Assurances and Affirmations above. The DRL should be highlighted in gray within each element or section. The charter includes a consolidated addendum of the DRL. This intentional redundancy facilitates efficient charter petition review while ensuring ready access to the DRL for any given section of the charter. To the extent that any inconsistency should exist between any provision contained within the body of the charter and the DRL contained in the addendum, the provisions of the DRL addendum shall control.
Element 1: The Educational Program

“A description of the educational program of the school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an "educated person" in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.” Cal. Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(A)(i).

“A description, for the charter school, of annual goals, for all pupils and for each subgroup of pupils identified pursuant to Section 52052, to be achieved in the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school, and specific annual actions to achieve those goals. A charter petition may identify additional school priorities, the goals for the school priorities, and the specific annual actions to achieve those goals. If the proposed school will serve high school pupils, a description of the manner in which the charter school will inform parents about the transferability of courses to other public high schools and the eligibility of courses to meet college entrance requirements. Courses offered by the charter school that are accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges may be considered transferable and courses approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the “A” to “G” admissions criteria may be considered to meet college entrance requirements.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(A)(iii).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENERAL INFORMATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The contact person for Charter School is:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The contact address for Charter School is:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The contact phone number for Charter School is:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposed address or target community of Charter School is:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This location is in LAUSD Board District:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This location is in LAUSD Educational Service Center:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The grade configuration of Charter School is:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of students in the first year of the renewal term will be:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The grade level(s) of the students in the first year of the renewal term will be:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The scheduled opening date of Charter School is:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The enrollment capacity:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Enrollment capacity is defined as all students who are enrolled in Charter School regardless of student residency).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The type of instructional calendar (e.g. traditional/year-round, single track-multi-track, extended day/year) will be:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bell schedule for Charter School will be:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The term of this charter shall be from:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Board of Directors for Valley Charter Elementary respectfully submits this charter renewal petition to the Los Angeles Unified School District (also referred to herein as “LAUSD” and “District”) for a five (5) year charter, grades K-5, site-based program that will serve a diverse student population in the San Fernando Valley.
COMMUNITY NEED FOR CHARTER SCHOOL

CHARTER RENEWAL CRITERIA

Evidence of Meeting Charter Renewal Standards Pursuant to Education Code Section 47607(b) and the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 11966.4(b)(1)

Education Code Section 47607(b) requires that a charter school must meet at least one of the following renewal criteria prior to receiving a charter renewal:

1. Attained its Academic Performance Index (API) growth target in the prior year or in two of the last three years, both school wide and for all groups of pupils served by the charter school.

2. Ranked in deciles 4 to 10, inclusive, on the API in the prior year or in two of the last three years.

3. Ranked in deciles 4 to 10 inclusive, in the API for a demographically comparable school in the prior year or in two of the last three years.

4. The entity that granted the charter determines that the academic performance of the charter school is at least equal to the academic performance of the public schools that the charter school pupils would otherwise have been required to attend, as well as the academic performance of the schools in the school district in which the charter school is located, taking into account the composition of the pupil population that is served at the charter school.

The following shall serve as documentation confirming that Valley Charter Elementary School exceeds the statutory criteria required for renewal as set forth in Education Code Section 47607(b):

- VCES has attained its API growth target in the last three years, both school wide and for all groups of pupils served by the charter school (if such data was available), exceeding the requirement of Education Code Section 47607(b)(1).

- VCES has achieved a statewide API rank of 8 or higher in the last three years, exceeding the minimum threshold rank of 4 required in Education Code Section 47607(b)(2).

- VCES has achieved a similar schools API rank of 5 in the past year, exceeding the minimum threshold rank of 4 required in Education Code Section 47607(b)(3).

Over the prior charter term, VCES had the following API scores:
2010-2014 API Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>API Statewide Ranking</th>
<th>API Similar Schools Ranking</th>
<th>API Growth Scores</th>
<th>API Growth Target (Actual Growth)</th>
<th>Met School Growth Target?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014 and 2014-15</td>
<td>State-mandated testing suspended in 2013-14; API data not calculated or reported (see Note below).</td>
<td>3-Year Weighted Average API: 983</td>
<td>2013 Statewide Rank: 9</td>
<td>2013 Similar Schools Rank: 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>A (+28)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>872</td>
<td>A (-51)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“A” means the school or student groups scored at or above the statewide performance target of 800. (Source: CDE DataQuest, accessed October 8, 2014.)

Note on 2013-14 and 2014-15 Testing Data

Assembly Bill 484 amended Education Code sections 52052(e)(2)(F) and 52052(e)(4) to allow schools that do not have an API calculated in 2013–14 and 2014–15 to use one of the following criteria to meet legislative and/or programmatic requirements:

- The most recent API calculation;
- An average of the three most recent annual API calculations; or
- Alternative measures that show increases in pupil academic achievement for all groups of pupils schoolwide and among significant groups.

The decision to use one of the above criteria may be made on a program by program basis and is a local decision. (Source: CDE Information Guide, Status of the Academic Performance Index and 3-Year Average, May 2014, available at: [http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ap/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ap/).)

Analysis of Charter Renewal Criteria – Schoolwide

VCES’s API growth scores have far exceeded the statewide performance target of 800 in the last three years; in 2013, the API growth score was 900, and the 3-Year Weighted Average API was 893. Therefore, VCES has scored high enough that the school has not been assigned a growth target for the last two years and is noted to have met its growth target for each year. Moreover, for the last three years, VCES has had a statewide API rank of 8 or higher; in 2013, the API statewide rank was 9 and similar schools rank was 5. Therefore, VCES has exceeded the charter renewal standards of Education Code Section 47607(b) and should be granted a five-year charter renewal term pursuant to Education Code Section 47607(a)(1).

Analysis of Charter Renewal Criteria – Student Subgroups

Education Code Section 47607(a)(3) states:
The authority that granted the charter shall consider increases in pupil academic achievement for all groups of pupils served by the charter school (defined as “a numerically significant pupil subgroup, as defined by paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 52052.” EC §47607(a)(3)(B)) as the most important factor in determining whether to grant a charter renewal. (Emphasis added.)

In 2012-2013, VCES had three numerically significant student subgroups – Hispanic/Latino, White, and Socioeconomically Disadvantaged. Numerically significant student subgroup API performance data is demonstrated in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subgroup</th>
<th>Numerically Significant in Both Years?</th>
<th>2013 API Growth</th>
<th>API Growth Target (Actual Growth) or 2012 Base</th>
<th>Met Student Group’s Growth Target?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>809</td>
<td>780 Base (+29)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>938</td>
<td>A (+14)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Learners</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>797</td>
<td>726 Base (+71)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"A" means the school or student groups scored at or above the statewide performance target of 800 in the 2012 Base. (Source: CDE DataQuest, accessed October 8, 2014.)

Thus, VCES’s outstanding student subgroup performance further solidifies its renewal status under Education Code Section 47607(a)(3).

**OUR SCHOOL**

Valley Charter Elementary School (VCES) is a dynamic and engaging learning community where students are challenged and inspired to develop as learners, leaders, and citizens of their school and community. With complete stakeholder involvement, we have grown into a thriving school since opening our doors in 2010.

Parents who were seeking an alternative to the standard offerings of local public schools conceived our school. These energetic and motivated parents planted the seed and it has grown and flourished from the start. In the past four years, VCES has made a name for itself in the San Fernando Valley and continues to attract a diverse group of families who are seeking an alternative, hands-on approach to education. We have reached full capacity, educating students in grades TK – 5. We are committed to a small class size average of 22 students, as well as employing teaching assistants in every classroom. Our initial faculty of seven has grown into a dynamic group of 13, all of whom are collaborative and highly motivated. Our program includes reading and writing workshop, Singapore Math, Project Based Learning and its inherent integration with science and history-social science, physical education, Orff music instruction, and visual and performing arts. We have worked diligently since our inception to build this program and intend to make improvements and additions, as well as increase student achievement in our next charter term.
The growth we have demonstrated has been possible because of our commitment to building a strong school community and culture among all of our stakeholders.

Since we value the education of the “whole child,” the social and emotional development and academic achievement of our students is of utmost importance at VCES. The school’s expectations for behavior and learning are made clear to students. We have built a positive culture among our diverse student body which values friendship, communication, empathy, compassion, risk-taking, and academic achievement. Students are given opportunities for leadership in the classroom, on the playground, and among the whole school. Upper grade students serve as role models for their younger peers and are expected to demonstrate positive decorum throughout the day. Students in grades 3 – 5 also participate in student council, which supports the student body and improves life at school. The fifth graders lead our weekly assembly in which we discuss school expectations, areas of concern or success, and goal setting. Assembly is also a time when student leaders, teachers, and the principal publicly recognize students for successes and behaviors that may include self-advocacy, reaching an academic goal, working hard, helping a friend, picking up trash, taking a risk, or making a hard, yet successful choice. With our Cool Tools program, which builds interpersonal skills, we have created a common language on campus that supports positive communication and behavior.

While the students are our primary focus, the adult stakeholders at VCES are crucial to our success. Our parents have been a profound factor of our achievement. Having chosen VCES, our parents are committed to supporting and improving the overall program and school. There is a spirit of volunteerism on campus every day. Parents contribute in myriad ways including participating in the production of musicals, doing traffic duty, assisting in classrooms, driving on field trips, developing Hispanic Heritage Month activities, planning and executing fundraising events, writing newsletters and grants, and attending outreach events. Other activities imagined and implemented by our parents include our school wide Earth Day celebration, Generations Day, and community events such as a movie night. Parents can be found socializing and connecting with one another before and after school. Parents participate in parent education classes, Principal’s Coffee meetings, and our Parent-Faculty Council, one of the means by which we communicate and develop school goals and outcomes, and invite parent participation and feedback. We believe that each parent has something to contribute to the school community and we continue to work on reaching and including all of our parent stakeholders.

Parents are also staunch supporters of the VCES curricular program. While our strategies and methods are neither traditional nor the manner in which the parents were educated, we do find program satisfaction among our parents. In our 2013-14 Parent Program Evaluation Survey, 91% of parents who responded indicated that they were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with how VCES is achieving its goal set forth in our mission and with the overall program offered at VCES. Our parents have faith and belief in the program as evidenced by their participation in the school community and their responses on the survey.

The faculty is at the heart of the overall program at VCES. We have built a team of like-minded educators who are highly motivated and have a strong work ethic. Student achievement is at the core of our work and the collaborative model is imperative for the success of our program. The 2012 VCES Third Party Review Report of Findings by Insight Education Group reported that teachers strongly agreed that they are treated as professionals and feel safe to share practices, try new things, and solve problems collaboratively. The school culture among the faculty at VCES is one of taking risks, learning and growing, building teacher capacity, and collaboration. From the beginning, the faculty has been part of developing the student expectations and has participated in building upon the curricular plan set forth by the administration. Teacher professional
development in all curricular areas has, and continues to be a priority as we grow.

With a foundation based on constructivist teaching, Project Based Learning, and analyzing data to drive instruction, the VCES curriculum is innovative, rigorous, hands-on, and engaging. While our program is built on the Common Core State Standards, our methods differ from the approach most public schools utilize. Differentiating instruction to make sure each student has an appropriate level of support is a priority.

The innovation that lies within our balanced literacy program is the use of reading and writing workshop. We use the frame of the workshop to present material in a way that is authentic for students. Our emphasis on reading is clear and evident to both students and parents. The expectations, while rigorous, are imperative for a student’s success as a reader. Unlike in classes where students read from a common textbook, VCES students get to choose their own books which is connected to higher rates of engagement and stamina. Our teachers guide the instruction based on student need, rather than a scripted program.

Guided by the CCSS, our mathematics program is taught in a logical, step-by-step manner that builds on students’ prior knowledge and skills. We use Singapore Math as our foundational pedagogy to construct our program, which is based on students developing the following core understandings: number facts, number sense, patterns, visualization, and communication. Problem solving and critical thinking are also crucial pieces of our curriculum.

Project Based Learning (PBL) and constructivism are the driving forces behind our history-social science and science instruction. Through Project Based Learning, students are given meaningful learning opportunities that are based in the real world, have real life applications, and teach 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, communication, synthesis of information, and creativity.

We have demonstrated success in the innovative features of our educational program since our inception in 2010. Constructivism invites students to build new concepts and knowledge while elaborating and changing prior knowledge based on collaborative interactions with peers and teachers. The collaborative nature of our program, the multiple ways in which students can access curriculum, and the role of teacher as facilitator demonstrate our commitment to constructivist learning theory. PBL’s approach and design is constructivist by nature, as is the manner in which students build on prior knowledge in our literacy program. We use multiple models in our math instruction. At their own pace, students build on math concepts with concrete manipulatives and then move on to pictorial representations and finally, abstract (numerical) representations. The overall expectations for communication and collaboration with peers benefit all students, especially students who demonstrate a lack of mastery in their English language development.

The integration of PBL has grown tremendously at VCES. With teacher training and sufficient planning time, we have developed a meaningful and robust program. Our projects demand a high level of student outcomes and there is a depth to the learning. The addition of curricular elements such as content-based musicals, field trips, technology, and the use of primary sources are among the many ways our program has become stronger. Student outcomes include projects such as field guides, brochures, role playing, simulations, and fairs.

One of the recommendations in the 2012 VCES Third Party Review Report of Findings by Insight Education Group was for VCES to “develop a streamlined assessment plan to monitor student achievement.” This has been a high priority for us in the past two years. We have
developed a plan, which includes benchmark assessments and a manner in which to monitor student progress. We utilize this data to drive our instruction and to guide our choices in professional development. With full enrollment, we have more data to analyze and monitor across the grade levels. This allows us to respond to trends and make changes and adjustments in our practice. Our goal is to continue to collect and analyze data, especially as we continue to work with the CCSS and students participate in the Smarter Balanced Assessment.

Even with our many successes over the last four years, we strive to continually improve in the areas of student achievement, instructional practice, and community building.

**Enrollment**

Valley Charter Elementary School has grown in popularity in the San Fernando Valley. Parents are seeking our hands-on, inquiry based learning environment for their children. The number of random public drawing (lottery) applications we receive yearly is evidence that the community finds a need for VCES. With 44 spaces in kindergarten and only a handful of spaces in other grades each year, we typically accommodate fewer than 10% of our applicants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VCES Number of Random Public Drawing (Lottery) Applications Submitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the beginning, we have acknowledged that our socio-economic and ethnic diversity has not represented the make-up we desire in our school’s mission and vision. We have worked, and continue to work, to increase the diversity of our community. As represented in the data below, we have seen a slow and steady increase in diversity since 2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VCES Student Socio-Economic and Ethnic Diversity Data 2010-2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To incur this change, we have put much effort into our school outreach within the local and larger Valley communities. Administrators, teachers, and parent volunteers engage in the following activities to educate the community about VCES: attend LAUP meetings, drop-off materials at local preschools and daycares, attend local street fairs, send informational postcards, host prospective parent events, host park playdates, provide school tours, and visit local malls and religious institutions. We also host a Community Fair every winter, which includes information about the school, classroom tours, games, food, and music. The Community Fair gives prospective families a sense of the close-knit and supportive community at VCES.
In 2013, we added a 25% priority in our random public drawing procedures for students who qualify for federal school assistance programs under Title I (see Element 8). This has helped VCES increase our total Title I percentage from 23% in 2010-11 to 29% in 2014-15. We have also noticed that the Gledhill (local school) priority has also helped increase our ethnic diversity. Since adding more students from our immediate local neighborhood, we are more representative of the diverse make-up of the community in which we are located.

Attendance

At Valley Charter Elementary School, we view every instructional day as an essential learning opportunity. The school day at VCES is full of interactive, hands-on learning experiences and school attendance is vital to student achievement. We believe that it is imperative to teach students the importance of regular attendance to help them become responsible learners. We also emphasize the importance of attendance to our parent body. Attendance is monitored monthly and our Attendance Review Committee (comprising of teachers and administrators) works with parents of students who have chronic attendance or tardy issues. Since 2010, we have seen a steady increase in our Average Daily Attendance (ADA). Over the next five years, we hope to see our ADA increase to over 97%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VCES Average Daily Attendance</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADA</td>
<td>95.3%</td>
<td>95.6%</td>
<td>96.1%</td>
<td>96.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Behavior and Suspensions

At VCES, we believe when appropriate behavior is the prevailing force in a school culture, discipline problems decline, and academic performance and school attendance improves. The teaching of social and community values has been a cornerstone of our curriculum. Using the Cool Tools program, we focus on key expectations that are used across the grade levels and throughout the school community to establish our commitment to the teaching and reinforcement of positive behavior. These expectations maintain a common language that reflects our school values.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VCES Number of Suspensions</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>2014-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Suspensions</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As demonstrated in the table above, zero students have been suspended at VCES. Our school discipline policy embraces the concept of progressive discipline. The VCES principal generally refrains from issuing formal discipline (i.e., suspension or expulsion) as first response to student misconduct, and instead problem solves with the student, teacher, and parent, to develop a plan of action for the future. The teaching of new positive behaviors to replace misbehavior also results in fewer repetitions of negative behaviors. The lack of suspensions connects with our philosophy that all students should be in school on a daily basis. The focus is on building problem solving and conflict resolution skills. Formal methods of discipline will only be used after all alternative consequences and strategies have not had the desired effect.
English Learner Reclassification

The main language groups represented by our students who are learning English, who make up 8% of the school’s population, are Spanish, Farsi, and Hebrew. ELs were reclassified at an average rate of 17% over the last four years, which is higher than the District percentage of 13.3% as reported for 2013. Our emphasis on literacy and English language development as described in Element 1, Curriculum and Instruction, outlines how we meet the needs of this subgroup.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>No. of ELs</th>
<th>No. of Students Reclassified</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students with Disabilities

Exposure to diverse learning styles helps us appreciate differences and value every member of the community. Our inclusive practices help us realize that we all have a skill set and something of significance to contribute. In our belief system, the child with disabilities is better served by having typical peer models. As students interact with a peer with a disability, they are all developing positive social skills that extend way beyond the classroom.

With our inclusive model, not only are we willing and able to accommodate and modify as necessary for any student, but we believe it is the right and moral thing to do. At VCES, our Resource Specialist Teacher (RST) works closely with general education teachers to support the academic, social, and behavioral needs of students with disabilities. A personalized program is developed based upon the students' area(s) of need. Regular collaboration between the RST, General Education Teacher, other DIS service providers is essential to each student’s academic success and sense of belonging. This collaboration takes many forms which may include: consultation, co-teaching, and modeling of specific academic and behavioral strategies. Services may be delivered 1:1, small group, or whole class both in and outside of the general education classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
<th>No. of IEPs</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Academic Performance Index

Results of state mandated tests reflect the academic rigor of our program. We have exceeded the state benchmark of 800 every year. In 2011, our API of 923 was based on grade 2, in 2012 the
score of 872 was based on grades 2 and 3, and in 2013, our API of 900 was based on grades 2 – 4. Our weighted 3-year average API is 893. Due to the change in state testing requirements, we did not have the opportunity to assess our students once we reached full capacity as a kindergarten – fifth grade school. VCES consistently tests over 99% of its eligible student body, regardless of ability or program, including English Learners and students with disabilities.

Over the past four years, our significant subgroup populations’ scores have increased. From 2012 to 2013, our Hispanic or Latino subgroup API increased from 780 to 809 and our Socioeconomically Disadvantaged subgroup API increased from 726 to 797.

VCES provides an alternative option for families seeking a quality public education in a community where some of the existing schools are not meeting the needs of every child. The eight LAUSD elementary schools within our target community (zip code 91343) have an average weighted 3-year average API of 785. Half of said schools have a weighted 3-year average API of below 800 and the other half of the schools do not exceed 845. It is within these school boundaries that a significant number of our current students reside.

While we are pleased with our growth, we do recognize the need to continuously increase student achievement. To address the needs of our population, our teachers receive extensive support through professional development and collaboration, and teaching assistants are trained in instructional strategies to provide to students individually or in small groups. We provide parent education classes and teachers engage with parents regularly to help them support their children at home.

**CST, English Language Arts**

Over the past four years, VCES has shown respectable scores of students scoring at or above proficient, yet the scores have fluctuated. With only three years of data, and small numbers of students being tested, our scores reflect the fact that we are a new school constantly developing and improving our curricular practice. We hope to demonstrate steady gains over the next five years with the Smarter Balanced Assessment.

**CST Levels of Proficiency, English Language Arts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Advanced</td>
<td>55 %</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Proficient</td>
<td>20 %</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on data analysis, and to address concerns about our students’ development of literacy skills, we continue to have extensive professional development in balanced literacy from current faculty as well as Growing Educators (local experts in reading and writing workshop research and practice). This work includes training in reading and writing workshop, interactive read aloud, shared reading and writing, word study, and Thinking Maps, while also focusing on the expectations within the Common Core State Standards (see Element 1.26, Professional Development).

Teachers consistently evaluate their English language arts instruction in their weekly planning time by examining student work, systematically analyzing data, and conducting lesson study. Teachers plan for reading and writing workshop with a focus on explicit skills to be taught and modeled, and on differentiating instruction for all learners. Students participate in one-on-one teacher conferences, as well as strategy and skill groups. In site based professional development, weekly planning sessions, and vertical teams, teachers refine their practice with their colleagues.

To address the needs of underachieving students, our resource specialist serves Students with Disabilities and some general education students using both a push-in, collaborative model, as well as a pull-out. In our pre-intervention process (PIP), our faculty meets to develop interventions in the general education classroom and to recommend strategies for individual needs. Our small class size as well as our use of instructional aides allows for small group intervention and support throughout the school day.
Since 2010, VCES students have shown gains on the Mathematics portion of the California Standards Test. Each group of similar students has shown either growth or has maintained the level of proficiency in mathematics.

### CST Levels of Proficiency, Mathematics

#### Grade 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Advanced</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Proficient</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Proficient &amp; Advanced</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Basic</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Below Basic</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Far Below Basic</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Grade 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Advanced</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Proficient</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Proficient &amp; Advanced</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Basic</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Below Basic</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Far Below Basic</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Grade 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Advanced</td>
<td></td>
<td>70%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Proficient</td>
<td></td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Proficient &amp; Advanced</td>
<td></td>
<td>82%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Basic</td>
<td></td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Below Basic</td>
<td></td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Far Below Basic</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2011, we implemented the Singapore Math curriculum. After extensive research, we selected Singapore Math due to its focus on mathematical fluency, problem solving, and critical thinking. Our students develop excellent number sense and understanding of mathematics as evidenced in our 2013 CST scores. 93% of the second graders scored at proficient or above in 2013. These students were taught using the Singapore math methodology and curriculum beginning in first grade, a foundational year. We provide ongoing teacher professional development in mathematics and our collaborative teaching model, as well as data and lesson analysis, supports our effort to increase student achievement.
CST, Science

In one year of CST Science data, 76% of the fifth grade students scored at proficient or above. We will continue to integrate Project Based Learning with our science instruction so student achievement continues to improve.

CST Levels of Proficiency, Science

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 5</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Advanced</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Proficient</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Proficient &amp; Advanced</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Basic</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Below Basic</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Far Below Basic</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CST, Significant Subgroup Populations

With a growing school and small numbers of students being tested, we have no significant CST data (more than 10 students in a subgroup within a grade level) regarding English Learners and Students with Disabilities. As mentioned previously, the two subgroups for which we have significant data have shown gains in the API. The CDE has reported the following data for Socioeconomically Disadvantaged and Latino or Hispanic students. This data represents only the grade levels with more than 10 students in a grade level, not all of the students within the subgroup population.

Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students Scoring Proficient or Above

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Language Arts</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gr. 2 % Proficient &amp; Advanced</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gr. 3 % Proficient &amp; Advanced</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gr. 4 % Proficient &amp; Advanced</td>
<td></td>
<td>64%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gr. 2 % Proficient &amp; Advanced</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gr. 3 % Proficient &amp; Advanced</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gr. 4 % Proficient &amp; Advanced</td>
<td></td>
<td>64%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Latino or Hispanic Students Scoring Proficient or Above

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Language Arts</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gr. 2 % Proficient &amp; Advanced</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gr. 3 % Proficient &amp; Advanced</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gr. 4 % Proficient &amp; Advanced</td>
<td></td>
<td>69%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our goal in the next five years is to close the achievement gap by continuing to emphasize balanced literacy and focus on explicit English language instruction. Our strategic focus on individual student data and individualized instructional delivery is based on both our benchmark and norm-referenced assessments, as well as our common formative assessments. We will continue our model of small class size and a smaller teacher-student ratio (with teaching assistants) so we can address the needs of our students individually and in small groups.

**Internal School Literacy Data**

As we reached full enrollment and increased our academic emphasis on literacy, we began collecting and monitoring student data regarding achievement in guided reading levels and reading fluency. With rigorous reading expectations, and high level and substantial response expectations regarding inferential comprehension in the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Reading Assessments, we recognize that the overall percentage of students reading on grade level decreased in the third grade (with one year of data). We believe that this is a clear indication of the increase in rigor and expectations of both our school requirements and the CCSS. With the rigorous expectations of CCSS for students in kindergarten, we continuously work on providing a developmentally appropriate and academically challenging program. To address these needs, we provide consistent professional development for our teachers and small group intervention for our students.

**2013-14 End of Year Guided Reading Level Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>On or Above Grade Level</th>
<th>Approaching Grade Level</th>
<th>Below Grade Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Grade</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Grade</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Grade</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Grade</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Grade</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2013-14, we began using AIMSweb to monitor student reading fluency. This assessment measures words per minute read. It does not include any assessment of comprehension. We do know that there is a direct correlation between fluency and comprehension. Students who are not fluent readers often spend much of their energy decoding words, which leaves them with little time and energy to comprehend what they are reading.

The data below demonstrates the success our students have reading fluently, that is, decoding words alone. Our challenge is to support these same students, who may not have a decoding need, in increasing their level of comprehension. Inferential comprehension is the pathway to gain meaning. Students need to be able to envision, synthesize, interpret, analyze, and critique
grade level text. Consequently, it plays an important role in our curriculum as we address the CCSS reading foundational skills.

### 2013-14 End of Year Reading Fluency Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum Expectations</th>
<th>At/Above 50th Percentile</th>
<th>Below 50th Percentile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Grade</td>
<td>67 wpm</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Grade</td>
<td>106 wpm</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Grade</td>
<td>127 wpm</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Grade</td>
<td>139 wpm</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Grade</td>
<td>153 wpm</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we begin the second year of being a TK-5 school, and enter our second charter term, we continue to develop a robust balanced literacy program. Our goal is to create curricular continuity between the grade levels. We recognize that as the make-up of our population changes, we may need to make shifts in our curricular choices and decisions to meet the needs of our students.
# SURROUNDING SCHOOLS DEMOGRAPHIC AND PERFORMANCE DATA

**Address:** 16514 Nordhoff Street, North Hills CA 91343

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parthenia EL</td>
<td>669</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>91 Hispanic</td>
<td>3 Filipino</td>
<td>2 White 2 Black 2 Asian</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gledhill St. EL</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>71 Hispanic</td>
<td>10 Filipino</td>
<td>8 White 8 Asian</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langdon EL</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>96 Hispanic</td>
<td>3 Black</td>
<td>1 White 1 Pac. Is.</td>
<td>722</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>738</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dearborn EL Charter Academy</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>48 Hispanic</td>
<td>30 White</td>
<td>11 Asian</td>
<td>856</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>843</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valley Charter EL</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>65 White</td>
<td>28 Hispanic</td>
<td>2 Black 2 Asian</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>898</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Population to be Served/Target Student Population
Currently, VCES operates in North Hills and serves students from several neighborhoods in the San Fernando Valley: North Hills border to the West through North Hollywood to the East, focusing on the greater Van Nuys area because of the school site’s location. Although the school does not have specific boundaries and is open to all children in the State of California, the majority of students reside in five zip codes: 91343, 91401, 91411 91423, and 91604. According to the 2010 population estimates, 184,192 people reside in these areas with approximately 50,874 school age children.

These neighborhoods represent a genuine diversity of families. Some neighborhoods are comprised of 53% Hispanic while others are 76% White. The percentage of African-Americans in these neighborhoods ranges from 3% to 5% and the percentage of Asians ranges from 4% to 12%. Socioeconomic status also ranges widely with some of the lowest median household incomes ($35,403 in zip code 91401) to areas where the median household income is $60,299 or higher. Our school reflects this ethnic and economic diversity of the San Fernando Valley neighborhoods as well as the City of Los Angeles at large. The driving force of our vision is to bring children from all backgrounds together to learn from and understand each other.

Over the five years VCES has been in operation, our waiting list has grown to over 500 students. However, VCES will maintain its current enrollment (see table below) over the next five years, ensuring our goal of creating a small learning community that is individualized and focuses on the whole child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K (incl. TK)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GOALS AND PHILOSOPHY

Our Mission Statement
The mission of Valley Charter Elementary School is to provide a holistic and exceptional education to a diverse student body, cultivating in students intellectual curiosity, collaboration, respect for others, and a passion for excellence.

We fulfill this mission by:
- Providing a constructivist, inquiry-based learning environment in which teachers guide students through active learning processes that develop conceptual understanding as well as self-knowledge.
- Implementing a project-based curriculum that develops academic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and artistic skills.
- Creating a program that develops students to be creative and critical thinkers, who are unafraid to question, challenge and express themselves; and that prepares students to lead and to serve the greater good as members of a democratic society and as citizens of our growing global community.
- Setting the highest individualized standards for all students, so our students realize their potential and can compete with the best students in the country.
- Creating a school culture that values character and citizenship as well as achievement, and process as well as product.
- Giving faculty time, resources, autonomy and a collaborative atmosphere to continually develop their skills, research, create, evaluate and refine project-based curricula, and reflect on the learning of their students.
- Communicating regularly with students’ families, seeking family involvement in the life of the school, and continually reaching out to all families in the neighborhood to ensure a diverse and inclusive learning community.

Our Vision
The purpose of Valley Charter Schools is to enable students to become thinking, fulfilled, caring individuals with sensitivity to, and understanding of, the diverse environment and society in which we live. We believe all children deserve a meaningful education that realizes their potential and by which students discover their own unique talents and gifts. We believe learning happens best when students work across disciplines, solve new problems, work in teams, take initiative, and responsible risks. At VCES, teachers, not textbooks, know students best; therefore, our collaborative teachers drive instruction. We strive to develop and communicate best practices, and mentor others as we have been mentored. We believe communities can come together to build great schools where academic excellence is available to all children.

Our Educational Philosophy
At the foundation of our educational philosophy is a belief that learning should be an active experience that involves a community of educators, students and families. We believe that effective schools create a culture of caring and respect that supports all members in achieving their potential academically, socially, emotionally, artistically, and physically. To enable all to work together toward these ends, we believe in explicitly expressing our learning goals – derived from CCSS and school-defined behavioral and attitudinal objectives. VCES expects all involved with the school to support these convictions and to endorse a constructivist learning environment that nurtures, challenges, and values every member of the community. VCES also adheres to the belief that students should be given opportunities to direct their own learning. VCES students are
asked to explore their interests through the process of formulating essential questions that drive their learning experiences. Similarly, teachers develop their own questions about student learning and examine their practices.

**Our Pedagogical Practices**

Current research shows that a constructivist approach to teaching and learning develops deep and long-lasting conceptual understanding in students. When coupled with a project-based curriculum and problem-based lessons, constructivism is even more effective. We, therefore, embrace these three practices fully. In our classrooms, teachers facilitate as students actively explore topics and strive to answer questions and solve problems that they themselves have posed at the outset of a course of study. Sometimes students work collaboratively, sometimes individually, but always with the knowledge that they can receive peer and teacher support. As they reach different project milestones, students wrestle with concepts, take risks, make mistakes, and revise. Teachers continually assess each student's progress through observation, interaction, and testing, and then design lessons in response to student needs. The completion of a project represents the culmination of a course of study and the achievement of specific learning objectives.

**Definition of an Educated Person for the 21st Century**

VCES's definition of an “educated person in the 21st century” is reinforced in explicit school guidelines of conduct in the classroom, in the schoolyard, and in the larger community. Faculty analyze this definition annually in order to ensure that it is translated into measurable student outcomes to be developed and assessed throughout the year. Our definition draws upon concepts of global competence and Howard Gardner’s theory of Multiple Intelligences (1983).

The concept of ‘global competence’ is receiving increased attention at the post-secondary level and is most commonly described as follows:

- The ability to work effectively in different international settings, an awareness of the major currents of global change and the issues arising from such changes, knowledge of global organizations and business activities, the capacity for effective communication across cultural and linguistic boundaries, and a personal adaptability to diverse cultures (Brustein, 2009).
- Having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others [and] leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one’s environment (Hunter, 2006)
- Intercultural adroitness (behavioral aspect focusing on communication skills), intercultural awareness (cognitive aspect of understanding cultural differences), and intercultural sensitivity (focus on positive emotion toward cultural difference). (Deardorff, 2006)

We believe an educated person in the 21st century is one who possesses the skills and attitudes encompassed by global competence as described above and also:

- **Effectively communicates**: writes clearly, listens actively, questions intently, reads critically, expresses oneself honestly and respectfully in a variety of mediums, seeks to master at least two languages (Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, Musical and Linguistic Intelligences)
- **Continually learns**: seeks to develop skills and acquire knowledge in all realms and at all times, obtains multiple perspectives, maintains an open-mind and a willingness to change in response to data, reflects on new experiences and information
(Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, Logical-Mathematical, Linguistic, Naturalistic Intelligences)

- Assertively perseveres: when problems cannot be solved readily or when faced with criticism and disappointment, maintains focus and self-discipline, works through struggles and setbacks, attempts trials, examines errors, tries harder, tries differently, tries again (Logical-Mathematical, Visual-Spatial, Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligences)

**How learning best occurs**

In keeping with our respect for the backward design technique\(^1\) of developing an educational program, our educational philosophy begins with the end in mind. After reviewing research and schools that share similar learning goals to VCES, we have concluded that a constructivist approach to teaching and learning is the most effective way of developing student mastery of both state standards and habits of heart and mind described as learning outcomes in this charter.

**Model Schools.** The following table identifies schools with a constructivist approach to teaching/learning with an emphasis on project/problem-based learning. These schools approach teaching and learning in the same way as VCES and provide evidence that this approach is successful with diverse learners. Given the differences in demographics of the schools below, we believe that our educational approach has been demonstrated to be effective with a variety of students and can, therefore, be considered appropriate for our students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Assessment Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Country Springs Elementary</strong> (Chino Hills, California)</td>
<td>38% Asian, 24% White, 16% Latino,</td>
<td>Weighted 3 Year Average API 938, Hispanic 894, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged 872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Edwin Rhodes Elementary</strong> (Chino, California)</td>
<td>46% Latino, 26% white, 16% Asian, 30% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>Weighted 3 Year Average API 937, African American 905, Hispanic 893, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged 894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enota Multiple Intelligences Academy</strong> (Gainesville, Georgia)</td>
<td>65% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, 12% Students with Disabilities, 29% Limited English Speakers; 43% Latino, 35% White, 15% Black</td>
<td>5th graders meeting or exceeding standards on Georgia's Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests: 99% Reading, 94% Language Arts, 96% Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rocketship Mateo Sheedy Elementary</strong> (San Jose, California)</td>
<td>91% Latino, 73% English language learners, 84% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>Weighted 3 Year Average API 887, Hispanic 883, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged 882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Visions School of Discovery and Exploration</strong> (Freeport, New York)</td>
<td>52% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged; 50% Latino, 38% Black, 9% White</td>
<td>4th graders meeting or exceeding standards on NY's State Assessments: 96% Language Arts, 98% Math</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1 *Understanding by Design* (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, 1998) is a theory of curriculum construction that involves the following process: 1) Identify desired results – learning outcomes; 2) Determine acceptable evidence – assessment data; 3) Plan learning experiences and instruction.
University of Houston Charter School
(Houston, Texas)

| 42% Black, 30% Latino, 22% White, 7% Asian: Economically Disadvantaged 28%, Special Education 11% | 93-94% of 5th graders meet or exceed standards on TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge & Skills) |

**Research.** Evidence from research in the fields of cognitive science, brain function and education leads us to conclude that learning best occurs when educational programs:

1. Develop and implement curriculum that is relevant, age appropriate and meaningful.
2. Create learning environments in which representations of world experiences and knowledge serve to invite students “…to experience the world’s richness, empower them to ask their own questions and seek their own answers, and challenge them to understand the world’s complexities” (Brooks and Brooks, pp. 5, 1999)
3. Ensure teachers continually strive to teach students at their instructional level (ZPD - zone of proximal development) based on ongoing formal and informal assessments.
4. Articulate and establish high expectations. Engage students in rigorous academic studies to continually improve their capacity and performance, reaching beyond their own perceived limits.
5. Model and guide early learners in developing high level thinking skills.
6. Consistently provide a variety of modalities for access to learning, including visual, auditory, and kinesthetic that inspires children to engage in ongoing practice of self-reflection and self-assessment, that facilitates taking responsibility for their own learning.
7. Offer students a degree of choice in terms of what they read, what they write, and what they construct as evidence of having met learning objectives.
8. Incorporates language learning and multi-cultural education; celebrate and bring relevance to cultural and individual diversity with a commitment to equity, by providing open exchange of perspectives, talents, and ideas to include everyone and inspire educators, students, and their families to reach for the highest level of social, ethical and intellectual integrity.
9. Cultivate a caring community of learners, where teachers, parents, and students share dynamic interactions, build warm, trusting relationships and work together in a safe, stable, supportive learning environment where character development is taught and high moral/ethical behavior is recognized and celebrated.

**Goals to Enable Students to be Self-Motivated, Competent, Life-Long Learners**
In addition to specific academic benchmark goals based on the CCSS, the California Content Standards, and new Next Generation Science Standards, VCES will work towards:

- **Developing self-motivated learners:** VCES believes that self-motivation requires students to internalize the benefits of learning. VCES will, therefore, seek to connect students’ personal interests and questions with curricular and extra-curricular opportunities. Students will be empowered to choose community service and academic projects that have personal meaning to them. By beginning with each student’s interests and questions, VCES can provide students with the means of making connections between their studies, themselves and life beyond the school’s walls. Furthermore, VCES’s emphasis on Global Citizenship throughout the program will foster student appreciation for the many positive impacts their skills and abilities can have on the world.
- **Developing competent learners:** The backward design approach that teachers will take in creating lessons and curriculum, coupled with data driven instruction efforts that guide teachers in refining their pedagogy in light of student assessment information, will ensure
that learning objectives are met by students. In addition, the constructivist and project-based teaching methodologies require students to reflect after formative assessments, a practice considered essential in improving student’s understanding of the way they learn best. In these ways, students will develop a solid foundation of knowledge and a competence in learning upon which they can build in the future.

- **Developing lifelong learners:** A lifelong learner is one who has both the interest in and the ability to continue to learn outside a formal school setting. Our program as described above in the context of developing competent and self-motivated learners is also expected to inspire lifelong learning. VCES’s emphasis on international understanding and responsible citizenship throughout the program will further foster student appreciation for the many positive impacts their skills and abilities can have on the world.

Additional academic goals include mastery of the Common Core State Standards and the school’s definition of an educated person. All curriculum designs are directly aligned to the CCSS. The standardized testing required by the State of California will be just as much a part of our assessments as our faculty-constructed rubrics, project goals, student portfolios, and student exhibits. In addition, character development and social responsibility are inherent to our entire program and will be assessed through student and teacher evaluations.

**Goals and Actions Aligned to California’s Eight State Priorities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCAL CONTROL FUNDING FORMULA (LCFF) AND LOCAL CONTROL AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN (LCAP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that it must comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (Local Control Funding Formula), as they may be amended from time to time, which include the requirement that Charter School shall annually submit a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) or LCAP update, as appropriate, to the Charter Schools Division and the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools on or before July 1. In accordance with Ed. Code sections 47604.33 and 47606.5, Charter School shall annually update its goals and annual actions to achieve those goals identified in the charter pursuant to Ed. Code section 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii), using the Local Control and Accountability Plan template adopted by the State Board of Education, as it may be changed from time to time. Charter School shall comply with all requirements of Ed. Code section 47606.5, including but not limited to the requirement that Charter School “shall consult with teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, parents, and pupils in developing the annual update.” Ed. Code § 47606.5(e).

For Methods of Measurement and Measurable Outcomes of the goals and actions below, please see Element 2/3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VALLEY CHARTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GOALS AND ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE STATE PRIORITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii), following is a table describing the Charter School’s annual goals to be achieved in the state priorities schoolwide and for all pupil subgroups, as described in Education Code Section 52060(d), and specific annual actions to achieve those goals.

The LCAP and any revisions necessary to implement the LCAP shall not be considered a material revision to the charter, and shall be maintained by the Charter School at the school site.

Because each state priority has multiple parts, in order to align with the goals and annual actions to these multiple parts of each state priority, the Charter School has separated out the state priorities into “sub-
priorities.”

**STATE PRIORITY #1— BASIC SERVICES**

The degree to which teachers are appropriately assigned (E.C. §44258.9) and fully credentialed, and every pupil has sufficient access to standards-aligned instructional materials (E.C. § 60119), and school facilities are maintained in good repair (E.C. §17002(d))

**ALL STATE PRIORITY #1 GOAL TARGETS TO BE MET BY FALL, 2015 AND ANNUALLY THEREAFTER**

**SUB-pRIORITY A – TEACHERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOALS TO ACHIEVE SUB-pRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All students have access to fully credentialed and highly qualified teachers</td>
<td>1. 100% of teachers are “highly qualified” for their teaching assignment, appropriately assigned and hold the appropriate credential, including subject matter and EL authorizations.</td>
<td>Implement hiring criteria to ensure “highly qualified” teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Annual teacher credential review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. In addition to holding the appropriate credential, teachers will have experience in mission appropriate pedagogy.</td>
<td>Ongoing weekly professional development and teacher collaboration, informed by teacher input and needs analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. VCES will maintain a staff retention rate of at least 85%.</td>
<td>Implement a performance review process that results in individual growth and improvement plans for teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>At least every three years, review salary schedule review to maintain competitive compensation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUB-pRIORITY B – INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-pRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All students need appropriate access to the instructional materials necessary to participate in the school's programs and services in order to master the CCSS standards appropriate to their respective grade levels.</td>
<td>The school will provide 100% of students with sufficient access to 100% of standards-aligned instructional materials necessary to participate fully in the educational program. All materials are aligned to CCSS or other adopted state materials.</td>
<td>-Annual inventory and purchase of needed instructional materials to maintain sufficient materials and ensure alignment to state standards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Sub-priority C – Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Students attend school in a safe and clean facility | School facilities are clean, conducive to learning, and do not pose health or safety risks to students. Students take ownership in the cleanliness and safety of the school. Health and safety issues, when they arise, are addressed within 24 hours, and resolved within 5 business days. | - Custodial addresses health and safety issues, when they arise, within 24 hours, and resolved within 5 business days.  
- Collect feedback on facilities through Annual student, parent, and faculty surveys and respond to concerns |

### State Priority #2 — Implementation of Common Core State Standards

*Implementation of Common Core State Standards, including how EL students will be enabled to gain academic content knowledge and English language proficiency*

**ALL STATE PRIORITY #2 GOAL TARGETS TO BE MET BY FALL, 2015 AND ANNUALLY THEREAFTER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Instruction is fully aligned to Common Core State Standards | All teachers are proficient at developing common core-aligned units of study anchored by performance tasks/measures. | - Ongoing professional development on standards-based instruction (including CCSS, Next Generation Science Standards, and CA social studies) for all teachers, with emphasis on how to make CCSS accessible to ELL students for all teachers  
- Creation of CCSS-aligned writing rubrics for use across the curriculum |

## Sub-priority B – EL Students & Academic Content Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| EL students receive instruction that incorporates SDAIE strategies from EL certified teachers | All EL students are accessing CCSS-aligned curriculum, taught by teachers who have EL certification. All EL students will receive instruction that incorporates SDAIE strategies. | - Ongoing professional development on standards-based instruction (including CCSS, Next Generation Science Standards, and CA social studies) for all teachers, with emphasis on how to make CCSS accessible to ELL students for all teachers  
- Creation of CCSS-aligned writing rubrics for use across the curriculum |
### Sub-priority C – EL Students & English Language Proficiency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EL students will demonstrate language proficiency</td>
<td>EL students will progress at least one level on the CELDT with the goal of redesignating all students. Individual test scores will be reviewed at the beginning of the school year and individual student targets will be set.</td>
<td>- Analysis of CELDT, RFEP, and subgroup achievement results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>- Set individual student targets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Unit reviews and lesson tuning protocols</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### State Priority #3 — Parental Involvement

Parental involvement, including efforts to seek parent input for making decisions for schools, and how the school will promote parent participation

### All State Priority #3 Goal Targets to be met by Fall, 2015 and Annually Thereafter

### Sub-priority A – Achieving/Maintaining Parental Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Parents are engaged as partners in their child’s education and feel connected to and welcome at the school. | 1. The Parent/Faculty Council will remain active, meeting monthly, and will give input in key decision-making processes.  
2. At least 90% of parents will report feeling satisfied with the school. | -- Maintain weekly EBlasts and quarterly newsletters  
- Maintain monthly Principal Coffees  
- Maintain monthly parent council meetings and work to diversify membership  
- Maintain a Parent Education and Engagement Committee to develop quarterly parent education and outreach |

### Sub-priority B – Promoting Parent Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents are engaged as partners in their child’s education</td>
<td>80% of parents will complete the suggested number of volunteer hours.</td>
<td>- Quarterly volunteer logs analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### State Priority #4 — Student Achievement

Pupil achievement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

- **A. California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) statewide assessment**
- **B. The Academic Performance Index (API)**
- **C. Percentage of pupils who have successfully completed courses that satisfy UC/CSU entrance requirements, or career technical education**
- **D. Percentage of ELs who make progress toward English language proficiency as measured by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) and/or English Language Proficiency**
### Assessment for California (ELPAC)

E. **EL reclassification rate**

F. **Percentage of pupils who have passed an AP exam with a score of 3 or higher**

G. **Percentage of pupils who participate in and demonstrate college preparedness pursuant to the Early Assessment Program (E.C. §99300 et seq.) or any subsequent assessment of college preparedness**

### Sub-priority A – CAASPP: ELA/Literacy and Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All students will demonstrate grade level mastery of State standards in ELA and Math and will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as comparable district schools for pupil achievement</td>
<td>CA Measurement of Academic Progress and Performance on statewide assessment (as available) Annually, the percent of VCES students scoring Advanced or Proficient on the state mandated assessments in ELA and Math will meet or exceed percentages at comparable LAUSD schools. All subgroups will achieve at least a 5% increase in proficiency annually.</td>
<td>-Implement CAASPP assessments annually and analyze data by subgroup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>-Implement interventions for students falling below proficiency such as extra block of math or ELA, online adaptive instruction to fill skill gaps such as Khan Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Continued teacher professional development on data analysis, differentiation, and intervention strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-After school enrichment and intervention for students below proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sub-priority B – API

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| All students will demonstrate grade level mastery of State standards and will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as comparable district schools for pupil achievement | The Academic Performance Index (API) (as available)  
- Annual API will meet or exceed the established state growth target  
- Annually, all subgroups will meet state targets  
- Annually, the SBAC participation rate will be at least 95% | -Implement interventions for students falling below proficiency such as extra block of math or ELA, online adaptive instruction to fill skill gaps such as Khan Academy |
|                                                                      |                                                                                             | -Continued teacher professional development on data analysis, differentiation, and intervention strategies |
|                                                                      |                                                                                             | -After school enrichment and intervention for students who are below proficient             |

### Sub-priority C – UC/CSU Course Requirements (or CTE) - Not Applicable

### Sub-priority D – EL Proficiency Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EL students will</td>
<td>Percentage of ELs who make progress</td>
<td>-Systematically collect home</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
demonstrate language proficiency toward English language proficiency as measured by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) and/or English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC) Annually, 90% of students progress at least one level on the CELDT and ELPAC annually

language survey and implement ELL diagnostic
-Administer the CELDT annually to all ELL students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-priority E – EL Reclassification Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Need</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL students will demonstrate language proficiency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-priority F – AP Exam Passage Rate - Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-priority G – College Preparedness/EAP - Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**State Priority #5—Student Engagement**
Pupil engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

A. School attendance rates
B. Chronic absenteeism rates
C. Middle school dropout rates (EC §52052.1(a)(3))
D. High school dropout rates
E. High school graduation rates

**Sub-priority A – Student Attendance Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Need</strong></th>
<th><strong>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</strong></th>
<th><strong>Actions to Achieve Goal</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as comparable district schools regarding pupil engagement</td>
<td>VCES students will have an average 95% attendance rate. All statistically significant subgroups will demonstrate proportional rates of absenteeism.</td>
<td>-Provide all students with an interest-based engaging, applied project-based program of study that maintains high levels of motivation and interest among students - Monthly analysis of PowerSchool attendance data by subgroup - Quarterly FOCUS and CALPADS reports analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sub-priority B – Student Absenteeism Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Need</strong></th>
<th><strong>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</strong></th>
<th><strong>Actions to Achieve Goal</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as comparable district</td>
<td>VCES will have a chronic absenteeism rate of less than 5%.</td>
<td>Monthly analysis of Student Information System attendance data by subgroup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need</td>
<td>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</td>
<td>Actions to Achieve Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The climate and culture of the school is safe, supportive, engaging, and enriching</td>
<td>-Pupil suspension rates will remain &lt;5%. Suspension rates are proportional across sub-groups. Special Education students are not disproportionally suspended.</td>
<td>--Provide all students with an interest-based engaging, applied project-based program of study that maintains high levels of motivation and interest among students -Quarterly Student Information System and CALPADS reports analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The climate and culture of the school is safe, supportive, engaging, and enriching</td>
<td>-Pupil expulsion rates will remain &lt;3%. Expulsion rates are proportional across sub-groups. Special Education students are not disproportionally expelled.</td>
<td>-Quarterly Student Information System and CALPADS reports analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The climate and culture of the school is safe, supportive, engaging, and enriching</td>
<td>-90% overall satisfaction rate from students and parents</td>
<td>-Annual disaggregated Program Evaluation Survey analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

State Priority #6 — School Climate

School climate, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

A. Pupil suspension rates
B. Pupil expulsion rates
C. Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness

State Priority #7 — Course Access

The extent to which pupils have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study, including programs and services developed and provided to unduplicated students (classified as EL, FRPM-eligible,
or foster youth; E.C. §42238.02) and students with exceptional needs.

“Broad course of study” includes the following, as applicable:

Grades 1-6: English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, health, physical education, and other as prescribed by the governing board. (E.C. §51210)

Grades 7-12: English, social sciences, foreign language(s), physical education, science, mathematics, visual and performing arts, applied arts, and career technical education. (E.C. §51220(a)-(i))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All students have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study</td>
<td>All students (grades 1st to 5th) will participate in a broad course of study that includes instruction in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, visual/performing arts, health and physical education.</td>
<td>-Annually evaluate the effectiveness of class assignments and impact on kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Annual master schedule audit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STATE Priority #8—OTHER STUDENT OUTCOMES**

Pupil outcomes, if available, in the subject areas described above in #7, as applicable.

**SUB-pRIORITY A – ENGLISH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will demonstrate proficiency in English</td>
<td>All students will demonstrate at least one year of growth toward grade-level proficiency in reading and language arts.</td>
<td>-Formative, ongoing reading fluency assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Progress report analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUB-pRIORITY B – MATHEMATICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will demonstrate proficiency in mathematics</td>
<td>All students will demonstrate at least one year of growth toward grade-level proficiency in mathematics.</td>
<td>-Formative, ongoing math fluency assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Progress report analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUB-pRIORITY C – SOCIAL SCIENCES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will demonstrate proficiency in social science</td>
<td>75% of VCES students will score proficient (rubric score of 3) or advanced (rubric score of 4) as measured on the end of the semester progress report in the area of Social Studies.</td>
<td>-Project rubric analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Progress report analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUB-pRIORITY D – SCIENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will demonstrate proficiency in science</td>
<td>75% of VCES students will score proficient (rubric score of 3) or advanced (rubric score of 4) as measured on the end of the semester progress report in the area of Science.</td>
<td>-Project rubric analysis</td>
</tr>
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<td>-Progress report analysis</td>
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### SUB-priority E – Visual and Performing Arts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-pRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will demonstrate proficiency in visual and performing arts</td>
<td>75% of VCES students will score proficient (rubric score of 3) or advanced (rubric score of 4) as measured on the end of the semester progress report in the area of visual and performing arts.</td>
<td>-Project rubric analysis</td>
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<td>-Progress report analysis</td>
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### SUB-priority F – Physical Education

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<tr>
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<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will demonstrate proficiency in physical education</td>
<td>90% of all 5th grade students will achieve Healthy Fitness Zone as measured by the FitnessGram.</td>
<td>FitnessGram test results analysis analysis</td>
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### SUB-priority G – Health (Grades 1-6 only)

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<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will demonstrate proficiency in health education</td>
<td>75% of VCES students will score proficient (rubric score of 3) or advanced (rubric score of 4) as measured on the end of the semester progress report in the area of Science.</td>
<td>-Project rubric analysis</td>
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<td>-Progress report analysis</td>
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### SUB-priority H – Foreign Languages - Not Applicable

### SUB-priority I – Applied Arts (Grades 7-12 only) - Not Applicable

### SUB-priority J – CTE (Grades 7-12 only) - Not Applicable

### INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

*Instructional Design and Methodologies*

VCES is dedicated to developing each student’s potential and to providing an intellectually challenging, experiential learning environment. Our project-based educational model focuses on a student-centered, constructivist approach to teaching and learning that is designed to:

- Educate the “whole child” by providing students with the tools for academic, social-emotional, creative and physical mastery.
- Enable each child to learn at his or her own pace within a small class.
- Use diverse teaching strategies that consider each child’s learning style and that vary in response to student assessment data.
- Empower and support teachers in their work as they focus on improving student learning and developing engaging curriculum.
We utilize a variety of instructional methodologies to ensure all students are achieving academic success and developing the qualities VCES deems essential for a fully educated person. The fundamental strategies include:

1) Constructivism
2) Project Based Learning (PBL)
3) Data driven instruction

**Constructivism**

VCES teachers implement learning experiences grounded in constructivist learning theory. The constructivist approach to teaching and learning invites students to experience concepts “as a process of knowledge generation in which prior knowledge is elaborated and changed on the basis of fresh meanings negotiated with peers and teacher” (Frensham, Gunstone, and White, 1995, p.51). Numerous independent researchers have documented the success of the constructivist model of education with historically under-served populations, including at such schools as North Oakland Community Charter School in Oakland and University of Houston Charter School in Texas. These schools and countless others have long demonstrated that when children from disadvantaged neighborhoods, including recent immigrants and ELs, are given the opportunity to attend a school like VCES, their test scores and more importantly their self-confidence and whole development excel. (Amaral, 2002; Mester, 2008; Freire, 1995.)

A constructivist approach combined with Project Based Learning is an effective way to develop deep and enduring conceptual understanding because they are structured activities in which students:

1. Use manipulatives and/or technology
2. Analyze both open-ended and specific questions
3. Transition from concrete to abstract reasoning
4. Work individually or in groups

In order to bring these experiences to life, we support our teachers in developing and implementing curriculum that includes real-world activities, multiple representations, metacognition, and critical theory. This active engagement of students in their own learning through highly structured yet creative learning experiences is the foundation of the VCES understanding of constructivism.

It should be emphasized that VCES believes that guidance must be provided to students. As noted psychologist Lev Vygotsky described in *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, the key to a learning experience within a student’s zone of proximal development (ZPD) is “problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p.86). Student discussion is essential to learning since the mental processes involved in formulating one’s thoughts into words contribute to development and concept-formation. Together, through conversation, students construct their understanding of content and the world. However, research has shown that purely discussion-based or collaborative learning can be ineffective if no student acts as a capable guide, if students treat each other with disrespect, or if students are reluctant to share their thoughts (Lewis, C. 1999). VCES is aware of these potential limitations and overcomes them by always ensuring that appropriate guidance is provided. One way is to model effective cooperative group and conflict resolution strategies, such as those used in programs such as Cool Tools and Council (ojaifoundation.org).

Furthermore, the active learning strategies inherent in the constructivist approach are validated by the findings of *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School* (1999), an authoritative
synthesis of research on learning that was jointly commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation.

*How People Learn* supports the scientific basis for constructivism in its section on active learning:

New developments in the science of learning also emphasize the importance of helping people take control of their own learning. Since understanding is viewed as important, people must learn to recognize when they understand and when they need more information. What strategies might they use to assess whether they understand someone else's meaning? What kinds of evidence do they need in order to believe particular claims? How can they build their own theories of phenomena and test them effectively?

Through our use of the constructivist approach VCES is committed to providing learning experiences that challenge students to create, question, analyze, and synthesize information to a higher level of meaning.

*Project Based Learning*

VCES defines Project Based Learning as a curricular and pedagogical strategy that organizes learning around projects. In this framework, students are involved in planning, problem-solving, decision-making, and investigation. Often working without direct guidance from the teacher, students work cooperatively over extended periods of time to reflect on their work and receive and incorporate feedback. Students work on projects that connect their content learning to the real world and require them to look at a problem from multiple angles. The effectiveness of this approach has “led to recommendations for shifting the major portion of instruction in schools from teacher-directed, teacher-assigned ‘schoolwork’ with its emphasis on comprehension, to student-initiated, goal-driven, independent, ‘intentional learning’ models with an emphasis on knowledge building” (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987).

For ELs and economically disadvantaged students, PBL takes on additional importance. The collaborative activities inherent to PBL provide ELs with systematic opportunities to improve their English proficiency in the context of authentic peer communication. Group interactions with the focus on the task rather than the language provides a nonthreatening opportunity for the second language learner to listen to other children's discourse and, once confident, to contribute to the conversation (Amaral et al., 2002; Echevarria et al., 2004). Research also indicates that the use of projects for the education of children living in poverty (1) increases their motivation for learning academic skills and the opportunity to meaningfully practice these skills, (2) helps children see themselves as learners and problem solvers and develops their self-esteem, (3) strengthens positive relationships between teachers and families, and (4) helps families become aware of resources available in their communities (Helm and Lang, 2003).

Furthermore, PBL aligns well with a standards-based curriculum. Educators in several research studies have demonstrated that standards can easily be met using the project-based approach, and have found that even some standards that had not been included in the original lesson plan were addressed when the project was implemented (Dixon 2001). Many ideas embodied in the Common Core State Standards, including the weaving of literacy and communication into all curricular areas, and a focus on explaining one’s thinking process are fundamental in constructivist and project-based learning.

In order for VCES to consider a PBL project, its central activities must involve the transformation and construction of knowledge (by definition: new understandings, new skills) on the part of
students and be aligned to CCSS. If the central activities of the project represent no difficulty to
the student or can be carried out with the application of already-learned information or skills, the
project is an exercise, not a PBL.

VCES’ teachers create their own projects and lessons that are aligned to CCSS. Their process
follows two basic steps:

1) Beginning of project: The teacher poses a driving question and the students create a list
of need to know questions that become the catalyst of the research and the project.

2) During the project: In line with the “master-apprentice relationship,” VCES teachers then
scaffold instruction: breaking down tasks, using modeling, prompting, and coaching to
teach strategies for thinking and problem solving to help students become proficient at
conducting the relevant inquiry activities (Blumenfeld et al., 1991).

In the first step, teachers present a driving question to their students. This question is developed
with the student learning outcomes in mind and is based on the CCSS and content standards.
The students then spend time thinking about what they ‘need to know’ to answer the question. A
list is generated by the students and is used to guide the project. The list is referred to throughout
the project to support teacher in guiding instruction and students in their research and learning.

In the second step, students begin to work individually or in small groups to answer the question.
During the project time of the day, the students experience a variety of lessons. This is a time of
independent or small group inquiry and research. Through this form of project-based instruction,
VCES creates a learning environment in which teachers are facilitators and students are learners
and doers.

Data Driven Instruction

Our instructional program is driven by student data. At VCES, this means that doing what Paul
Bambrick-Santoyo refers to as turning “the school focus from ‘what was taught’ to ‘what was
learned’” (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2010, p.xxxv). The principal engages teachers in conversations,
reflection, and planning based on student achievement data. In order to support this process, the
Charter School systematically collects and analyzes student data on key proficiency indicators.
Data is collected through the implementation of a robust set of diagnostic and benchmark
assessments that complement the state standardized test data (CST, CELDT, etc.) and provide
continuous information about student progress towards standards. For example, VCES teachers
use the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) Reading Assessments (Levels
A-Z) to assess students’ independent reading levels and AIMSweb to assess reading fluency and
mathematics computation fluency. All of these assessments are used at least three times a year as
benchmarks for student progress. The TCRWP assessments are analyzed so teachers can identify
specific student needs in the area of reading and support students individually or in small strategy
groups. The AIMSweb assessments are used either weekly or monthly to progress monitor
students not meeting grade level expectations.

Data-driven conversations also focus on teacher-generated grades to ensure that grading policies
are fair, equitable, and focused on student proficiency (as opposed to behavior, homework
completion, or compliance).

VCES data is stored in Excel spreadsheets, which allow teachers and the principal to monitor
student growth and identify patterns of achievement that can be addressed through instructional
and behavioral practices. Grade level teachers are provided with common planning time which
they use to examine data and make data-driven curricular decisions. The principal and teachers
monitor the progress of all subgroups. Any problematic data trends are directly addressed
through meetings with individual teachers, and through the examination of classroom practices. Teachers use the data to design curriculum to help raise the achievement of all students, and close any gaps that may exist.

References:


Curriculum and Instruction; Instructional Methods and Strategies; Mastery of CCSS

Valley Charter Elementary School is a unique educational environment where instruction is delivered in a variety of ways. Educators at VCES employ teaching strategies that include direct instruction, student-led discussions, cooperative and collaborative learning, and inquiry-based activities as a basis for learning and solving authentic problems. The foundation of our curricular decisions and the motivation behind our selection of curricular materials and programs are steeped in our belief that children learn best in a rigorous, student-centered and Project Based Learning environment. With the Common Core State Standards as our guide, our constructivist approach to teaching and learning guides students to become active and successful learners.

English language arts, English language development, mathematics, history/social science, and science are considered core classes. Visual and performing arts and physical education classes are non-core.

English Language Arts (Core)

At Valley Charter Elementary School we want our children to view themselves as readers and writers, not just in the classroom but in their daily lives. Because of this we have adopted a workshop approach to teaching reading and writing that is more authentic than using a traditional scripted program. We also value having a balanced approach to our literacy instruction. To us, this means having a dedicated time for reading, writing, and word work each day. Our language arts instruction is both explicit, through mini-lessons and direct instruction, and implicit, through read alouds and partner work. Children are constantly developing their language skills through their work in every subject. Below we have highlighted some of the key components of our balanced literacy instruction.

Reading Workshop:
Reading is taught through reading workshop. This approach to teaching uses a workshop structure where students are taught reading strategies that they then apply to independent books that are on their differentiated reading levels. We approach this time as both a print rich and talk rich part of our balanced literacy approach. We value the opportunity for our “readers to talk about their books in genuine ways” (Collins, 2004, p. 21). Students work to push themselves to the next level of reading with the support from their teacher. The ability to have students reading at their own independent level allows for a multitude of both intervention and enrichment opportunities. Students learn to pick “just right” books based on level and interest and they learn to challenge themselves in stamina, fluency, and comprehension (Calkins, 2010, p. 6). They also work to replicate this work outside of the classroom so that they are building a true reading life. Stamina and engagement are key to this sense, “For children to become better readers, they must read for long stretches of time, with just-right material, joyfully engaged in their reading. Without engagement during reading, this ‘time spent on reading’ doesn’t count” (Serravallo, 2010, p. 20).

Each classroom has a diverse library that houses books at all levels for students to be able to read at school and home. The goal of reading workshop is to grow independent readers that can not only decode their books, but understand them at an inferential level.

On a daily basis, students participate in a predictable independent reading workshop. The workshop time begins with a 10-15 minute teacher led mini-lesson. Each mini-lesson includes a teaching point that focuses on a reading strategy, which is part of a unit of study. The teacher introduces the skill, models it using a mentor text, and invites students to participate in an active engagement piece that allows them to try out the skill on their own or with a reading partner. Students are then reminded of the skill and encouraged to apply it to their reading as they go off for independent reading time. This independent time is anywhere from 20-50 minutes depending upon the grade level. During this time the teacher is able to provide intervention by leading small strategy groups that are focused on skills that groups of readers need to move onto their next level of reading. These lessons often address behavior, fluency, monitoring for sense, literal comprehension, or inferential comprehension. These strategy groups meet for 7-10 minutes at a time. The teacher is also conferring in one-on-one sessions to meet each individual child’s needs. In the lower grades (K-2), this time also includes time for partners to read to one another and to discuss their books. In the upper grades (3-5), students are also meeting in partnerships or book clubs to talk about a book that they have both read. During some point of the reading workshop the teacher gives a mid-workshop interruption that will extend the skill taught during the mini-lesson. They might share what an individual reader is doing well to show the use of the skill. At the end of the reading workshop there is a teacher share where students can meet with other partners or can meet as a whole group to talk about how readers practice the reading skill introduced that day. Students keep reading logs to help record what they are reading. These can be used to help teachers work with students individually or in small groups on how to vary their book selection and to keep track of how much they are reading. Students in upper grades use reader response notebooks to write about what they are reading. Entries grow in depth and complexity as students move up in level and learn more strategies. There is a large emphasis on being able to talk and write richly about their books. We believe in the “power of print-rich, talk-rich, inviting classrooms” (Collins, 2004, p. 2). Readers focus on growing theories about their books and characters to show understanding at a more inferential level.

To create their own units teachers look at the Common Core State Standards and then create units and teaching points that address these reading standards. In addition to looking at the standards, teachers consider the reading units developed at Columbia University Teachers College Reading and Writing Project and modify them to fit the needs of each individual class. Teachers backwards plan by first stating their goals for the unit of study and then developing individual teaching points that lead their students to accomplish these goals. As the grades progress units
build from reading habits to genre studies. Units might be based on comprehension strategies, author studies, genre studies, or the development of their identity as readers. Examples of units covered include: Readers Build Good Habits, Readers Use Strategies to Figure Out Words, Readers Think and Talk About Books to Grow Ideas, Reader Use Word Power to Read and Understand their Books, Readers Pursue Their Interests in Books and Other Texts, and Readers Make Plans for Their Reading Lives (Collins, 2004, p. 46). Through small strategy group work that reinforces these teaching points and one-on-one conferences, teachers can be continually assessing students’ mastery of these reading standards. We use the TCRWP Reading Assessments. These normed assessments allow us to assess students’ individual levels in fluency, and literal and inferential comprehension. Teachers keep copious notes on each child. They record all teaching points taught to the students in both small group and one-on-one conferences. Teachers use data collected through observations and running records to plan future mini-lessons, small group and individualized instruction.

**Read Aloud:**
There is indisputable research that reading aloud to children is vital and in a seminal report the U.S. Department of Education even went so far as to write, “The single most important activity for building knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children” (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott and Wilkinson, 1985, p. 23). For this reason, reading aloud to children at all grade levels every day is an integral part of our curriculum. We have diverged from the traditional read aloud experience, where the teacher simply reads a chapter book aloud while the students passively listen, and we have started using interactive read alouds. This innovative approach to whole class read alouds has been developed by educational researchers such as Lester Laminack and Reba Wadsworth (2006), as well as Lucy Calkins (2001).

Interactive read aloud invites the students into a story with the teacher. During this time the teacher implicitly models how to use reading strategies by using an authentic reading experience, as opposed to a formal mini-lesson in workshop (Hoyt, 2007). The read aloud starts with a book introduction that briefly previews the skills students will use while listening. The teacher will begin by reading a page or two of the book and then stop to model a skill. For example, she might think aloud about what the character’s actions reveal about his personality. After modeling the skill, she continues to read and stops soon thereafter to have the children try this same skill by either writing in their notebooks or by turning and talking to a partner. While students are writing or talking, the teacher is able to circulate and coach students who need intervention. She is also able to use this time as an informal assessment to see how students are progressing with a skill. Sometimes the skills practiced in read aloud will be a preview of upcoming work or a review of skills taught months ago. By balancing students’ experience with skills the teacher is able to assess the needs of her students. When a teacher notices gaps in a student’s proficiency she can also make a note to meet with him/her during a reading workshop conference.

Careful planning is done to ensure that the skills and strategies practiced during interactive read aloud are consistent with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), especially those in reading and listening and speaking. As opposed to a teacher who simply selects a chapter book and reads aloud one chapter a day, using interactive read alouds requires the teacher to plan places where she will stop and model, how support will be gradually released, and how to coordinate this work with other components of her balanced literacy program. This last part is perhaps most crucial to ensuring that the teacher is properly implementing the CCSS. By aligning the work done in reading workshop, interactive read aloud, and writing workshop, the teacher is not just exposing children to a standard, but truly teaching all aspects of that standard in a variety of contexts. Through read alouds teachers are also able to incorporate science and social studies content into
the literacy block. Teachers often select expository nonfiction and historical fiction books that expose children to the content standards in a different way.

Fluency/Shared Reading:
Fluency is the ability to read a text accurately and effortlessly at an appropriate rate and with meaningful phrasing and intonation. Maryanne Wolf and Tami Katzir Cohen (2001) have further defined fluency as a “developmental process that involves all components of reading acquisition, including phonemic awareness and decoding skills, as well as a strong vocabulary, knowledge of grammatical functions, and knowledge of word roots and parts.” Our experience has confirmed what we know from research - there is a direct correlation between fluency and comprehension (Fuchs, Fuchs, Hosp, and Jenkins, 2001). Students who lack fluency often struggle to meet grade level comprehension expectations. Students who are not fluent readers often spend much of their energy decoding words, which leaves them with little time and energy to comprehend what they are reading. Consequently, it plays an important role in our curriculum as we address the CCSS reading foundational skills.

One way that we address our students’ fluency needs is through shared reading. Shared reading promotes reading fluency, comprehension, vocabulary building, and a sense of community within our classrooms. Teachers carefully select the text that will be used for the week. It can be a poem, song, or passage from a book, and often ranges in genre. Shared reading also provides the opportunity to integrate the curriculum with social studies or science reading.

The shared reading text is presented in a big book format, chart, or projected onto the whiteboard. The teacher initially models the reading and the students practice, paying attention to phrasing, intonation, expression, and how the punctuation informs the prosody. Hand motions may also be developed to help the children recall the words in the text. The second day allows for more chances to practice reading the text fluently and also delve deeper into comprehension work. Discussions arise about specific vocabulary, and what the students envision as they read the text. By the third day, students are exhibiting more fluency with the text and are again focusing on comprehension or more specific phonics work such as rhyming, beginning sounds, and vowel sounds. On the fourth day, students again practice reading the text fluently but can also focus on grammar and word work, such as punctuation, parts of speech, and contractions. The final day is reserved for practice and a performance of the text.

Fluency needs are also addressed during small group work and one on one instruction. Teachers use a variety of informal assessments and tracking systems to monitor students’ progress. We utilize a nationally normed assessment by monitoring fluency progress with the online program AIMSweb. Students are given benchmark assessments three times a year to track their fluency growth. The focus of this assessment is words per minute. Benchmark goals are set at each level for the fall, winter, and spring. We more closely monitor student progress at weekly, monthly, or bi-monthly intervals for students who are not meeting the benchmark norms. Students are closely tracked and instruction is tailored to meet their fluency needs. Fluency intervention is given to any student who is struggling to meet grade level standards. Goals are also set for students exceeding grade level standards to ensure they are being challenged with their reading.

Writing Workshop:
We teach writing using the writing workshop structure. This approach, developed by educators at Columbia University’s Teacher’s College is based on the actual writing processes used by published authors such as Georgia Heard, Don Graves, Lucy Calkins, and Ralph Fletcher (The Reading and Writing Project, 2014). This innovative approach to teaching writing utilizes a workshop structure where students are not just following a process to produce a single piece of
perfect writing, they are using the writing process to express themselves and “to do powerful things in the world in which they live” (Ray & Laminack, 2001, p.5).

Intervention is an integral part of the workshop approach to teaching. Through assessments, both formal and informal, teachers identify students’ areas of need and then confer with them during independent work time. As Carl Anderson (2000) explains the goal of these conferences is not to fix the students’ writing, but to support them so that they “can do the work we teach them in today’s conference on their own in future pieces” (p. 8). These conferences ensure that teachers are teaching to the standards, while differentiating and remediating instruction for students who need additional help.

At the cornerstone of the writing workshop are mentor texts, which serve as the primary instructional material. Since writing workshop is based on the processes used by published authors, it is only reasonable that students are constantly referring to these texts to see examples of strategies they might use. In primary grades, students make their own choice about which paper to use. The teacher provides a variety of templates based on the genre and students choose the ones that fit their work. In the upper grades, students are gathering and developing in their notebooks and then drafting, editing, and revising on lined paper. Since purchasing the laptop carts, upper grade students often publish on their laptops.

The writing workshop structure follows the same procedure as the reading workshop. The day’s work starts with a mini-lesson. During this short period of instruction the teacher provides a context for the work they will be doing, models the use of the day’s skill in her own work, and provides an opportunity for the students to try the skill. During the lesson the teacher will often refer to mentor texts or a classmate’s work to show examples of how others have used a skill. At the end of the mini-lesson, the teacher sends the students off to consider trying this skill in their own writing.

During the independent portion of the workshop, students work on their self-selected pieces. Depending on the stage of the writing process the class is in, students might be gathering, developing, revising, or editing. This process happens at different rates depending on the grade level and the writing proficiency of the student. Lower grade students might be writing multiple stories a day, while the converse is true in the upper grades. Older students are more likely to try out multiple stories during the gathering and developing stages, but select one story to take through the rest of the unit. While students are working, the teacher confers with each student in small groups or one-on-one. The workshop concludes with a partner share, during which students get feedback from their partners, and a teacher share. Many teachers choose to use the teacher share time as a way to incorporate grammar or convention work into the workshop.

When developing a yearlong sequence for writing units, teachers rely on the CCSS for guidance. Since the CCSS include the same three major genres for each grade (opinion, narrative, and expository), students are exposed to all three each year. Since each writing unit lasts approximately four weeks, teachers are able to plan multiple units for the same genre. For example, a fifth grade class might write a memoir and a fantasy story. Giving children multiple opportunities to write in a genre is crucial. They are able to focus on a few standards in each unit, as opposed to a cursory overview of five or more standards. They are also able to incorporate work done in the first unit when they get to the second one.

Word Study:
Another important area of our balanced literacy program is word study. “Word study teaches students how to look at words so that they can construct an ever-deepening understanding of how
spelling works to represent sound and meaning” (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, and Johnson, 2008, p. 3). We understand that the stages of spelling are developmental, so students are initially assessed using spelling inventories to determine where they fall on the continuum of orthographic knowledge. Keeping in mind Vygotsky’s research on the zone of proximal development, teachers analyze each child’s spelling assessments to determine their independent, instructional, and frustration levels. Teachers use this information to form groups and guide planning of instruction. These groups are flexible and students can move as needed, based on assessments and teacher observations.

Word study typically begins with a word sort. “When students sort words, they are engaged in the active process of searching, comparing, contrasting, and analyzing” (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, and Johnson, 2008, p. 51). Students may sort by initial sounds, ending sounds, spelling patterns, and Greek and Latin affixes. This sort may include pictures or words depending on the level of the students. Students discover the pattern and create a list of words for the week. As they progress through the week, students engage in activities to further their understanding of the pattern. These activities include cutting and pasting pictures that follow the pattern, manipulating magnetic letters to form new words that follow the pattern, playing games that allow for discrimination of the pattern, and conducting word hunts to find the pattern in text. Assessments are given to discern how the students have internalized the pattern.

Scope and Sequence

In addition to aligning our work with CCSS, our faculty works collaboratively to make sure we have a cohesive curriculum across the grade levels. As students progress through the grades there is a purposeful progression in the way students make their thinking visible in reading, work in partnerships, and gather ideas in writing. We are constantly evaluating how the work in one grade level is building off the preceding years’ curriculum.

Kindergarten Language Arts

Conversation skills, reading and writing behaviors, and creating a community of learners are crucial components of the kindergarten language arts curriculum. To create a community of readers and writers, the teacher leads students in shared reading, interactive writing, and interactive read aloud. In kindergarten, comprehension work focuses on character work, retelling, envisioning, and synthesizing. Reading units include the following: Emergent Story Books, Super Powers, Becoming Reading Teachers, and Informational Texts. Throughout all of these units, students are demonstrating their comprehension skills by turning and talking and by stopping to jot, sketch, or act. Students have partners in reading and writing workshops. Partners spend time reading together (choral reading), echo reading, and discussing their books (both the same book or independent books). Kindergarteners learn to write personal narratives, all about books, how-to books, and persuasive letters. In kindergarten students truly begin to see themselves and their classmates as readers and writers.

First Grade Language Arts

The work students do in kindergarten to develop their identities as readers and writers continues in first grade. In writing, students are learning to write small moments and nonfiction pieces and how make their writing easy for readers to understand. In reading, students practice rereading for understanding, fluency, and character analysis. Envisioning is one of the most important reading strategies taught in first grade. Students practice envisioning by turning and talking or acting with a partner. First graders are also practicing retelling and reading for sense through the following units: Building Good Habits, Tackling Trouble, Nonfiction Readers Learn about the World, and Reading Across Genres. First grade utilizes a number of structures that build a
community of learners, including but not limited to partner reading (echo reading and taking turnings) and shared reading.

Second Grade Language Arts
Second grade focuses on all of the reading strategies as well as summarizing, previewing, using fix-up strategies, and character analysis. Students learn these skills through units that teach them about comprehension strategies, characters, and main idea work. Partnerships are a large part of the second grade language arts program. Students work with their partners in read aloud discussions, in reading partnerships (with the same book and with different books), on fluency, and in writing to edit their pieces. In writing, second graders have an opportunity to write biographies, personal narratives, science reports on life cycles, and reports on heirlooms and their community.

Third Grade Language Arts
In third grade students are becoming more independent readers and writers. Students are responsible for recording their thinking on sticky notes, in a notebook (for the first time), and on a reading log. Students are supported by their partners, whether they are reading the same book or a different book. Book clubs start in third grade, where three or four students are reading and discussing the same book. Reading units include a character unit, a mystery unit, a nonfiction unit, and a book club unit (with books in a series). The Harry Potter Read-a-thon (in conjunction with first grade) has proven to increase fluency rates and stamina. In writing workshop, students move away from using specialized paper and move into a notebook. This is the first year where students will spend a month on one piece of writing. In addition to other genres, third graders write angled informational books, reviews, persuasive letters, and mysteries.

Fourth Grade Language Arts
Fourth grade language arts continues to emphasize the stamina and notebook work started in third grade. Students write in and turn in their reading notebooks weekly. They also show their comprehension skills through partner conversations, read aloud discussions, and conferences. Fourth grade units include work with characters, nonfiction, historical fiction, and biography. Students are supported by their partnerships, book clubs, and peers in their strategy groups. Students are given the chance to sign up for “seminars” on a reading or writing topic that interests them. Independence and stamina are crucial as their reading homework becomes to record their thinking in their notebook for a set number of books (based on their level) each week. In writing, students are given the opportunity to write personal narratives, nonfiction, persuasive pieces, and biographies.

Fifth Grade Language Arts
Stamina and depth of thinking are two skills being constantly revisited in fifth grade reading workshop. Each week students read a set number of books, based on their reading level, and record their thinking in their reading notebooks. Students might be writing about symbols, character traits, the author’s message, cause and effect, or author’s purpose. This connection between writing and reading is developed through partner work, mini-lessons, small group instruction, or book clubs. The fifth grade reading curriculum includes many genre studies, specifically fantasy, biography, social issues, and nonfiction (weather and Revolutionary War content). Fifth grade’s writing units are closely aligned with their reading work. For example, students read fantasy books in reading workshop and write fantasy stories in writing workshop. Other units include research reports, personal essays, memoirs, and content-based essays. Partnership work and conversation skills are present in every aspect of language arts, through peer feedback, book clubs, and whole class conversations.
English Language Development (Core)

The specific needs of our English Learners are a top concern for our faculty. While only 8% of our student population is identified as English Learners, extensive internal analysis of students performing below grade level has shown us that not only our identified population needs explicit language instruction. In looking at our API scores, we have identified an achievement gap...
between white students and our Hispanic/Latino students as well as between our white students and socioeconomically disadvantaged students. Our observations corroborate research from The University of Chicago’s Thirty Million Word Initiative (2014) that shows that socioeconomically disadvantaged students hear thirty million fewer words by four years old than students who come from language rich homes. We have a significant portion of our student body that has a language deficiency, despite not being identified as English Learners. For this reason, it is important to note that these strategies are not just used for identified students, but for any student we feel has a gap in his/her language development.

Planning for ELD instruction is guided by the ELD standards (specifically the new CCSS aligned standards) and our student data. As a faculty, we review the results of the CELDT test and identify areas of student growth and areas in which we need to increase instruction. We consider groups of students not only by their grade level, but also by their level of English development. LAUSD ELD portfolios are maintained for each student and updated throughout the year. Teachers are beginning to work with the new ELD standards and future professional development will focus on how to effectively implement them. Since the new standards are closely aligned with the CCSS, which is fully implemented, the new standards have been easily incorporated into our curriculum. We address these standards, using SDAIE strategies when appropriate, in our ELD instruction and in our daily language arts, math, and content area instruction.

ELD instruction at VCES is both embedded in our subject areas throughout the day and explicitly taught. The workshop structure that we use to teach reading and writing allows teachers to meet with English Learners in small groups to address the standards. Since conversation skills are such a substantial part of our language arts curriculum, students are constantly learning how to interact in meaningful ways (a key part of the ELD standards). Yvonne and David Freeman (2009) write, “Teachers need to ensure that language use in schools is cognitively demanding and context embedded so that students can learn both the academic language and the content they need” (p. 43). Teachers are able to do this using the workshop model by providing sentence frames for notebook entries and book conversations, by providing specific feedback about word choice in writing, and by teaching vocabulary in the context of read aloud.

In addition to learning conversational English, our English Learners have to learn academic language, which can take five to seven years for these students to gain proficiency (Freeman and Freeman, 2009). Because of our project-based and constructivist approach to teaching, students are experiencing multiple representations of academic vocabulary, as recommended by the CDE (2010). In second grade this means learning the word “physics” by seeing it in action at Kids Space. In fifth grade students analyze maps to learn the word “cartography.” Students are constantly building on prior knowledge as teachers utilize what the CDE (2010) refers to as “communitarian practices” (p. 110). The PBL process naturally results in students working collaboratively to conduct a lab, a simulation, or a report. While working together, our English Learners are constructing their understanding of academic vocabulary through conversation with their peers, who often frame the content in “kid-friendly” language they can more easily understand.

Shared reading has become an effective way for teachers to work with students on fluency, the mechanics of the English language, and vocabulary. By working with the same passage for a week, students can focus on specific aspects of the text, as opposed to having to attend to decoding each day.

In every grade level, ELD students are using Thinking Maps to organize their ideas about a topic before a discussion. Working with Thinking Maps is consistent with our emphasis on brain-
based research, as outlined in our master plan for English Learners. In the lower grades, a teacher might be helping an EL use a circle map to write down everything he knows about an animal before a discussion in science. An upper grade teacher might be showing ELs how to use a multi-flow map to plot out the causes and effects of European exploration.

Explicit ELD instruction is done in small groups and students are not pulled out of the classroom during the day. Some grade levels combine their classes and group their students by their level of English proficiency. Other grade levels group children within their individual classroom. At each grade level we design ELD curriculum that meets the expectations of the new standards. Interacting in meaningful ways, one component of the ELD standards, is not only embedded in every subject area throughout the day, but it is explicitly taught to our EL students. Research presented in the CDE’s publication *Improving education for English learners: Research-based approaches* (2010) suggests that a separate ELD block is only more effective when the focus is on conversation skills and oral language activities. As recommended by the CDE (2010), lower grade students spend a significant portion of their ELD time discussing their personal experiences and their preferences and singing songs. Upper grade students are often discussing a picture with a partner, reacting to a controversial advertisement, or discussing a problem in their lives. EL students receive explicit instruction on how to turn a question into a complete sentence response or how to disagree and agree respectfully with a partner. In all of these activities, students are learning to communicate their ideas, to adapt their tone and content for an audience, and to listen closely to a partner.

Another component of the new ELD standards is learning about how the English language works. While students are working with words, being taught conventions and grammar, and getting new strategies for reading every day, EL students need unique direct instruction on the mechanics of the English language. In the lower grades, you might see students adding detail to a simple sentence. With the teacher’s guidance they might be discussing the best adjective to describe the plants they saw on their field trip to the farm. In the upper grades, students might be revising a story by changing the ending, adding in show, not tell, or making dialogue tags more precise. These are skills that all of our students need, whether they are identified as English Learners or not. However, we recognize the importance of these lessons for our ELs and ensure that there is dedicated instructional time for them to learn how the English language works.

At VCES, we firmly agree with what the CDE (2010) writes when they say, “Instructed ELD complements informal instruction that happens throughout the school day in spontaneous situations where the skillful teacher takes full advantage of every opportunity for teachable moments” (p. 85). This is our goal. We reserve instructional time for ELD lessons, but we are constantly designing curriculum in all areas that meets the needs of our English Learners.

References:


*Mathematics (Core)*
At Valley Charter Elementary School, we believe that math should be taught in a logical, step-by-step manner that builds on students’ prior knowledge and skills. We use Singapore Math as our foundational pedagogy to construct our dynamic and challenging program. Math topics are taught in great depth. We aim for relational understanding and mastery of concepts and skills. In order to achieve relational understanding and conceptualization of new math topics, we use multiple models in instruction. Students begin learning new concepts with concrete manipulatives. Upon mastering the concept with manipulatives, students move on to pictorial representations of the math topic. Finally, students show and practice their learning using abstract (numerical) representations of the math concept.

Our educational culture is reflective and based on students developing the following core understandings: number facts, number sense, patterns, visualization, and communication. Problem solving and critical thinking are also crucial pieces of our curriculum. We believe that students must persevere through challenging math problems and employ a variety of different strategies so they can become critical problem solvers. Key strategies that students utilize include computation, mental math, and model drawings (Fortsen, 2010).

At VCES we aim “not to produce little living libraries on” math, “but rather to get a student to think mathematically for himself...to take part in the process of knowledge-getting. Knowledge is a process not a product” (Bruner, 1966, p. 72). In order for teachers to engage students as part of the learning process, VCES faculty plans precisely and responsively, and bases math curriculum on individual students’ needs. We use the Singapore Math curriculum as a skeletal foundation for our math program. Teachers use Common Core State Standards and student achievement to drive and finesse the program. VCES faculty also creates original materials to supplement student learning.

Another important philosophical approach that VCES faculty utilizes is precision teaching. Precision teaching rhythmically paces a math lesson and ensures that all students feel successful. Brevity is crucial in instruction. Every time a teacher speaks for more than 20 seconds, a large percentage of the students stop listening (Davidson, 2010). VCES teachers aim to deliver precise, focused lessons that engage all students. One of the ways VCES teachers deliver precision teaching is through call-response lessons. Teachers lead students to understand new topics through a series of laddered questions, using as few words as possible. The questions are based on foundational concepts that students have already mastered and grow gradually in complexity (Davidson, 2010).

Instruction in math is divided into the three main components: fluency, direct instruction, and problem solving ladders. Fluency accounts for up to 50% of instructional time in the primary grades, and 30% in the upper grades. Fluency instruction at VCES takes on many forms including mental math, sprints, and pattern box exercises. After fluency, there is time for direct instruction and independent practice. Finally, students complete a complex problem solving ladder that challenges their critical thinking and perseverance skills.

Fluency is an important component of VCES’s math program. The ability to recall basic math facts fluently is necessary for students to attain higher-order math skills. Grover Whitehurst, the Director of the Institute for Educational Sciences (IES), noted this research during the launch of the federal Math Summit in 2003: “Cognitive psychologists have discovered that humans have fixed limits on the attention and memory that can be used to solve problems. One way around these limits is to have certain components of a task become so routine and over-learned that they become automatic” (Whitehurst, 2003). The implication for mathematics is that some of the sub-
processes, particularly basic facts, need to be developed to the point that they are done automatically. If this fluent retrieval does not develop, then the development of higher-order mathematics skills — such as multiple-digit addition and subtraction, long division, and fractions — may be severely impaired (Whitehurst, 2003).

Fluency is a time to reinforce concepts previously taught and to frontload upcoming math concepts. Fluency is not just a simple warm up to the lesson; students access foundational skills that they need in order to be successful in math. Fluency is planned strategically and increases in complexity. Teachers think longitudinally about the basic math skills that students need to access the curriculum.

Mental math increases in complexity through the grade levels. Teachers often lead their students in oral counting such as skip counting to prepare for the students’ study of multiplication. Students are also directed to mentally solve a progression of math problems. Teachers must prepare fluency scripts that present problems in a “ladder” format, incrementally increasing the complexity of math problems. Often, kinesthetic movements are integrated during oral fluency to support students as they internalize new concepts. Another way VCES students practice mental math is through playing efficient math games and drills.

Sprints are one of the key methods for students to develop math fluency. Dr. Yoram Sagher, the inventor of math sprints, designed sprints with specific purpose and intent. A sprint is a double-sided math fact practice sheet that has 30 to 44 problems. The sprint is differentiated and broken into four quadrants that increase in complexity. Sprints are designed to develop automaticity with previously learned material in an adrenaline-rich, motivating classroom environment. Not only do sprints help students master math facts, they also build students’ engagement and confidence in math because they are written to ensure success. John Mighton (2003) attests that if a child experiences success, then she or he will be more open to further learning. Sprints give students an opportunity to make peace with their personal best and see that practice and hard work results in improved fluency (Ramos, 2011).

The pattern box is a timed skilled practice of basic math facts. The levels advance incrementally to bring students to the next rung of their math ladder. The pattern box is a differentiated one and a half minute activity. The pattern box begins with sums and differences, parts and whole, and progresses onto multiplication, division, and finally, to fraction equivalence. The pattern box is an example of how we extend and remediate math instruction, since each student progresses through increasingly challenging tasks and at his/her own rate (Ramos, 2011).

VCES faculty strives to create dynamic problem solving sessions. We use differentiated problem solving ladders to engage weak students while challenging strong students. Problem solving ladders intentionally begin with a story statement that has no question. Students must practice diagramming and representing their thoughts pictorially. The first question is below grade level which means that all students, even the lowest learner, can feel successful. The questions progress and increase in complexity so that the last question is a challenge for even our most proficient student (Davidson, 2011). Alternatively, students may spend a substantial amount of time on one problem. This builds persistence and flexibility in their thinking as they come up with multiple ways to solve one problem.

Following fluency and problem solving work, the students engage in a whole class lesson, which typically introduces a new concept or deepens the understanding of a previously learned concept. The lesson often requires the use of manipulatives to support understanding at the concrete stage, or personal boards used by students to demonstrate pictorial or abstract understanding. The
teacher models as students practice the new concept. The mathematics lesson is built on a ladder, starting with a task that all students should be able to complete, and progresses in difficulty. During the lesson, students are asked not only to solve problems but to explain their thinking. Different approaches to solving problems are valued and explanations are a key part of the lesson. Some teachers begin remedial support during the lesson, having their teaching assistants lead a small group shadow lesson at a slower pace so all students have equitable access to the curriculum.

Once the lesson is complete, the students engage in independent practice to demonstrate their understanding of the concept taught. The independent work is designed to support students at all levels, increasing in complexity just as the lessons do. Teachers often supplement their grade level Singapore math curriculum with teacher-created materials and resources from the grade level above or below. The teacher meets with small groups to reteach or provide enrichment and remediation. Students may also work in groups or pairs to complete assignments.

VCES feels that hands-on materials are crucial to student mastery of complex math concepts. Through manipulatives, students construct their own meaning of new math skills. Students also use ten frames as a concrete representation of numbers in a problem. Ten frames show students numerical relationships within ten. Similar to ten frames, upper grade students use number disks to efficiently represent large groups of numbers. The rekenrek is an effective tool to build students’ base ten number sense. Students are able to see the way one hundred can be broken down into groups of tens, fives, and twos.

In primary grades, math instruction is focused on the development of number sense. Students must develop a strong foundation with the concept of numbers within ten and of ten before they can move on to larger numbers. Students work on bilateral counting within ten. They move both up and down the number line by ones and twos within ten so that they truly master number relationships. Another foundational piece of mastering numbers within ten is understanding number bonds. A number bond is the pictorial representation of the part/whole relationship of a number. VCES places a greater emphasis on the mastery of number bonds over addition and subtraction facts because students benefit tremendously from understanding number relationships. Another way VCES math curriculum builds number sense is to teach counting in the “Chinese way.” In Chinese, fourteen is ten-four, eighteen is ten-eight, and thirty is three-ten. Children can easily view two-digit numbers as tens and ones. They can readily think of twelve both as one group of ten items plus two ungrouped items and a collection of twelve ungrouped items (Sun, 2001).

Students in third through fifth grades continue bilateral counting to reinforce multiplication and division facts. They then begin counting by fractions and decimals, learning how to mentally simplify and convert from mixed to improper. Students are introduced to the bar model, which is a way of diagraming information presented in a word problem. The bar model represents known and unknown quantities in a word problem. Bar models are more versatile, for when older students begin to solve word problems involving more complex concepts such as multiplication, division, and fractions. These bar models are a natural progression from number bonds used in lower grades. Consistent with the Smarter Balanced Assessment, students in the upper grades are expected to explain their thinking in writing and in numbers. Using sentence starters, examples, and models, teachers can scaffold this writing component for struggling students.

Student progress in math is monitored through various types of assessments. Throughout the entire math block, teachers are monitoring student performance. These informal assessments may take the form of choral response, individual answers on personal boards, exit tickets, and
independent work. Teachers use these informal assessments to reevaluate lesson plans and regroup students for remediation and extension. In addition to informal assessments, VCES faculty give regular summative math quizzes and tests. These assessments not only help teachers reflect on students’ needs, they also give students an opportunity to track their own learning and set goals for improvement. VCES also uses the AIMSweb math computation benchmark assessment as a standardized way to monitor children’s progress.

Plato said that arithmetic “by some divine art arouses the dull and sleepy brain, and makes it studious, mindful, and sharp.” VCES believes that a strong foundation in math provides students with different strategies to approach their own learning. Students are pushed to become critical thinkers who problem solve and persevere. Math is the door and key to learning the sciences. Students can connect math with its usages in everyday life. VCES strives to teach math in such a way that students learn why things are true, rather than to just memorize ways to solve problems.

References:


**History-Social Science (Core)**

Valley Charter Elementary School uses 21st century skills as a foundation to construct its dynamic history-social science curriculum. VCES faculty works closely with one another to build curriculum so that each grade level sets the foundation for the subsequent year. We build our history-social science curriculum through the lens of Project Based Learning. Through student-led exploration, analysis, discussion, inquiry, and investigation, students are able to gain meaning
of the history-social science curriculum. Field trips are at the cornerstone of our instruction as a way to make curriculum come to life.

Over the course of their elementary years, students build a deep understanding of who they are within the context of a larger community. Kindergarten begins with thinking about themselves and their immediate community. First grade deepens this exploration of self by broadening the concept of community through its changes in time and physical space. Second grade further discusses the self by focusing on heritage. They broaden the scope of a community to include cities. Third grade builds the link between the physical space and temporal ties of a community. While fourth grade continues to broaden the geographical scope of community, they delve deeply into the causes and effects of events in the history of California. Fifth grade brings the curriculum full circle by building students’ identity as citizens of the United States. Another common thread of the curriculum is the discussion of students’ rights and responsibilities. Kindergarten focuses on students’ rights and responsibilities in their immediate community. This discussion crescendos up the grade levels to fifth grade where students explore their rights and responsibilities as American citizens.

Methods and Strategies:
VCES bases its social science and history curriculum on Project Based Learning and constructivism. Our use of PBL is consistent with Hallerman’s definition: “Project Based Learning is a systematic teaching method that engages students in learning important knowledge and 21st century skills through an extended, student-influenced inquiry process structured around complex, authentic questions and carefully designed products and learning tasks” (2011). Through Project Based Learning, students are given meaningful learning opportunities that are based in the real world, have real life applications, and teaches them 21st century skills. “PBL is one of the best ways to be sure 21st century skills are explicitly taught, because well-designed projects require them” (Hallerman, 2011). VCES values the following 21st century skills: critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, communication, synthesis of information, and creativity.

Project Based Learning is one way that VCES delivers a constructivist curriculum. Bruner notes that constructivist learning is an “active process” with students being given opportunities to make decisions, ask questions, answer questions and synthesize information (1960). In order to deliver effective, constructivist instruction, VCES personalizes and differentiates instruction to consider the whole child. We consider students’ preferred learning modality, schema, and social, emotional, and academic development when planning curriculum. PBL work begins with a driving question, where students are asked an open-ended question which they explore and embark upon an in-depth inquiry. They then generate a “need to know” list where they brainstorm the knowledge they would need to acquire to answer the driving question. The teacher then facilitates student learning through hands-on experiences which build meaning and knowledge. Through this research process, students are acquiring both content and 21st century skills. Students present their learning in a public way, such as through simulations, writing publication, and public speaking to a variety of audiences.

Students need to do and experience in order to acquire meaningful knowledge. According to Tomlinson and Kalbfleish (1998) in their article entitled “Teach Me, Teach My Brain,” students should spend 60 – 80% of class time engaged in “processing, discussions, group work, self-assessment, journal writing, feedback, mapping, review, memorization.” VCES students work collaboratively in small groups. Students share their ideas about their learning in social sciences. VCES students embark upon a variety of hands-on experiences such as field trips, simulations, and examination of primary sources such as realia, to learn the history-social
sciences meaningfully. These hands-on experiences are crucial for our ELs because it frontloads vocabulary and attaches real world meaning to words. These experiences also provide equal access to learning for all students. For students who need extra support, we provide modified assignments and intervention. “The overwhelming need for learners is for meaningfulness. Understanding a subject results from perceiving relationships. Our function as educators is to provide our students with the sorts of experiences that enable them to perceive patterns that connect” (Caine, 1991).

The social studies curriculum at VCES is teacher-created and based on student needs, interests, and the Common Core State Standards. Literacy is embedded throughout each unit. Students are continuously practicing their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Thinking Maps are a resource that we use to help students think about their learning. “Generating visual maps helps learners understand the concepts of similarities and differences, cause and effect, part as opposed to whole, and analogical sets. Understanding these types of relationships is an essential component of conceptual change and cognitive growth” (Brooks, 2004). Thinking Maps provide students with a visual so that they can make meaning of the history-social science curriculum.

Linda Darling-Hammond explains that “Nations around the world are reforming their school systems...to support the more complex knowledge and skills needed in the 21st century, skills needed for framing problems, seeking and organizing information and resources, and working strategically with others to manage and address dilemmas and create new products” (2008). VCES is committed to providing students with a social studies and history curriculum that is ever changing, with a pedagogical focus on constructivist practice, 21st century skills, and critical thinking.

**Kindergarten Project Based Learning units and brief descriptions:**

Me and My Community (Blockwork): Students investigate their role in their local community beginning with their classroom and school. This exploration expands to an investigation of their neighborhood and the role of different important community members/builders, such as the police station, fire station, grocery store, and library. The investigations include field trips, teacher created books, videos and pictures conveying the importance and roles of these buildings and community members in the neighborhood. Once students learn about the essential community buildings, they use blocks to build the community. Through identifying and discussing the problems that arise in the blockwork community, students learn how to be safe, and in turn make changes to improve their community (such as adding traffic lights or creating sidewalks). Students take on the role of the community members within the buildings to create a safe and functioning blockwork community.

The Grocery Store: Students engage in an investigation of the grocery store by seeking to answer the driving question: How does our work as grocery store workers contribute to our community? Students create a need to know list and think about all of the information that is needed to answer the driving question. Students go on a field trip to a grocery store and learn about each department. Students apply to work in a specific department, and once hired they embark on building and creating a grocery store and carrying out the functions of the department to which they were hired. In a grocery store simulation, students work in their respective department as the grocery store has its grand opening. Students role play as the local community shops in their grocery store.

**First Grade Project Based Learning units and brief descriptions:**

Now and Long Ago: Students compare and contrast everyday life in different times and places and recognize that some aspects of people, places, and things change over time while others stay
They examine the structure of schools and communities in the past, and study transportation methods of earlier days. They recognize similarities and differences of earlier generations in such areas as work, dress, manners, stories, games, and festivals. Students analyze all these different aspects of long ago through the unit’s driving question: How can we, as historians, design and build a museum that teaches about life long ago? Students generate a need to know list that guides instruction. Students begin the unit with a field trip to Leonis Adobe Museum to engage in hands-on activities that give them a sense of how people lived in the 19th century. Students explore a plethora of authentic long ago artifacts from the home (butter churn, baby bottles, clothes) and recreational objects (toys and games). They then compare and contrast these objects to their modern day counterparts to see what has changed and what elements have stayed the same. Students also participate in a simulation where they travel back in time and visit a long ago one-room schoolhouse as well as a long ago home. Students examine primary documents such as old photographs and journals. Students learn songs from the past and analyze lyrics to determine societal changes. The unit culminates in a living museum where they use their knowledge of life from long ago and decide what elements to show fellow students in an interactive presentation. Students construct backgrounds and artifacts for their exhibits using the knowledge built throughout the project.

Service Learning Project: Building upon their knowledge of the plight of endangered animals, students embark upon a month-long service learning project. Students conduct research about various animal conservation efforts through interviews with conservation experts and articles. They then fundraise for a conservation organization to help save endangered animals. These philanthropic efforts inspire students to look beyond their immediate community and into the greater society. They develop global citizenship by actively making a difference in the world.

Second Grade Project Based Learning units and brief descriptions:

Ancestry: Students participate in an investigation of their family roots through interviews, literature, and use graphic organizers such as Thinking Maps, and charts to compare generations and to synthesize their thinking. They bring in and share primary source realia that illustrates their heritage. Students also study family heritage geographically. They analyze immigration and migration patterns including the push and pull factors that motivated people to move. This unit culminates in the creation of an interactive display of family heritage.

Operation Relocation: Students investigate the essential components of a community. They begin the unit by wondering what resources are needed to have a successful classroom community. Students consider the necessary components of their classroom. They then physically relocate and reflect on their experience and how important certain resources are for a community of learners. Students investigate the essential elements of a community through field trips, interviews, teacher-created reading materials, and primary documents such as photos. Students work in collaborative groups using mapping skills, spatial reasoning, and their knowledge of community to build a large-scale city. They use their communication skills to present their city to the larger school community.

Third Grade Project Based Learning units and brief descriptions:

Local Natives: During this unit, students learn about our first known local predecessors, the Chumash. Students use the following question as a framework for the construction of their knowledge: How can we, as 3rd graders, learn about how local native tribes lived? Students engage in various activities to gain first-hand experience with the lifestyle experienced by the Chumash. Students also gain experience and knowledge through a visit to the Chumash Indian Museum where they play games, sing songs, and view realia from the time period. Students then reflect on their own lives and how they compare and contrast with the lives of Chumash children.
Rancheros: The launch for this unit includes exploration of items from this time period, including, but not limited to: jerky, branding iron, rosary, adobe brick, and lasso. Students question and propose the meaning of and uses for these items. A driving question is presented to the students to guide their inquiry: How can we, as historians, look at how native LA was changed by Spanish settlers? Students then create a list of pertinent information required to answer the question. The student-created list serves as the impetus for instruction. Students explore immigration in our local community by discovering their own family’s geographical history with the local community in which they live.

Metropolitan Los Angeles: This unit explores the development of the greater Los Angeles area. This unit ties together all of the previous learning in 3rd grade about our local area. Students learn about the causes and effects of the development of Los Angeles on its population. The students engage in an interactive, explorative field trip via the red line on the Metro. The journey includes discussion of different modes of development, water sources, transportation, and different demographics along the route to downtown. Students participate in a tour of the first home in Los Angeles as well as some of the civic buildings in the area. Throughout the field trip, students record their findings in a visual timeline, which is recorded in notebooks and with photography. Upon their return, students share their groups findings and discuss what they noticed about the development of our great city.

Fourth Grade Project Based Learning units and brief descriptions:
California Geography: Students explore the various regions of California through multimedia research including, but not limited to: PowerPoint, newspapers, videos, books, and Internet sources. The unit concludes with students creating individual road trip itineraries highlighting landmarks in their assigned regions as well as topographical features.

California Missions: Students learn about the process of the introduction of missions in California, including their purpose and effects on the local native population. Students visit the San Fernando Mission to study mission life and work. Throughout the project students are seeking to answer the question: How can we, as historians, understand the reason for missions in California? Students work in groups to create micro living missions while considering different roles within the mission community. They present their projects to the third graders who will serve as the native population they are trying to colonize. Finally, students analyze and synthesize their experiences and research through journal work.

Fifth Grade Project Based Learning Units and brief descriptions:
European Explorers: This unit launches with students experiencing exploration through a hands-on field trip where they are given the quest to find a route through the neighborhood. Students embark on their journey and encounter many issues along the way, such as: illnesses, mutiny, shipwreck, running out of food, and being lost. Students are challenged to work collaboratively to solve their problems and meet their final goal. Next, students enroll in explorer school where they receive instruction three days a week on topics to improve the prospect of them becoming successful explorers (navigation, technological advancements, sponsorship, weather conditions, and early explorers). This unit concludes with two celebratory projects, one of which is a musical that highlights the major achievements and failures of well-known explorers from our past. The other culminating project is when students research and take on the persona of an explorer seeking funding for their voyage. Students use their public speaking and persuasive writing skills, and content knowledge to demonstrate their understanding.
The Revolutionary War: Students are presented with severe taxes on all of their materials as an introduction to this unit. Taxation continues for two weeks time. During the two week period, students engage in interactive read alouds on the content area. Students are invited to a town hall meeting during which they can present their questions and concerns about the taxes. At this point, students are presented with the driving question: How can a snowball fight create a country? Throughout the rest of the unit, students learn about the course of the war through the study of the causes and effects, highlighting the major battles and their outcomes. Students perform a musical on the content and plan and perform a reenactment of a major battle of their choice. Incorporated with writing workshop, students research a topic that peaks their interest surrounding the Revolutionary War (i.e. women’s roles during the war, important person, turning point, etc). Students research collaboratively throughout this project. They are be assessed based on their participation and writing.

References:


Science (Core)

Valley Charter Elementary School employs 21st century skills as a foundation in constructing its dynamic science curriculum. These valuable skills include: communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and problem solving. The VCES faculty work closely with one another to build curriculum that builds essential skills for subsequent grade levels. VCES builds their science curriculum through the lens of Project Based Learning and FOSS kits. Students are encouraged to explore, analyze, discuss, investigate, and experiment in order to enhance scientific understanding, questioning and methods. Field trips, simulations, and experiments are ways that we establish a strong connection with our students and our curriculum.

Methods and Strategies:
Project Based Learning, is a valuable methodology, as it is an effective conduit to teach: content knowledge, essential language arts skills, cooperative collaboration skills and scientific concepts. This is what makes VCES’s science curriculum engaging and meaningful for students. Project Based Learning is one of the best ways to prepare our students for the demands of life, citizenship, and work in today’s world. In a review of the research on Project Based Learning,
Thomas (2000) identified five distinguishing features of Project Based Learning. 1) The use of projects that focus on content that is central to the curriculum. 2) Projects are based on questions of importance or *driving questions*. Driving questions are germane to the content, and crafted both to engender optimal student engagement and foster active intellectual pursuit of solutions. 3) Projects involve students in ways that require them to identify problems, develop and design solutions, and create an end product such as a presentation, report, invention, or model. 4) Projects are student-centered to the greatest extent possible. Teachers serve as resources, facilitators and guides, but it is the students who define, choose and carry out their projects. 5) Projects are developed from reality-based ideas and problems rather than on academic exercises and pursuits. The projects represent authentic efforts in solving or investigating real-world dilemma.

The essential elements for the science based PBL units include content based on California State Science Standards that include 21st century skills. Valley Charter values critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and communication. This integrates vocabulary building, critical thinking, problem solving, in depth inquiry, and open-ended questions to be explored. Each science PBL offers an opportunity for revision and reflection that leads to high quality products, culminating in a student presentation for a public audience. Students are allowed to make choices about the products to be created, how they work, and how they use their time, guided by the teacher and depending on what is developmentally appropriate.

VCES also values the pedagogy presented by Professor Lawrence Lowery (1998), who emphasizes a sequential developmental acquisition of scientific skills for the elementary student. Methodologies include presentation of tasks, hands-on experiences of tasks, authentic and written assessments, and group discussions. Students are encouraged to generate formal questions and conduct hands-on experiences that will create empirical understanding of questions presented. Lowery (1998) posits that humans are pattern seekers and that they use their capabilities to come to the understanding of their surroundings.

The FOSS kit is a non-textbook science program, which provides classroom laboratory kits especially designed to involve all students in experiments and investigative experiences. The modules are sufficient in content that create a complete articulated program. The investigations within the program are designed specifically to match the cognitive capacities of youngsters and the sequence of modules is articulated to match the cognitive growth of students over time. Within each grade level component, students conduct hands-on experiments, create hypotheses for investigations, ask questions, analyze and interpret data, and share their findings with peers. Embedded within each unit of study, is an opportunity for students to read and compare non-fiction texts based upon the material being studied. An important key component of the curricula is to present the idea that scientific knowledge is based on empirical evidence using Foss kits. Students deepen their understanding of scientific content while completing Project Based Learning experiences.

Each curricular component is supported by hands-on experiential discoveries. These include in-class hands on experiments and real world experiences. For example, second grade visits the Kids Space Physics Forest to study force, balance, and motion, potential energy, and kinetic energy. Third grade visits the UCLA observatory during their astronomy study, fourth grade visits Vasquez Rocks to study rocks and minerals, and fifth grade attends the Bodies exhibit during their unit on systems of the human body.

By employing both PBL and FOSS kit methodologies, students compare, analyze, and comprehend a variety of non-fiction material that support each learning module. Students write
developmentally appropriate discourse on their areas of studies, create a “need to know” list based upon a driving question to fuel a unit of study. Students are pulled through the curriculum by a meaningful question to explore an engaging real world problem to solve, or a challenge to design or create something. Before they can accomplish this, students need to inquire into the topic by asking questions and developing their own answers. To demonstrate what they learn, students create high quality products and present their work to other people. Project work involves collaboration in small teams guided by the teacher.

Kindergarten Project Based Learning units and brief descriptions:
Property Changes Unit: Through hands-on activities and experiments, students learn about the different phases of water. Students learn the scientific process of creating a hypothesis, making observations, and coming to a conclusion based on those observations. As is true with all Project Based Learning units, students are encouraged to generate their own questions as to how water changes. Students record their observations of various experiments using Thinking Maps. They analyze their observations and draw conclusions on the different phases of water. Students then broaden their understanding of the phrases of water to the larger environment. Students read a variety of age-appropriate non-fiction materials on clouds, the water cycle, and the watershed. Students conclude the unit with a public presentation of their findings about the different phases of water using the different artistic modalities.

Recycling Unit: Kindergarteners must answer the following driving question: How can we, as kindergarteners, help save Earth? Students research and explore the idea that resources from our Earth can be used in everyday life and how they can be conserved. Students read teacher-created materials, conduct interviews, and play hands-on games in order to learn about different natural resources and how those are used in our lives. Students discuss, in collaborative groups, how they can help the Earth by conserving different resources. Students engage in an inquiry where they weigh and analyze the amount of trash produced in the classroom. They actively try to reduce this amount through strategies that the collaborative groups brainstorm. Students visit a local recycling plant and landfill to learn about where trash goes, how it can be recycled and repurposed. Students also learn about the effects of different trash and if it decomposes. Students then think critically about how their actions directly impact their environment and their world. The unit culminates in a public service announcement where the kindergarteners give tips to the rest of the school community about recycling and reducing trash.

First Grade Project Based Learning units and brief descriptions:
Endangered Animal Unit: First graders engage in hands-on inquiry and research to answer the following driving question: How can we save endangered animals? Students begin the unit with an entry event, a visit to the Los Angeles Zoo, to observe animals and interview experts. Upon returning to school, students discuss what they have observed and generate a list of questions that they need to answer in order to solve the driving question. Students are then engaged in a series of hands-on experiments and simulations where they learn about how animals survive in their respective habitats. Students examine animal artifacts to learn about animal adaptations such as carnivore and herbivore teeth. Students also study owl pellets and horse manure to analyze the diets of carnivores and herbivores. Students then research specific endangered animals such as pandas, cheetahs, rhinos, great white sharks and polar bears. They will read teacher-created science books on these endangered animals. They learn how to record their learning in their science journals through the use of Thinking Maps such as circle maps to list ideas, tree maps to categorize animals, brace maps to list the parts of animals, and double bubble maps to compare and contrast the adaptations of different animals. Students are then given an opportunity to publically present their research in collaborative groups to the rest of the VCES community.
Students are then given an opportunity to discuss animal conservation and human impact with leading experts in the field. Students have contacted Dr. Laurie Marker, the founder of Cheetah Conservation Fund, to research what conservationists do to save endangered animals. The conclusion of the research prompts students into a service learning project where they raise awareness and fundraise for an animal conservation organization.

Plan and Plant Unit: First graders work in collaborative groups to answer the following driving question: How can we, as botanists, design and create a living garden? This cross-curricular project-based unit focuses on plant life cycles and adaptations. Students research different types of gardens, such as vegetable, flower, succulent, and insect gardens. Students research, through experimentation, what plants need in order to survive. Students then visit Descanso Gardens so they can observe different types of living gardens and see how botanists and landscapers think about plant adaptations when they design their gardens. Students then survey the land at school that has been allocated for them to turn into a living garden. They read teacher-created materials that teach about various types of plants and their needs to survive. In groups, students choose plants based on school environment and design a garden. Students grow some plants from seed and some from adult plants. Student are then engaged in a hands-on process to take care of their garden and plants for the remainder of the year. They are able to observe, first hand, a complete plant life cycle. They are observe what the impact of weather is on their plants.

Second Grade Project Based Learning units and brief descriptions:

Balance and Motion Unit: Students interact with materials and share discoveries as to how different objects balance, spin, or roll and come to understand the forces of nature that allow these physical movements. Within the unit, students understand systems that are stable and unstable, force of gravity, how to produce rotational motion using push or pull movements and how to describe the motion of moving spheres. Second grade uses the Foss Kit (Balance and Motion) to drive instruction. Each unit introduces key vocabulary for all learners that helps grow understanding. Embedded within each unit is a pre and post assessment which helps guide instruction for potential small group re-teaching or whole group review. Students are encouraged to generate meaningful questions for conducting careful investigations. The unit includes opportunities to cover cross-curricular areas in mathematics, reading and writing. Students are expected to use content-based vocabulary to communicate observations. Some activities included in the unit are making mobiles, spinning tops and a class size marble run. Student’s experiences are augmented by a field trip to Kidspace Children’s Museum in Pasadena with a visit to their Physics Forest and a special class that emphasizes force and motion. At the museum, students explore real-world physics concepts that support the discoveries being made in the science classroom. Students learn how energy shapes our everyday life through hands-on activities, experiments, and interaction with specific exhibits in the Galvin Physics Forest. Students culminate the unit by creating a classroom size marble run, that shows understanding of potential and kinetic energy and force by gravitational pull. Students are assessed using Foss kit reading and conceptual written assessments as well as authentic assessment and interviews by the teacher.

Life Cycles Unit: In the second grade life cycles Project Based Learning unit, students focus their research and quest for knowledge with the driving question: How do we, as second graders, come to understand and compare life cycles of indigenous California organisms so that we can teach these concepts to kindergarteners? Students are first introduced to a variety of indigenous organisms that cohabit with urban environments in the Los Angeles area by visiting the Natural History Museum’s new exhibit entitled Nature Lab. During this field trip, students observe specimens, videos, and graphics that tell stories about what plants and animals exist in L.A. and how they survive and thrive in and around this urban environment. Students are held accountable to their learning by completing teacher generated learning assessment sheets. Next
students join the Audubon Society at the Sepulveda Basin Wildlife Refuge to explore and identify indigenous and migrating bird species. Students then research and write reports on the insects, birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians that live within the Basin. Students are grouped according to the order they are studying so that they may compare the life cycles of organisms within an order. Students are required to compare and contrast multiple sources for each animal in order to write a comprehensive report. While students are researching, they are also experiencing life cycles first hand by helping to turn eggs in the incubator as we hatch chicks and observing the metamorphosis of Painted Lady caterpillars and chrysalis. To embed understanding, students then create board games that focus on the stages of life cycles of their organism. For making the game, students are grouped by a variety of orders so that they may compare life cycles across orders. Students are assessed throughout the Project Based Learning unit as to how well they access information from non-fiction text, how they write their knowledge in report form and how they convey their knowledge to their peers and to the kindergarten classes.

Third Grade Project Based Learning units and brief descriptions:

Sun, Moon and Planet:  The sun, moon, and planets module has four investigations that focus on Earth’s place in the solar system. In this module students: observe and compare shadows during the school day, relate the position of the Sun in the sky to the size and orientation of an object’s shadow, use physical models to explain day and night, record observations in the night sky, observe and record changes in the Moon’s appearance every day for a month, analyze observational data to discover the sequence of changes that occur during the Moon’s phase cycle, make and interpret the model of Earth, Moon, and Sun systems, classify planets by their various properties, record and display the organization of the solar system graphically and present a solar system musical to the student body upon culmination. Students visit the UCLA planetarium as well. Through each activity students come to understand the context of the lesson through questioning and planning. They come to a physical understanding by doing and observing, manage data by recording, organizing and processing, and conduct analysis by discussing and writing explanations. Within the lesson are embedded assessments. Formative assessments occur on a daily basis. Action during class is recorded, or review of notebooks after class is observed. Embedded assessments provide continuous monitoring of students’ learning and helps the teacher make decisions about whether to review, extend, or move on to the next concept. Benchmark assessments are short summative assessments given after each investigation. Third Grade teachers reinforce these concepts by staging Vacation on Mars: The Solar System for Young Explorers. This musical complements the curriculum resources and is used to improve reading comprehension, vocabulary, performance and music skills, class camaraderie and teamwork.

Environments and Adaptation Unit: Third grade teachers begin this unit by asking the driving question: How can we, as park rangers, teach others to adapt and survive in environments around the country? Within this unit, student learn the five different environments that make up the United States, understand how climate affects the organisms that are indigenous to each climate and how to create geographical maps that represent said climates. Students work in cooperative groups to create survival guides for visitors of their particular bioregion. Students are awarded badges along the way for group cooperation, research, writing and final product. Students learn to make legends, come to understand not only how climates affect animals, but the people who live there as well as the Native American populations pre-contact. Students take a field trip to Charmlee Park to hike through and investigate the unique Chaparral bioregion of the low-lying Los Angeles mountains. This hands on experience helps to solidify understanding of what makes specific bioregions unique.
Fourth Grade Project Based Learning units and brief descriptions:

Rocks and Minerals: The fourth grade science curriculum focuses on rocks and minerals, environments and electricity and magnetism. Fourth grade students study rocks and minerals as part of their solid Earth unit. Students conduct experiments from FOSS kits that include, analyzing “mock rocks,” performing scratch tests to determine mineral hardness, performing a calcite quest by observing calcite’s special property of reacting with vinegar, and investigating and determining mineral properties that include streak and luster. Students take a field trip to Vasquez Rocks in Agua Dulce, to observe geological formations, rock type and density. This science unit is also linked to a non-fiction writing unit on the creation of a field guide to the rocks and minerals present in the Los Angeles Basin. Within each unit is a pre and post assessment to monitor student understanding and gauge mastery of material learned.

Environments: Students study both terrestrial and aquatic environments as part of their study of environments, by answering this driving question: How can we, as environmentalists, create a local environment that sustains aquatic and terrestrial life? Students conduct experiments from the FOSS kits to enhance their understanding of environments as well build terrariums and aquariums in small cooperative groups. Students visit the Santa Monica Pier to get an in-depth understanding of the local aquatic environment and explore food webs, from primary producers to top consumers. As a final product, students build a terrarium or aquarium in cooperative groups that show understanding of the concepts that all organisms need energy and matter to live and grow and that living organisms depend on one another and their environments for their survival.

Electricity and Magnetism: In this unit the driving question is: How can we, as engineers, design and build a machine that turns on a light bulb? Students observe the interaction of magnets with a variety of common objects, learn properties of magnetic poles, create static charge, understand, design, and build simple open, closed, parallel, and series circuits, and learn how to build an electromagnet. This unit is integrated with a non-fiction writing piece that is based upon researching a topic related to electricity or magnetism. As a culminating activity, small cooperative groups design and construct machines that turn on a light bulb using their knowledge of circuitry.

Fifth Grade Project Based Learning units and brief descriptions:

Weather: Fifth grade students study weather by answering the question: How does weather affect different professions? Students study various weather systems through hands-on experiments using the FOSS kit (Water Planet). Firemen, farmers, and pilots speak to students about how weather impacts their work. Students then present causes of extreme weather and how they affect people from various occupations. Students take a three-day field trip to the Catalina Island Marine Institute and culminate the unit by working in teams to produce weather maps and forecasting, which are then presented to our first graders.

Body Systems: Fifth graders study the body systems by answering the question: How does the human body work? They take a field trip to The Bodies Exhibit to gain insight on the various body systems: skeletal, muscular, circulatory, nervous and digestive. Through researching various non-fiction resources and videos, students become experts on one of the body systems and present their findings at our school’s Community Fair, the local library, and CSUN’s health center. Students spend time comparing sources and applying their learning by creating models and posters in small cooperative groups.
Solar System: The final unit that is studied in fifth grade is the solar system. Students answer the question: Why should we be nicer to Mother Earth? Students conduct research on the planets in our solar system by reading comparative non-fiction text, listening to guest speakers, and watching video resources. Student’s final product is the creation of a commercial advertising a particular planet, its special features, and its location in the solar system. Students visit the Griffith Park observatory to experience the solar system in the planetarium and embed their understanding of the position of the planets within the system and their relationship to Earth. This unit is closely aligned with the fifth grade Earth Day curriculum, which teaches students about water problems throughout the world.

References:


Visual and Performing Arts (Non-Core)

Valley Charter Elementary School believes art education is essential to the well-rounded cognitive development of its students. Through the incorporation of the visual and performing arts curricula, students awaken different ways of assimilating information. These applications enable students to learn a deeper way of understanding and can thus apply this understanding towards different areas of study. We find this to be especially important for our socioeconomically disadvantaged students who may not have exposure to and experiences with the arts at home.

An education in the arts helps students develop their “habits of mind, social competencies, and personal dispositions” (Rupert, 2006, p.8). Students who participate in arts learning experiences have the potential to improve their achievement in other realms of learning (Rupert, 2006). Music education has been shown to improve fluency, segmentation, and phonemic awareness (Gromko, 2005). In a national study that served over 25,000 middle and high school students, UCLA researchers found that students with high arts involvement performed better on standardized achievement tests than students with low arts involvement (Rupert, 2006).

By studying art, students are asked to look for key details, to closely observe, and to summarize what they have learned. They are encouraged to ask and answer questions: What was the creator’s purpose? Who was the audience? What does the creator do to get his point across? And key to literary or art criticism, what specific evidence do you have to support your theory? Students are encouraged to see the story behind the work of art, make personal connections and connections between other works of art. In so doing and as required by the CCSS, students develop vocabulary, learn speaking and listening skills, apply critical thinking, and are given an opportunity for dialogue and self-expression. Students’ interpretations are valued and mirrored. Art study is an important way of developing a student’s self esteem. They are taught to agree and disagree about interpretations, which directly supports the book talk we encourage during language arts discussions.

Another important aspect of arts education is that it exposes students to other cultures. Students gain invaluable insight to the art traditions of other cultures. Students can then reflect on their
own lives and cultural traditions more closely. The arts help students better understand their place in the world.

VCES believes that arts inspire self-confidence and helps keep students engaged in school. They are an indispensable aspect of a student’s education. The skills that students learn in arts education can transfer into other disciplines and improve student performance in other subject areas.

VCES teaches the arts through two ways: arts subject specific instruction and arts integration with other core academic subjects. In order to establish meaning and connection, visual and performing arts need to be well integrated into the curriculum. Students also need, however, exposure to arts education through specific instruction, sometimes through specialists or experts. Students need to understand the essential elements and skills of the various arts disciplines.

**Visual Arts (Non-Core)**

VCES believes in creating multiple opportunities for spatial-visual learning for the interpretation of pictorial imagination and expression. Through the study of images, students come to understand the relationships between images and the meaning between space and effect. In conjunction with informing students of the fundamentals of art (color, value, texture, shape, line and form), students are exposed to art as primary object. Students learn how to interpret art objects from multiple perspectives: object appreciation, artist’s cultural influence, artist’s personal life influence and reasons for the object’s creation. Students then are able to learn major historical and stylistic periods of painting, about artist’s lives and times, and critical thinking through interpretation of the artist’s meaning.

Students at VCES progress through increasingly rigorous degrees of the understanding of the fundamental elements of art. Each grade level incorporates the elements of art into its instruction either directly or within Project Based Learning units. Students are introduced to different elements of art and the use of a variety of media. After students establish a foundational understanding of art, they are given the opportunity to visit museums such as MOCA and the Getty to learn how to look at and appreciate art. Students are asked to think not only about individual works of art but also exhibitions and the decisions made to create an exhibition.

In the primary grades, arts instruction focuses on how shapes, lines, and color work together to create art. As early as Kindergarten, students are thinking about how background and foreground influence artwork. Students work with multiple media, such as paint, oil pastels, crayons, and even recycled materials. By creating color wheels, students explore primary and secondary colors, as well as warm and cool colors. In first grade, students find inspiration through Henri Matisse and “paint” with scissors to discover positive and negative space. Second grade further develops these foundational art skills by teaching radial symmetry, design, perspective, and composition. They create murals in groups that require discussion, choice, and cooperation to produce a cohesive work of art. Students are introduced to artists such as Edgar Degas, Pablo Picasso, Andy Warhol, and Ezra Jack Keats.

As students move to the upper grades, art becomes even more integrated into the content areas. After looking at primary source art that shows the Chumash weaving process, third graders experience the challenges of weaving as they create a basket and a rope. In fourth grade, students take a closer look at our California landscape through photography. They take a field trip to Vasquez Rocks and apply their understanding of capturing composition from nature using photography. In fifth grade the there is a great emphasis on art analysis, especially as it relates
primary sources. For example, they compare two versions of the Boston Massacre and compare
the purpose for and political implications of the artist’s representation. Interactive read alouds
support our arts education as a way to teach students about artists and to practice analyzing color
imagery.

Threaded throughout each grade level is a unit that focuses on self-portraiture. Based on Lucy
Calkins’ theory that students should write what they know in order to understand the craft of
writing and to develop their language, VCES believes that teaching the elements of art and style
through the lens of self-portraiture is essential to art appreciation and developmental
understanding. One can see the progression of understanding in our yearbook as childrens
yearbook pictures are accompanied by their study of portraiture for that given year.

Music (Non-Core)
VCES bases its musical education on the Orff-Schulwerk approach. Students are taught by an
Orff master once per week throughout the school year. Orff-Schulwerk approach to musical
education offers a potential for active and creative music making by all children, not just the
musically talented. Orff-Schulwerk develops musicianship through singing, playing instruments,
speech, and movement (Shamrock, 1997). Active music making and movement is the core of the
Orff-Schulwerk approach. In the Orff-Schulwerk process, “aspects of play are developed
consciously to involve learners with the elements of music and movement” (AOSA, 2012, p.2).
Students develop their musicianship by progressing through the following stages of learning:
preliminary play, imitation, exploration, improvisation, and creation. Students learn foundational
music skills by using speech, singing, movement, body percussion, and instrumental play. After
students have established a strong foundation in music and movement, understanding form and
rhythm, students learn music literacy. Students begin understanding the concept of notes aurally.
They then understand notes through the solfege system and rhythmic syllables. Finally, students
are exposed to the standard written notation system and become fluent in reading music notation.

Orff-Schulwerk lessons explore and develop skills through the following means: speech, singing,
movement, and playing instruments. Speech is used to create the feeling of a steady beat.
Students often recite short rhymes with games to develop a sense of pattern and stabilize their
sensitivity to beats. Complex rhythmic elements are introduced later with appropriate speech
examples. Singing is also essential to the development of musical skills. Students often sing
simple songs with accompanying games that provide a basis for strengthening their singing
abilities and developing a sense of tonal relationships. Students begin with the falling minor third
and progress to understand pentatonic scales, and finally to the diatonic scales (major and minor).
Movement is key to developing musical foundation. In primary grades, movement is used to
develop spatial relationships and coordinating the body to the regular, steady beat.

Finally, students develop their musicianship through playing instruments. Students begin with
body percussion. They clap, snap fingers, slap their thighs, and stomp their feet. These motions
are combined into patterns and phrases so that students learn the concept of form in music.
Students then play unpitched hand percussion instruments. Some examples include maracas,
claves, tone blocks, triangles, jingles, finger cymbals, tambourines, cowbells, and various sizes of
the hand drum. These instruments provide students with an exposure to musical texture that can
be used alone and combined in layers. Finally, students can strengthen their musicianship through
playing Orff instruments. Some examples include bass, alto and soprano xylophone, soprano and
alto glockenspiel, and bass, alto and soprano metallophone. Students play these instruments in a
percussion ensemble. In fourth grade, the recorder is added to the repertoire of instruments as a
contrasting melody instrument.
VCES uses the Orff Schulwerk approach to music because it allows students to have a broader artistic experience with music. It is “never music alone” that is emphasized. Music is always taught in conjunction with movement and speech. Music education’s emphasis is on process rather than performance. Students participate at their own musical level. They develop skills for creating ideas within music rather than just replicating ideas.

Performing Arts (Non-Core)
At every grade level, teachers incorporate performing and kinesthetic art into their curriculum. We believe the performing arts give children a unique means of expression that captures their passions and emotions and allows them to explore new ideas, subject matter, and cultures. Giving students the opportunity to express what they have learned in a kinesthetic format allows for a deeper understanding and an opportunity to reach bodily-kinesthetic and musical learners. Some examples of how we incorporate the performing and kinesthetic arts into the curricula at VCES are body movement during Singapore math sprints and fluency work, freeze dance and free movement in first grade, presentation of folk tales by second graders, and musicals from grades three through five on topics specific to social studies or science. Our students culminate the year with a whole school Spring Sing for the parent body. Students learn songs, movement, performance skills and stage direction by participating in this annual event.

In conjunction to presenting and performing, students annually attend performances at the Valley Performing Arts Center at CSUN. This is not only a great opportunity for students to experience live multi-cultural performances, but a way to experience culture within our local community.

Another way in which students at VCES experience multi-cultural performing arts is through Japanese taiko drumming. In first and second grade, students are exposed to foundational Japanese rhythms in enrichment classes. In third grade and above, students are given an opportunity to participate in an after school taiko drumming team and prepare rhythms that reflect Japanese music traditions. Students audition for the team, practice under the guidance of teachers, and celebrate at an end of the year performance for the school community.

For each of the areas of the arts, students at VCES have ample opportunity to dive deeper into curricula and teachers are able to reach children with different learning styles. Well-known professor of cognition, education and psychology at Harvard University, Howard Gardner (1983) notes that students have many different strengths and ways of learning and sharing their learning. VCES provides many opportunities, using the arts as a conduit, to allow children different ways of learning and in return showing what they know and have learned. Using the arts ensures that multiple learning modalities are addressed and students come to a deeper understanding of material that increases the love of learning and a positive learning experience that directly influences self-esteem. Gardner (1997) also states that, “there is now a massive amount of evidence from all realms of science that unless individuals take a very active role in what it is that they’re studying, unless they learn to ask questions, to do things hands on, to essentially re-create things in their own mind and transform them as is needed, the ideas just disappear.” Giving students hands-on opportunities to embody cognitive material and apply that understanding using the arts is an essential element to the broad educational experience at the school.

Arts education is essential to a student’s well being, both personally and academically. An education in the arts gives students a broader scope in which to view the world. Additionally, the skills that students learn in the arts are readily transferable to other subject areas. Students’ learning in the arts enhances their learning in other disciplines and broadens their experiences of the world.
Health and Physical Education (Non-Core)

Health

At Valley Charter Elementary School, we encourage healthy living throughout our community. Our health policy prohibits parents from sending unhealthy foods such as soda and candy with their students to school. Our lunch program is not only NSLP compliant, but the food contains no additives, preservatives, or hormones, and the packaging is environmentally friendly.

In addition to our healthy food policy, we have other school wide initiatives in place that not only meet the requirements of the health standards, but also demonstrate our emphasis on social-emotional development. One of these is Cool Tools, which helps with decision-making and interpersonal communication skills. Some of the Cool Tools components include personal space (bubble space), choice of voice (red voice vs. blue voice), and understanding and accepting multiple perspectives (the kaleidoscope). VCES also uses a protocol called Council, which is the practice of speaking and listening from the heart. More than a class meeting, this structured experience helps students respectfully make decisions, resolve conflicts, and share experiences. By starting Cool Tools and Council as early as kindergarten, they have become a common language that can be quickly referred to by students and teachers.

In the primary grades, children are learning about injury and prevention through the Safe Moves program. This assembly teaches students to safely move throughout their community, be it on bike, in a car, or on foot. After learning the importance of safety in the community, this focus naturally extends to the playground and our parking lot. In conjunction with their blockwork about communities, kindergarten has raised awareness about safety in our parking lot by putting up signs. Through our school garden and cooking experiences, primary grade students are exposed to the importance of making healthy food choices.
In the upper grade, students are becoming more aware of their individual differences and needs. Students take an active part in Generations Day where we invite grandparents to visit our school so we can learn from their life experiences. Upper grade students are role models for the rest of the school, as we expect them to resolve conflicts and relate to their peers appropriately. Fifth grade works with our nearby public library to put on a health fair that uses what they learned in science to educate the community about common diseases. Fifth graders also learn about puberty through a video and discussion.

**Physical Education**

At VCES, we believe that physical education plays a critical role in the development of the whole child, and a quality physical education program has benefits that reach far beyond the field or court. The CDC reports that regular physical activity improves strength and endurance, reduces anxiety and stress, and increases self-esteem. Additionally, it may help improve students’ academic performance, including academic achievement, academic behavior, and factors contributing to academic achievement such as concentration and focus. Our physical education program allows students to develop movement skills in a safe environment that promotes perseverance, good sportsmanship, and teamwork in a developmentally appropriate progression. VCES complies with Ed Code section 51210(g) that requires 200 minutes of physical education every ten days for elementary students.

Students begin by engaging in a warm up where they stretch and prepare their bodies for physical activity. The teacher introduces the focus of the lesson, and demonstrates the skill using one or two verbal cues that are “the critical cues for attaining the stated objectives of the lesson” (Holt/Hale, 1998, p. 5). Following the instruction, the students practice the skill with teacher feedback and corrections are made. They then have the opportunity to use the skill in a game. The session closes with the whole class together and the teacher reminding the students of the day’s objective and the review of the cues taught in the lesson. As a result of our small student to teacher ratio, students are able to get immediate feedback to improve form and accuracy.

Our physical education program is designed to account for the developmental needs of our students and the curriculum makes a spiral progression as the students progress through the grades. Kindergarten students focus on movement concepts, which increase spatial awareness and improve motor skills. They play a number of unconventional games to practice these skills and begin to use equipment such as balls, hoops, and jump ropes. First grade students build on what they learned in kindergarten while beginning to understand the rules and skills to play games on the playground. The curriculum starts with learning the fundamentals of games with a few players, such as four-square and handball. Students are exposed to the rules and skills of team games as well.

Second, third, and fourth grade students hone their skills and “move beyond performing a skill in isolation to using the skill in dynamic situations” (Holt/Hale, 1998, p. 3). Students gain mastery of games such as kickball, soccer, basketball, handball, and tetherball. Fifth grade students continue to build on what they learned, but have the added focus of preparing for the California Physical Fitness Test. They build cardiovascular stamina, strength, and increased flexibility through strategic lessons and games.

**References:**

Adopted Course of Study, CA Ed Code § 51210(g)
Technology

All teachers at Valley Charter Elementary School use technology regularly to enhance and enrich their classroom instruction. Teachers at all grade levels use the Internet on a regular basis to find high-quality resources, and use presentation software such as PowerPoint and websites such as Brainpop to present lessons to the class. Teachers use web-based assessments such as AIMSweb to monitor and record student progress in reading fluency and math computation.

Prior to using the computers, all upper grade students and parents agree to follow the rules and expectations in our Technology Acceptable Use Policy. Students attend assemblies about computer use and cyber safety. One of our primary uses of the computers is to prepare students for the computer-based state standardized assessments. In addition to practicing their typing and keyboard skills, students work with practice assessments to learn how to use the functions and question types they will encounter on the assessment. School staff regularly maintains the equipment and Wi-Fi access.

Since purchasing two laptop carts, students in grades three, four, and five have used the laptops in myriad of ways. Third grade students are introduced to keyboarding skills, use PowerPoint to present content, and create voiceovers for video presentations. Fourth and fifth graders primarily use the computers for research, with an emphasis on safe Internet research practices. They use their research to create PowerPoint presentations and they publish their essays and reports using Word.

Throughout the school year, students prepare to take the Smarter Balanced Assessment. They regularly take computer-based assessments in all classes. Additionally, their frequent use of laptop computers prepares them to use a computer for testing. Finally, in math class students are regularly asked to do sample performance tasks, similar to those they might see on the Smarter Balanced Assessment, as part of their regular coursework.

Transitional Kindergarten

Valley Charter Elementary School shall comply with all applicable requirements regarding transitional kindergarten.

Academic Calendar and Schedules

Charter School shall offer, at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction set forth in Ed. Code section 47612.5, and the number of school days required by California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 11960.

Academic Calendar
Sample Daily Schedules

Our schedule supports student-centered and project-based learning that engages students in literacy work, critical thinking, problem-solving and exploration.
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<tr>
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<th>Activity</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
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First and Second Grades

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Third Grade

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### Instructional Days and Minutes Calculator

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Recruitment

VCES seeks to recruit teachers who embrace a philosophy similar to ours as indicated in the Goals and Philosophy section of this Element. While we seek experienced and knowledgeable teachers who complement our learning community, we are also committed to our teaching assistants who have shown talent and interest in becoming a teacher. Currently, three of our classroom teachers began their careers as teaching assistants at VCES.

Our teacher recruitment process utilize the online job sites, conferences (California Charter Schools Association, Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, et al.), local education job fairs, and agencies (California Teachers on Reserve, Carney Sandoe, et al). Email forwards through educator networking groups such as Edupreneurs, graduate school of education alumni groups, and university alumni groups have also been effective. Website postings in addition to the Charter School website include:

- Edjoin.com
- Essentialschools.org
- Calcharters.org (California Charter Schools Association website)
- Calwesteducators.com
- Craigslist

Guided by the descriptions found in Element 5, the principal and Executive Director seek to hire a diverse, fully certificated staff that has a commitment to constructivist learning theory, project-based learning, data driven instruction and values a highly collaborative teaching environment.

Ongoing Professional Development

Since our inception, professional development has been at the core of our work. Unlike many schools, we invest significant time and funding into providing high quality training for our faculty. As our Charter School has grown, so has our professional development program. Recognizing that professional development is most effective when the attention is to depth, not breadth, in our formative years we focused on one significant curricular area per year. In our first year, the focus was on the implementation of reading and writing workshops and in year two we introduced Singapore Math. In year three, after attending the Buck Institute conference on Project Based Learning, the year’s emphasis was developing PBL across the grade levels. As we have grown into a full faculty, we are now focused on building our capacity in all curricular areas.

The two weeks we spend on professional development before the academic year begins are a unique aspect of our Charter School. During this time, we not only attend to school business and mandatory compliance training, but we launch the professional development focus for the year. Teachers work in collaboration with one another to develop yearlong plans, review recent research on curricular implementation, and study data on their new class.

The work we begin in the summer continues throughout the year, especially on our early release and pupil-free days. To build upon our work in curricular areas or child development, teachers participate in professional book clubs. While most schools only have one time per week to come together, we have pupil-free days strategically placed throughout the year so we can continuously
be coming back to our professional development topics as the year progresses. On these days we work with experts in the field, we evaluate student data, and we reflect on the continuity of curriculum across the grade levels.

Bringing in experts is a priority for us to ensure that our professional development is current and research-based. We have been working with, and will continue to work with, an expert in Singapore math. Our trainer helps us align our math curriculum with the CCSS, models lessons in the classroom, and gives feedback to teachers that he observes. Because there are so many elements of Singapore math, we feel that it is imperative to be constantly honing our skills in all areas of the program. As we move into the next five years, we will continue our efforts to master these components and identify common struggles students have at each grade level. Our goal is to strategize ways to use fluency exercises to close the gaps we recognize in our students.

Another group of experts with whom we are working is Growing Educators. Our time with them is spent strengthening our balanced literacy program through classroom observations, the analysis of student work, and the discussion of current practices. The experts support us in building the continuity of curriculum across grade levels and increasing the rigor of our literacy instruction. We have started this year by working on building teacher efficacy in delivering mini-lessons and small group instruction. Our constant goal is to examine and close the achievement gap in language arts. As a result, through our professional development in the next charter cycle, we plan to continuously be evaluating how our literacy program is meeting the needs of our subpopulations.

Our dedicated faculty not only actively attends school-provided professional development but they seek additional opportunities to grow as educators. Our school culture of mutual respect and collaboration has made teachers feel comfortable opening their classrooms to each other. Because our students work with specialists, teachers are able to not only use that time to plan collaboratively, but they can observe each other and co-teach to build their own capacity in any given area. Our skilled teachers have many strengths and value learning from each other.

As we look to the future, professional development at VCES will focus on closing the achievement gap and increasing the effectiveness of our instruction. Over the next five years, we will continue our robust professional development program in following areas:

- Balanced literacy
  - Mini-lessons
  - Strategy groups
  - Analysis of student data
  - Closing the achievement gap
  - Interactive read aloud and student conversations
- Language development
  - Implementation of new ELD standards
  - Explicit language instruction
- Singapore Math
  - Fluency work to build automaticity
  - Aligning math instruction with CCSS, including Smarter Balanced style assessments

**MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS**

**WASC ACCREDITATION**

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If Charter School serves students in grades 9-12, Charter School shall obtain Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation before Charter School graduates its first class of students.

Since our constructivist, project-based educational program emphasizes individualization and data driven instruction, our special needs populations (English Learners, Gifted and Talented Students, Students Achieving Below Grade Level, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged/Low Income Students and Students With Disabilities) can receive differentiated instruction that focuses on their needs and capitalizes on their strengths. Coupling this with a number of other essential components can ensure that students with special needs receive the most effective and individualized education possible. The essential components of the program include:

1. Small class sizes which allow the teachers to truly know their students;
2. A significant amount of instructional planning time;
3. A culture among teachers of openness and collaboration, including weekly team planning sessions and regular professional development activities, allowing teachers to learn from each other’s varying expertise in handling learning differences;
4. Ongoing communication between teachers and parents and a commitment to work together for the education of their children;
5. Various forms of assessment that are used to guide instruction;
6. Learning goals that are clearly articulated; and
7. High expectations for all students.

**English Learners**
Charter School is required to timely identify potential English Learners (ELs) and provide them with an effective English language acquisition program that affords meaningful access to the school’s academic core curriculum. Instructional plans for English Learners must be (1) based on sound educational theory; (2) adequately supported with trained teachers and appropriate materials and resources; and (3) periodically evaluated to make sure the program is successful and modified when the program is not successful.

On an annual basis (on or about October 1), Charter School shall submit a certification to the LAUSD Charter Schools Division (CSD) that certifies that Charter School will either adopt and implement LAUSD’s English Learner Master Plan or implement Charter School’s own English Learner Master Plan. If Charter School chooses to implement its own EL plan, the plan shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

- How English Learners’ needs will be identified
- What services will be offered
- How, where, and by whom the services will be provided
- How the school will evaluate its EL program each year, and how the results of this evaluation will be used to improve the program, including the provision of EL services

Each year, Charter School shall provide to the CSD a report on its annual EL program assessment. Upon request, Charter School shall provide a copy of its current EL Master Plan to the CSD.

Charter School shall administer the CELDT/ELPAC annually in accordance with federal and state requirements.

Charter School shall reclassify English Learners in accordance with federal and state requirements.

Charter School shall ensure that it will provide parent outreach services and meaningfully inform parents with limited English proficiency of important information regarding school matters to the same extent as other parents.
"Students achieve (second-language acquisition) significantly better in programs that teach language through cognitively-complex content, taught through problem-solving, discovery-learning in highly interactive classroom content.... In the long term, students do less well in programs that focus on discrete units of language taught in a structured, sequenced curriculum with the learner treated as a passive recipient of knowledge." -- Virginia P. Collier

VCES shall comply with federal, state, and district mandates regarding English Learner education and the classification of EL students. We shall meet all requirements of federal and state law relative to equal access to the curriculum for English Learners. Our goal is to meet the educational needs of all students in an environment that fosters an appreciation and understanding of other languages and cultures.

English Learners (ELs) have full access to VCES’s educational program. All students will develop as English speakers, readers, and writers, and all cultures and languages are honored and integrated into the community as much as possible. At all times, our students’ primary language is honored and valued as both an instructional tool and a learning resource for all students in the class. The entire school community is enriched by the multilingual and multicultural qualities of its students.

Process for Identifying English Learners

A Home Language Survey is solicited from every parent on the enrollment form given upon the student’s admittance. The purpose of the Home Language Survey is to identify students who come from homes where a language other than English is spoken. The survey is equitable, comprehensive, and not based on prior assumptions. Children of parents who list a language other than English in response to any of the questions of the Home Language Survey will be tested with the initial California English Language Development Test which will determine actual English language proficiency. Students who score Early Advanced or Advanced on the initial CELDT will be classified as Initially Fluent English Proficient (IFEP) and students who do not will be classified as English Learners (ELs).
The initial CELDT assessment is performed within 30 days of enrollment with children who have not previously been enrolled in a California Public School.

Parent Notification of Language Status

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, requires schools to provide many different kinds of information and notices to parents about their children’s school, academic progress, teachers, and more. VCES makes reasonable efforts to present the information in an understandable format and in a language parents can understand.

VCES notifies parents of children identified for participation in an English Learner program no more than 30 days after the start of the school year. For a child identified as in need of an EL program after the start of the school year, parents are notified within two weeks of placement in a program.\(^2\)

VCES notifications to parents include the following:

1. The reasons for identifying the child as Limited English Proficient and for placing the child in a language instruction educational program for EL students.
2. Annual notification of the child’s level of English proficiency, including how the level was assessed and the status of the child’s academic achievement.
3. The instructional methods to be used in the program in which the child is participating or

\(^2\) The thirty-day requirement applies to students who are entering a California public school for the first time or for students who have not yet been CELDT tested. All other students who have indicated a home language other than English will continue with annual CELDT testing based upon the date last tested at the prior school of enrollment.
might be assigned to.
4. How the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of the child and specific exit requirements of the program.
5. How the program will help the child learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards.

How English Learners are Assessed and Process/Criteria for Reclassification

It is the goal of VCES for students to progress towards reclassification at a minimum of one ELD level per year. Students who fail to make adequate progress measured by progress reports and report card grades will be referred to the Student Success team for intervention.

The initial California English Language Development Test is administered to each incoming student whose Home Language Survey indicates that a language other than English is spoken in the home within 30 days of enrollment. The CELDT is also administered annually to EL students to measure their language acquisition progress.

Review of student progress is ongoing and begins in September, with the review of the previous year’s CST scores and report card grades. In mid spring, after annual CELDT scores become available, ELD folders will be reviewed. If the standards check off sheet and work samples indicate Average Progress or Advanced Progress for the identified ELD level and CELDT scores also meet the requirements listed below, the student will move forward on to the second step of the Reclassification process.

The reclassification team (which includes the teacher and the Principal) reviews teacher recommendations and overall successful classroom performance in academic areas as indicated by report cards, and benchmark/summative assessment type tests. When the student scores Basic or above on the ELA portion of the California Standards Tests, and achieves an overall score of 4 or 5 on the CELDT with no subtest score lowers than a 3, and receives a “3” or above in English Language Arts on a progress report, the reclassification team will recommend the student be reclassified to RFEP (Reclassified Fluent English Proficient) and parents will receive a notification letter.

Educational Program for English Language Acquisition

At VCES, students are grouped in mainstream classes that implement ELD and SDAIE strategies. Teachers use modeling, graphic organizers and visual aides to support students’ recognition of essential information in all academic subject areas.

Elementary school teachers are mindful of the stages of language acquisition and differentiated instruction. Students at the Beginning and Early Intermediate stage of language acquisition are still learning how to read, write, listen and speak academic English and will benefit most from ELD strategies. Students at the Intermediate Level and above are taught to use academic English skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking to learn content and will benefit most from SDAIE strategies.

Pedagogy

Other major components of the VCES pedagogical approach include:
1. Teach to the Highest: A classroom environment that values the student and provides authentic opportunities for use of academic language and maintains the highest standards and expectations for all students (Goodman, Cummins, Smith, Collier).

2. Brain Research - Metacognition
   - A time to activate and focus prior knowledge: inquiry charts, brainstorming and clustering (Costa, Rico, Kovalik).
   - An opportunity to insure a common base of understanding and scaffolding: direct experiences, films, visuals, teachers read aloud (Krashen, Collier, Vygotsky).
   - Students taught and encouraged to organize their thoughts and writing utilizing multiple intelligences: graphic organizers, summaries, visuals, or contextual and semantic clues (Costa, Rico, Krashen, Long, Gardner, Lazear).
   - Metacognitive aspect of teacher and students modeling of how an answer was obtained, not merely the correct answer (Costa, Farr).

3. Brain Research and Student Language Acquisition
   - A student-set purpose for learning: motivating, stated result or goal; student choices; inquiry charts (High, Scope, and Hunter).
   - Chances to negotiate meaning from language and text: co-op activities for problem solving, social skills; heterogeneous grouping (Long, Kagan, Vygotsky, Cummins, Shefelbine).

4. Reading and Writing To, With, and By Students:
   - Reading that stresses the purpose and joy before the skills; that begins with writing and reading one's own language; continues with immense amounts of being read to; time for silent sustained reading and silent sustained writing with oral book sharing and quick shares (Goodman, Krashen, Flores, Traill).
   - Direct teaching of concepts, vocabulary or necessary skills; text patterns, academic language, writing patterns; decoding skills (UCI Writing Program, Bettances, Chall, Reading Task Force, Shefelbine, Adams).
   - Writing that stresses the metacognitive use of reading and writing as a process; use of clustering/brainstorming to initiate writing; acceptance of developmental level of writer; editing and revising done only in appropriate place in the process. No over-editing in early drafts; not all writing brought to editing stage; use of conferencing methods to guide student through the process; use of logs for personal responses to texts or issues; use of interactive journals (Goodman, Graves, Calkins, Rico, UCI Writing Project).
   - Shared reading/writing experiences are only a few strategies for a language functional environment; use of personal interaction values oral ideas and cross-cultural respect (Traill, Cummins).

5. Active participation in all components of the unit, negotiating for meaning, comprehensible output (Long, Cambourne, Cummins, Swain, Goldenburg).

6. A theme and strategies to foster respect, trust, identity, and voice (Cummins, Berman, Baron).
7. Ongoing assessment and closures to units using a variety of assessment tools to provide reflection on what has been learned, how it was learned and what will be done with the information. Assessment, ongoing and summative, based on strengths as well as needs (Costa, Wiggins, Farr, Treadway, Lazear).

In this way, VCES expects students to acquire English language skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and thinking and to proficiently meet grade level ELA standards.

Services and Supports

VCES hires CLAD certified, experienced teachers with full understanding of Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) and/or trained in the nationally recognized program Project GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design). During professional development, teachers will be trained in specific methods of instruction for a successful English immersion education in a multilingual classroom.

VCES provides primary language support to English Learners in the form of bilingual teachers, bilingual aides, bilingual students, and bilingual parent volunteers.

Process for Monitoring Progress

In order to document progress, VCES teachers receive an ELD folder for each of their EL students that is used to monitor individual progress at the targeted ELD level. These folders include the ELD standards by level (Beginning, Early Intermediate, Intermediate, Early Advanced, and Advanced) and span grades K-2, and 3-5. Teachers use these folders to collect student work samples, and check of mastery towards each ELD standard.

It is the goal of VCES for students to progress at a minimum of one ELD level per year.

Gifted and Talented Students and Academically High-Achieving Students

The needs of our Gifted and Talented Students (GATE) and academically high-achieving students are addressed in an inclusive way, consistent with our individualized instructional philosophy. The guidelines for GATE instruction call for differentiated instruction, instructional strategies that suit the nature of gifted students, ample opportunities for higher-level conceptual thinking, and time for gifted students to work together.

Our ultimate goal is to provide all students with access to a rigorous, well-rounded curriculum, and to provide all students with extended, enriching, and critical thinking activities that have appropriate depth and pace. We provide a text-rich environment and numerous opportunities for students to delve into subjects more deeply. Many projects are open-ended and give students a chance to adapt their assignments to suit their abilities, interests, and learning modalities. Students often work collaboratively, discussing ideas and concepts, and brainstorming solutions to math, science, and history problems.

Other ways in which our teachers enhance the curriculum for gifted and high achieving students is based on the research of Kaplan (1986):

- Present content that is related to broad-based issues, themes or problems.
- Integrate multiple disciplines into the area of study.
- Present comprehensive, related and mutually reinforcing experiences within an area of study.
- Allow for the in-depth learning of a self-selected topic within the area of study.
- Develop independent or self-directed study skills.
- Develop productive, complex, abstract and/or higher level thinking skills.
- Focus on open-ended tasks.
- Develop research skills and methods.
- Integrate basic skills and higher level thinking skills into the curriculum.
- Encourage the development of products that challenge existing ideas and produce “new” ideas.
- Encourage the development of products that use techniques, materials and forms.
- Encourage the development of self-understanding. For example, recognizing and using one's abilities, becoming self-directed, appreciating likenesses and differences between oneself and others.
- Evaluate student outcomes by using appropriate and specific criteria through self-appraisal, criterion-referenced and/or standardized instruments.

Students will be identified through a search and referral process based on VCES teachers’ recommendations. We will continue to use LAUSD’s GATE identification process and policy and will reimburse the District for testing and processing on a fee-for-service basis. If VCES students participate in the Saturday Conservatory of Fine Arts, we will reimburse on a fee-for-service basis.

Underachieving Gifted

For those students who are gifted but do not have the task commitment, we will apply similar tactics that address our “at risk” population. By fostering active student involvement in their own learning we will increase student interest and enthusiasm. Teaching self-monitoring and self-management skills will help these students set their own goals and persevere when working on a project. Grouping them with more motivated students – both gifted and struggling - will also provide a peer attitudinal model to help engage them in their own learning.

Students Achieving Below Grade Level

Meeting the needs of our students performing below grade level begins with a systematic and data-based process for identifying these students. This process commences with teachers making observations in their classrooms and gathering data from formal assessments, rubrics, and work samples. Norm referenced assessments such as AIMSweb fluency scores, TCRWP leveled reading assessments, and AIMSweb math benchmarks are closely analyzed. A concerned teacher immediately communicates with the student’s previous teacher to clearly identify the reason meaning is breaking down. Together they do not simply identify “math” as an area in need of improvement, or even “multiplication of large numbers.” Teachers work collaboratively to look at the root of the gap in learning. They consider external factors (such as parent involvement), physical factors (such as glasses), and affective factors (such as motivation and feelings about school). If concerns persist after this vertical communication, the administrator will arrange for a pre-intervention plan (PIP) meeting. This meeting is comprised of all of the students’ previous teachers and administration. The team generates ideas and resources that can help the student succeed. After the plan has been put into place, the team will reconvene to decide if a formal Student Success Team (SST) meeting needs to be held with a parent present. This SST may lead to an IEP assessment if needed.
As research has shown, early intervention is vital and VCES strives to provide intensive and meaningful intervention for any student that needs it (Fuchs and Fuchs, 2006). Teachers are constantly working with struggling students in small groups to reteach and pre-teach vocabulary, skills, and concepts. Based on Response to Intervention research, the length of intervention is based on the progress that we see a student making, though it is often around six to eight weeks (East, 2006).

In both language arts and math, most of our intervention is done in small groups or one on one. As a result of our small class sizes and the presence of teaching assistants in every classroom, students have the benefit of immediate feedback and intervention. Intervention in math takes the form of small group review and preview groups. Teaching assistants work with students on basic facts, to increase automaticity, and the teacher reteaches a concept to a group of students. Teaching assistants also shadow a lesson, by teaching a lesson to a small group of students at the same time the teacher presents it to the rest of the class. Teachers modify assignments, either by reducing the number of assigned problems or by giving a different type of assignment.

In language arts, teachers use the independent reading and writing time to meet with small groups on a specific skill. Strategy groups in reading cover topics such as monitoring for sense, phonics, and determining importance. Teaching assistants work with below grade level students on fluency practice by having them read aloud from grade level texts and from texts on their independent reading level. By working with small groups, teachers are able to closely monitor students’ progress and give immediate feedback to students. Our RSP teacher works with some below grade level students using resources such as Lindamood-Bell, which provides strategies that help develop phonemic awareness and understanding of sounds.

Building the relationship between home and school is a crucial way we meet the needs of our below grade level students. Teachers communicate with parents through email, weekly notes, conferences, and phone calls. Knowing that not all students have access to books at home, teachers make their classroom libraries available to students. This is especially crucial for our students struggling with reading because it is imperative that they read books on their independent level. Throughout this process, the student is constantly informed of his progress and the learning goals on which he is working. Sometimes this means having honest conversations about the progress that needs to be made. We value making sure parents and students are an active part of the intervention process.

Fuchs and Fuchs (2006) report that most of the assessments used to monitor students performing below grade level are for tracking a student’s progress. They write, “It is a form of dynamic assessment because its metric is change in students’ level or rate of learning” (Fuchs and Fuchs, 2006, p. 94). VCES teachers are continuously gathering information to inform their instruction and monitor below grade level students’ progress. AIMSweb is a critical part of our process for formally monitoring student progress. Using these fluency and math assessments, teachers are able to assess students more frequently than the benchmarks that all students take. The data gathered through the AIMSweb portal is transferred to the student’s teacher as he moves onto the next grade. This allows his/her next teacher to make informed decisions about intervention as soon as the school year starts.

We also monitor the progress of our below grade level students through Excel spreadsheets. These spreadsheets contain formal assessment scores for each student in math, reading comprehension, language development, and fluency. They are color coded so that teachers and administration can easily get an overview of a student’s progress. Teachers update these
throughout the year and the information contained in them is passed onto the student’s next teacher.

References:


Socio-Economically Disadvantaged/Low Income Students

We realize that many of the neighborhoods we serve face multiple challenges, and that some of the children within these communities may lack supports and provisions that exist for other families. VCES teachers and staff are trained to recognize symptoms and behaviors indicative of a child’s need for additional supports, including issues relating to hunger, extreme poverty, and individual families’ challenges to meet their child’s needs. Our Student Success Team will be responsible for identifying students and families who might need additional resources or supports, including what currently exists within our school as well as referrals to outside community service organizations.

As we have emphasized throughout this petition, we believe that all students can learn, succeed, and are capable of academic excellence, and that includes our students in need. Our emphasis on community and the responsibility we have to one another within that community extends to the parents and families of our students as well.

Our academic program provides both in and out of classroom opportunities so that all students have enriching experiences that provide both context and knowledge for classroom projects. Classrooms take a minimum of two field trips per year to venues such as the fire station, Descanso Gardens, Leonis Adobe, Underwood Farms, Chumash Indian Museum, Skirball Museum, and the Catalina Island Marine Institute. As technology is so well integrated, students without computers at home have many opportunities in class during the school day to become comfortable and competent with using technology for academic purposes. Students type writing workshop publications, make PowerPoints and iMovies for project-based learning, and do research for reports. The use of computers is also a way for teachers to modify assignments based on student needs and preferred learning modalities. Together these opportunities allow us to create unifying and enriching school-based experiences for all of our students, regardless of their socio-economic background.

The progress of socioeconomically disadvantaged students is monitored through our AIMSweb data system, including reading fluency and math computation fluency. As with all students, teachers and staff analyze data/assessments and the instructional program is modified accordingly.

VCES offers a whole day program: school schedule from 8:15 am - 2:40 pm, and we implement a before- and after school program, as funding allows, to accommodate working families. The Charter School also offers free lunch to students who qualify.
**Students with Disabilities**

**Federal Law Compliance**
Charter School shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.

**Special Education Program**
Charter schools must ensure that no student otherwise eligible to enroll in their charter school will be denied enrollment due to a disability or to the charter school’s inability to provide necessary services. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure the recruitment, enrollment and retention of students with disabilities at charter schools.

Prior to LAUSD Board of Education approval, Charter School will execute a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) by and between LAUSD and Charter School regarding the provision and funding of special education services consistent with the requirements of the LAUSD Special Education Local Plan Area (“SELP”) Local Plan for Special Education.

**SELP Reorganization**
The Los Angeles Unified School District is approved to operate as a single-District SELPA under the provisions of Ed. Code § 56195.1(a) and intends to continue operating as a single-District SELPA as in the current structure but has created two school sections (District-operated Programs and Charter-operated Programs) under the administration of one single Administrative Unit pursuant to a reorganization plan approved by the Board of Education on January 4, 2011 (149/10-11). Full implementation of the reorganized LAUSD SELPA commenced in the 2013-2014 school year requiring all District-authorized charter schools to elect one of the three options available under the LAUSD SELPA. Prior to an Option election, all District-authorized charter schools were required to participate as a school of the District under the District-Operated Programs Unit. Prior to the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year, all District-authorized charter schools, other than those that had previously executed an Option 3 Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”), were required to execute a new MOU setting forth the LAUSD SELPA option election for the remainder of the charter petition term. The Charter-operated Program schools do not have LEA status but will function in a similar role in that each charter school will be responsible for all special education issues including services, placement, due process, related services, special education classes, and special education supports. Charter schools may apply for membership in the Charter-operated Program section of the SELPA. These schools will receive support from a Special Education Director for the Charter-operated Programs.

**Modified Consent Decree Requirements**
All charter schools approved by the LAUSD Board of Education are bound by and must adhere to the terms, conditions and requirements of the Chanda Smith Modified Consent Decree (“MCD”) and other court orders imposed upon the District pertaining to special education. The MCD is a consent decree entered in a federal court class action lawsuit initially brought on behalf of students with disabilities in LAUSD. It is an agreement of the parties approved by the federal court and monitored by a court-appointed independent monitor. The MCD includes nineteen statistically measureable outcomes and facilities obligations that the District has to achieve to disengage from the MCD and federal court oversight. All charter schools are required to use the District’s Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual and Welligent, the District-wide web-based software system used for online Individualized Education Programs (“IEPs”) and tracking of related services provided to students during the course of their education.

As part of fulfilling the District’s obligations under the MCD, student level data requests from District-operated and Charter-operated schools are made on a regular basis. The requested data must be submitted in the Office of the Independent Monitor’s (“OIM”) required format in accordance with the OIM’s required timelines and as follows:

- End of Year Suspension
District ID, CSIS ID, last name, first name, date of birth, gender, grade, date of suspension, number of days suspended, and reason for suspension.

- **Statewide Assessment Data** *(Including Charter Schools)*
  The usual file including District ID.

- **Norm day**
  District ID, CSIS ID, last name, first name, date of birth, gender, grade, location code, school name, and local district for all students enrolled on norm day.

- **CBEDS** *(Including Charter Schools)*
  All Students enrolled as of December 1 of each school year

  District ID, CSIS ID, last name, first name, date of birth, gender, grade, location code, school name, and local district for all students enrolled on norm day.

- **Dropout** *(Including Charter Schools)*

  District ID, CSIS ID, last name, first name, middle name, date of birth, grade, last location, school name, and local district

- **Monthly SESAC and Suspension data** *(Including Charter Schools)*

- **Graduation roster from all LAUSD schools** *(Including Charter Schools)* with 12th grade SWD

The MCD requires charter schools to implement the District’s integrated student information system which is referred to as My Integrated Student Information System (MiSiS). MiSiS is a suite of applications which is designed to capture all District student data. All charter schools are required to utilize MiSiS beginning August 1, 2014 upon the release of Milestone 8 which includes the final set of functionalities required to comply with the MCD. Upon charter school full utilization of MiSIS, the list of required data above will automatically be captured within MiSIS.

**A TYPICAL DAY**

Valley Charter Elementary School is a dynamic and engaging school community. A typical day begins with warm greetings and parents connecting on the basketball court or in the parking lot. Students can be seen smiling while skipping to their classrooms. Teachers may be busy preparing lessons or preteaching new concepts to small groups of students. VCES students are excited to be at school!

On some days, the halls are quiet as students delve into books, math problems or hands-on projects. On other days, we may have parent volunteers helping in classrooms or going on field trips. Parents can be seen touring prospective families, while the principal may be showing classrooms to other school administrators and teachers. It is not unusual to see special guests, whether live or via Skype (such as a NASA astronaut), speaking with students in their classrooms. We have musical performances and professional authors and storytellers on campus. We celebrate Earth Day with a full day of learning about environmental issues, and we welcome grandparents to connect with our students on Generations Day.

Our outdoor spaces are often buzzing. While our coach is teaching physical education to one class, students can be seen building a Chumash tulle hut. While students are making
observational notes about plant growth in the first grade garden, others are picking up trash, helping with our clean school initiative. During recess, a lively football game may be seen while other students practice jumping rope or shooting hoops.

Community building and leadership are a regular part of every day at VCES. Student council takes an active role in making sure that students are respecting the school, especially during lunch cleanup. Comprised of third, fourth, and fifth grade representatives student council meets on Fridays to develop schoolwide activities. Fifth grade students lead our weekly assemblies on Thursday mornings. During this time of community building, we discuss schoolwide issues or initiatives, recognize and celebrate students’ achievements, and set goals for the week.

While the activities of the day are never typical, what is constant is our rigorous academic program, our students’ hard work, and the learning that comes alive with all that we do.

A Typical Day in Kindergarten

Kindergarteners begin their day with a morning meeting which helps to build community in the classroom through our flag salute and calendar work. Students then transition into English Language Development (ELD) where they are learning the mechanics of language and developing their oral language. We use Singapore math to guide our math instruction. Students work on a math sprint which helps build fluency. After the sprint, students meet the teacher on the rug for the math lesson. Students practice the skill with the teacher for guided practice and then try it independently. Following math, students have snack and recess where they are learning to navigate their social lives, solve problems, and work collaboratively. Students return to the classroom from recess, and come to the rug with their reading partners to get ready for reading workshop. In reading workshop, students learn a reading strategy, watch it demonstrated for them, and then try it on the rug with the teacher. Students then are sent off to their book nooks where they can try the strategy that was taught. Next, students transition into writing workshop. In writing workshop, students learn different strategies that writers use. The strategy is modeled for the students, students try it on the rug for guided practice, and then are sent off to work on their own writing. Recess and lunch follow writing workshop. After lunch, kindergarteners engage in an interactive read aloud where they are implicitly taught different comprehension skills, such as envisioning, synthesizing, and character study. The afternoons rotate between social studies, where students are learning about their community through block work, and science, where students are conducting experiments and learning about the world around them. Our days end with a council, shared reading, or reflection circle. Throughout the day, you will hear students singing, see them moving their bodies, and witness the excitement that naturally comes with a kindergarten classroom.

A Typical Day in First Grade

First graders begin the day with a morning meeting where they build community by sharing about their lives. Then, they do calendar math and shared reading where they study a poem or short excerpt and focus on phonemic awareness skills, fluency, and writing mechanics. We transition into a full hour of Singapore math where the students first engage in a variety of fluency activities such as timed math quizzes, counting games, and activities promoting the part/part whole relationship. Students then delve into the math lesson and learn new concepts using concrete manipulatives, pictorial representations, and abstract numbers ending with an independent follow up. After recess, first graders engage in half an hour of word study where they sort words by word families, manipulate sounds, and play games that reinforce phonemic awareness. Following word
study, students participate in reading workshop where they focus on a reading strategy and then read independently at their reading level while the teacher works with small groups and confers with individual children. Immediately after, the students jump into writing workshop where they also learn a writing strategy that they then implement independently in their notebooks. After writing workshop, we have ELD time where we frontload vocabulary, teach sentence frames, and further support phonemic awareness development. Upon returning from lunch, students engage in interactive read aloud where they practice reading skills such as envisioning and synthesizing information. Then, the children practice solving differentiated word problems. The rest of the afternoon is typically spent on projects for our science and social studies units. You will see students working cooperatively to plan their restaurant simulation, dressing in clothing from long ago, or planting seeds in their student-designed garden. The day ends with interactive writing that recaps our shared experiences in first grade.

A Typical Day in Second Grade

A typical day in second grade begins with shared reading and language development, where students practice vocabulary, grammar, and fluency. Math begins with fluency practice to reinforce concepts or in preparation for future content. A lesson includes a sprint, or drill, problem solving, concept development, and independent practice. Small group instruction may be present as needed. After recess, students are taught a mini-lesson in reading and then writing workshop, in which they practice a strategy modeled by the teacher. After the mini-lesson, they are dismissed for independent work, conferring, and small group instruction. The last part of the morning is dedicated to word study or phonics. The afternoon begins with an interactive read aloud, which includes shared thinking, partner talk, and grand conversations. The remaining of the afternoon is reserved for social studies or science, Project Based Learning, or art. Students might spend this time making life cycle board games, building a model city, or studying the art of Ezra Jack Keats following a visit to the Skirball Cultural Center.

A Typical Day in Third Grade

Third graders begin the day with language development. Following a discussion about the day’s agenda, students prepare for the interactive aloud. They grab their reader’s notebooks and a pencil and meet on the rug to practice important reading skills such as inferring the author’s message and developing theories about characters. Next, the teacher models a new reading strategy, students practice the strategy with a partner, and then go to their reading spots to continue working on the strategy in their independent book. During this 40 minutes of independent reading time, students are reading books at their levels or meeting with the teacher for a strategy group or a one-on-one conference. Following recess, students come in and warm-up for math with a timed math sprint. Then, they engage in math fluency to strengthen their automaticity. Students learn a new conceptual skill and then practice the new skill independently. Writing workshop follows math. The new writing strategy taught is practiced with a partner and then students continue using the strategy in their own writing pieces. Students return to class to engage in a shared reading lesson during which time, they work on developing their reading fluency, finding the main idea, and various word work activities. Students then spend time in their word study groups to learn and practice new spelling patterns. Afterwards, students work in their Project Based Learning groups to learn about various social studies or science topics. During this time, students may be making a video about L.A. history, practicing for their solar system musical, earning “survival” badges as they study ecosystems.

A Typical Day In Fourth Grade
With a spring in their step, the fourth grade students enter our rooms prepared to engage in an academically exciting voyage. A typical day starts with morning meeting where students engage in discussion about building character as students and community members. Guided by Words Their Way methods, the students are in different word study groups based on their needs. Small group instruction time also supports our English Learners’ vocabulary development and understanding of how the English language works. We begin reading workshop where the children participate in book clubs, strategy groups, and 50 minutes of independent reading. Using all of the components of Singapore math students share multiple ways to solve a problem and continuously work on mastering their math facts. Once math has finished, we move into writing workshop. Students excitedly come to the rug with their composition journals in hand. Similar to reading workshop, we conduct a mini-lesson, and engage with students as they write with gusto. The students return from lunch, ready for read aloud before launching into social studies and science. In the afternoon, fourth graders are busy using the computers to research regions of California, practicing for their living museum, or visiting our local library to find books on notable Californians.

A Typical Day In Fifth Grade

The first thirty minutes of the day are devoted to language development. During this time students are divided into two groups based on their level of English development. Students can be seen debating current event topics or getting a preview of upcoming content. Next is the reading block, which includes a teacher directed mini-lesson, 55 minutes of independent sustained reading, and small strategy groups. During math time, students engage in fluency exercises that help them practice their automaticity of math facts in an active way. Math continues with a mini-lesson, during which the teacher models a skill and students try similar problems on their individual whiteboards. The math lesson concludes with independent practice and enrichment for students with accelerated abilities. Using the workshop structure, writing includes direct instruction in grammar, conventions, and genre study. Our language arts component continues into the afternoon with an interactive read aloud that provides scaffolding for students to try out critical thinking with some support from the teacher. Students think about, write about, and discuss literature in partnerships. The school day ends with a block of Project Based Learning. Fifth graders can be seen attending Prince Henry School of Navigation, participating in a Revolutionary War battle reenactment, or preparing for their overnight trip to the Catalina Island Marine Institute.
Element 2 – Measurable Pupil Outcomes and Element 3 – Method by which Pupil Progress Toward Outcomes will be Measured

“The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. “Pupil outcomes,” for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school’s educational program. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both schoolwide and for all groups of pupils served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 47607. The pupil outcomes shall align with the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(B).

“The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured. To the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(C).

Measurable Goals of the Educational Program

Charter School shall meet all statewide content and performance standards and targets. Ed. Code §§ 47605(c)(1), 60605.

Charter School shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (Local Control Funding Formula) and AB 484, as they may be amended from time to time, including all requirements pertaining to pupil outcomes.

Standardized Testing

Charter School agrees to comply with and adhere to state requirements for participation and administration of all state-mandated tests. If Charter School does not test with the District, Charter School hereby grants authority to the State of California to provide a copy of all test results directly to the District as well as Charter School.

The Charter School affirms that, to the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card.

Measurable Goals of the Educational Program

Measuring Pupil Outcomes: Summative Assessment Performance Targets

Charter Element 2: Measurable Pupil Outcomes

Charter School Outcomes that Align with the State Priorities

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(B), following is a table describing the Charter School’s outcomes that align with the state priorities and the Charter School’s goals and actions to achieve the state priorities, as identified in Element 1 of the charter.

The LCAP and any revisions necessary to implement the LCAP, including outcomes and methods of
measurement listed below, shall not be considered a material revision to the charter, and shall be maintained by the Charter School at the school site.

**STATE PRIORITY #1 — BASIC SERVICES**

The degree to which teachers are appropriately assigned (E.C. §44258.9) and fully credentialed, and every pupil has sufficient access to standards-aligned instructional materials (E.C. § 60119), and school facilities are maintained in good repair (E.C. §17002(d))

**ALL STATE PRIORITY #1 GOAL TARGETS TO BE MET BY FALL, 2015 AND ANNUALLY THEREAFTER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-priority A – Teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. 100% of teachers are “highly qualified” for their teaching assignment, appropriately assigned and hold the appropriate credential, including subject matter and EL authorizations.</td>
<td>Implement hiring criteria to ensure “highly qualified” teachers</td>
<td>Annual personnel data and credential analysis</td>
<td>100% students are taught by a highly qualified teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In addition to holding the appropriate credential, teachers will have experience in mission appropriate pedagogy.</td>
<td>Ongoing weekly professional development and teacher collaboration, informed by teacher input and needs analysis</td>
<td>Candidate interviews, classroom observations, professional development activities</td>
<td>100% of teachers are trained/have experience in mission appropriate pedagogy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. VCES will maintain a staff retention rate of at least 85%.</td>
<td>Implement a performance review process that results in individual growth and improvement plans for teachers</td>
<td>Annual review of salary/benefits and retention rates</td>
<td>85% retention of staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sub-priority B – Instructional Materials**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The school will provide 100% of students with sufficient access to 100% of standards-aligned instructional materials</td>
<td>Annual inventory and purchase of needed instructional materials to maintain sufficient materials and ensure</td>
<td>Annual resource and instructional material inventory</td>
<td>100% of students have access to standards-aligned materials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
necessary to participate fully in the educational program. All materials are aligned to CCSS or other adopted state materials.

**Sub-priority C – Facilities**

**Goal to Achieve Sub-priority:** School facilities are clean, conducive to learning, and do not pose health or safety risks to students. Students take ownership in the cleanliness and safety of the school. Health and safety issues, when they arise, are addressed within 24 hours, and resolved within 5 business days.

**Actions to Achieve Goal:** Custodial staff addresses health and safety issues, when they arise, within 24 hours, and resolved within 5 business days.

**Method of Measurement:** Monthly facilities walkthrough; ongoing log of facility maintenance, repair issues, and discussion in weekly assemblies.

**Measurable Outcomes:** Fewer than 2 safety related incidents occur, none of which pose a significant threat to student safety.

**State Priority #2 – Implementation of Common Core State Standards**

Implementation of Common Core State Standards, including how EL students will be enabled to gain academic content knowledge and English language proficiency

**All State Priority #2 goal targets to be met by Fall, 2015 and annually thereafter**

**Sub-priority A – CCSS Implementation**

**Goal to Achieve Sub-priority:** All teachers are proficient at developing common core-aligned units of study anchored by performance tasks/measures.

**Actions to Achieve Goal:**
- Ongoing professional development on standards-based instruction (including CCSS, Next Generation Science Standards, and CA social studies) for all teachers, with emphasis on how to make CCSS accessible to ELL students for all teachers
- Creation of CCSS-aligned writing rubrics for use across the curriculum

**Method of Measurement:** Unit reviews and lesson tuning protocols

**Measurable Outcomes:** >95% of student learning experiences demonstrate strong alignment to CCSS.

**Sub-priority B – EL Students & Academic Content Knowledge**

**Goal to Achieve**

**Actions to Achieve**

**Method of**

**Measurable Outcomes**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBPRIORITY</th>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>MEASUREMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All EL students are accessing CCSS-aligned curriculum, taught by teachers who have EL certification. All EL students will receive instruction that incorporates SDAIE strategies.</td>
<td>-Ongoing professional development on standards-based instruction (including CCSS, Next Generation Science Standards, and CA social studies) for all teachers, with emphasis on how to make CCSS accessible to ELL students for all teachers</td>
<td>Unit reviews and lesson tuning protocols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Creation of CCSS-aligned writing rubrics for use across the curriculum</td>
<td>100% of EL students taught CCSS-aligned content by teachers with EL certification in core content areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUB-pRIORITY C – EL STUDENTS & ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EL students will progress at least one level on the CELDT with the goal of redesignating all students. Individual test scores will be reviewed at the beginning of the school year and individual student targets will be set.</td>
<td>-Analysis of CELDT, RFEP, and subgroup achievement results</td>
<td>CELDT, ELPAC annual assessments</td>
<td>The percentage of students achieving proficiency on SBAC is 5-10% greater than comparable LAUSD schools. The school will increase the number of English Learners who make adequate annual progress by at least 5% each year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Set individual student targets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Unit reviews and lesson tuning protocols</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STATE PRIORITY #3— PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

*Parental involvement, including efforts to seek parent input for making decisions for schools, and how the school will promote parent participation*

**ALL STATE PRIORITY #3 GOAL TARGETS TO BE MET BY FALL, 2015 AND ANNUALLY THEREAFTER**

**SUB-pRIORITY A – ACHIEVING/Maintaining Parental Involvement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Parent/Faculty Council will remain active, meeting monthly, and will give input in key decision-</td>
<td>-Maintain weekly EBlasts and quarterly newsletters</td>
<td>Monthly Parent/Faculty Council meeting attendance and</td>
<td>Regularly attending members of Parent council will be representative of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Maintain monthly parent council meetings and work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
making processes. to diversify membership minutes student demographics

- Maintain a Parent Education and Engagement Committee to develop quarterly parent education and outreach

2. At least 90% of parents will report feeling satisfied with the school.

- Maintain weekly EBlasts and quarterly newsletters
- Maintain monthly Principal Coffees
- Maintain a Parent Education and Engagement Committee to develop quarterly parent education and outreach

Annual Program Evaluation Survey results

90% of parents are satisfied with level of parent engagement in their education

| SUB-PRIORITY B – PROMOTING PARENT PARTICIPATION |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY** | **ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL** | **METHOD OF MEASUREMENT** | **MEASURABLE OUTCOMES** |
| Parents will complete the suggested number of volunteer hours. | - Quarterly volunteer logs analysis | Volunteer logs analysis | 80% of parents will complete the suggested number of volunteer hours |

**STATE PRIORITY #4 — STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

Pupil achievement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

- **California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) statewide assessment**
- **The Academic Performance Index (API)**
- **Percentage of pupils who have successfully completed courses that satisfy UC/CSU entrance requirements, or career technical education**
- **Percentages of ELs who make progress toward English language proficiency as measured by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) and/or English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC)**
- **EL reclassification rate**
- **Percentage of pupils who have passed an AP exam with a score of 3 or higher**
- **Percentage of pupils who participate in and demonstrate college preparedness pursuant to the Early Assessment Program (E.C. §99300 et seq.) or any subsequent assessment of college preparedness**

**SUB-PRIORITY A – CAASPP: ELA/LITERACY AND MATHEMATICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE</th>
<th>METHOD OF</th>
<th>MEASURABLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUBPRIORITY</strong></td>
<td><strong>GOAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>MEASUREMENT</strong></td>
<td><strong>OUTCOMES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA Measurement of Academic Progress and Performance (CMAPP) on statewide assessment (as available) Annually, the percent of VCES students scoring Advanced or Proficient on the state mandated assessments in ELA and Math will meet or exceed percentages at comparable LAUSD schools. All subgroups will achieve at least a 5% increase in proficiency annually.</td>
<td>- Implement CAASPP assessments annually and analyze data by subgroup - Implement interventions for students falling below proficiency - Continued teacher professional development on data analysis, differentiation, and intervention strategies - After school enrichment and intervention for students below proficient</td>
<td>The school will analyze State and local disaggregated assessment results, identify areas of curricular and student needs and make curricular adjustments and develop student action plans.</td>
<td>Student performance for all subgroups will meet or exceed growth targets. 80% of all students will score proficient/advanced on the CMAPP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### SUB-PRIORITY B – API

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</strong></th>
<th><strong>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</strong></th>
<th><strong>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</strong></th>
<th><strong>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Academic Performance Index (API) (as available)</td>
<td>- Implement interventions for students falling below proficiency - Continued teacher professional development on data analysis, differentiation, and intervention strategies - After school enrichment and intervention for students who are below proficient</td>
<td>The school will analyze State and local disaggregated assessment results, identify areas of curricular and student needs and make curricular adjustments and develop student action plans.</td>
<td>Student performance for all subgroups will meet or exceed growth targets. 80% of all students will score proficient/advanced on the CMAPP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SUB-PRIORITY C – UC/CSU COURSE REQUIREMENTS (OR CTE) - NOT APPLICABLE

### SUB-PRIORITY D – EL PROFICIENCY RATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</strong></th>
<th><strong>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</strong></th>
<th><strong>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</strong></th>
<th><strong>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of ELs who make progress toward English language proficiency as measured by the California English</td>
<td>- Systematically collect home language survey and implement ELL diagnostic assessment - Administer the CELDT</td>
<td>CELDT, ELPAC annual assessments analysis</td>
<td>Annually, 90% of students progress at least one level on the CELDT and ELPAC annually</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Language Development Test (CELDT) and/or English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC) Annually, 90% of students progress at least one level on the CELDT and ELPAC annually

### SUB-PRIORITY E – EL RECLASSIFICATION RATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All students will progress toward RFEP each year. 100% of students will be RFEP by culmination.</td>
<td>-Implement data analysis system to capture all RFEP requirements and track student progress toward meeting requirements</td>
<td>CELDT, ELPAC annual assessments</td>
<td>100% of students will be RFEP by culmination.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SUB-PRIORITY F – AP EXAM PASSAGE RATE - NOT APPLICABLE

### SUB-PRIORITY G – COLLEGE PREPAREDNESS/EAP - NOT APPLICABLE

**STATE PRIORITY #5— STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**

Pupil engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

- **F. School attendance rates**
- **G. Chronic absenteeism rates**
- **H. Middle school dropout rates (EC §52052.1(a)(3))**
- **I. High school dropout rates**
- **J. High school graduation rates**

### ALL STATE PRIORITY #5 GOAL TARGETS TO BE MET BY FALL, 2015 AND ANNUALLY THEREAFTER

### SUB-PRIORITY A – STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VCES students will have an average 97% attendance rate. All statistically significant subgroups will demonstrate proportional rates of absenteeism.</td>
<td>-Provide all students with an interest-based engaging, applied project-based program of study that maintains high levels of motivation and interest among students</td>
<td>Monthly attendance reporting disaggregated by subgroup.</td>
<td>97% attendance rate. All subgroups demonstrate proportional rates of absenteeism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Monthly analysis of PowerSchool attendance data by subgroup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Quarterly FOCUS and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### CALPADS reports analysis

### **SUB-PRIORITY B – STUDENT ABSENTEEISM RATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</strong></th>
<th><strong>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</strong></th>
<th><strong>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</strong></th>
<th><strong>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| VCES will have a chronic absenteeism rate of less than 5%. | - Monthly analysis of Student Information System attendance data by subgroup  
- Calls to parents of chronic absentees (or SARB Board reporting as needed)  
- Quarterly Student Information System and CALPADS analysis | Monthly attendance reporting disaggregated by subgroup. | <5% chronic absenteeism. All subgroups demonstrate proportional rates of absenteeism. |

### **SUB-PRIORITY C – MIDDLE SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES – NOT APPLICABLE**

### **SUB-PRIORITY D – HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES - NOT APPLICABLE**

### **SUB-PRIORITY E – HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES - NOT APPLICABLE**

### STATE PRIORITY #6 — SCHOOL CLIMATE

*School climate, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:*

- D. Pupil suspension rates  
- E. Pupil expulsion rates  
- F. Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness

### **ALL STATE PRIORITY #6 GOAL TARGETS TO BE MET BY FALL, 2015 AND ANNUALLY THEREAFTER**

### **SUB-PRIORITY A – PUPIL SUSPENSION RATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</strong></th>
<th><strong>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</strong></th>
<th><strong>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</strong></th>
<th><strong>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Pupil suspension rates will remain <5%. Suspension rates are proportional across sub-groups. Special Education students are not disproportionally suspended. | Provide all students with an interest-based engaging, applied project-based program of study that maintains high levels of motivation and interest among students  
- Quarterly Student Information System and CALPADS reports analysis | Quarterly disaggregated Student Information System and CALPADS suspension data. | Pupil suspension rates remain <5%. Suspension rates are proportional across sub-groups. |
### Sub-priority B – Pupil Expulsion Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
<th>Method of Measurement</th>
<th>Measurable Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupil expulsion rates will remain &lt;3%. Expulsion rates are proportional across sub-groups. Special Education students are not disproportionally expelled.</td>
<td>Quarterly Student Information System and CALPADS reports analysis</td>
<td>Quarterly disaggregated Student Information System and CALPADS suspension data.</td>
<td>Pupil expulsion rates remain &lt;3%. Suspension rates are proportional across sub-groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sub-priority C – Other School Safety and School Connectedness Measures (Surveys)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
<th>Method of Measurement</th>
<th>Measurable Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% of students and parents are satisfied with level of parent satisfaction and student engagement</td>
<td>Annual disaggregated Program Evaluation Survey analysis</td>
<td>Annual Program Evaluation Surveys</td>
<td>&gt;90% overall satisfaction rate from students and parents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### State Priority #7 – Course Access

The extent to which pupils have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study, including programs and services developed and provided to unduplicated students (classified as EL, FRPM-eligible, or foster youth; E.C. §42238.02) and students with exceptional needs.

“Broad course of study” includes the following, as applicable:

- Grades 1-6: English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, health, physical education, and other as prescribed by the governing board. (E.C. §51210)
- Grades 7-12: English, social sciences, foreign language(s), physical education, science, mathematics, visual and performing arts, applied arts, and career technical education. (E.C. §51220(a)-(i))

### Goal to Achieve Sub-priority

All students (grades 1st to 5th) will participate in a broad course of study that includes instruction in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, visual/performing arts, health and physical education.

- Annually evaluate the effectiveness of class assignments and impact on kids
- Annual master schedule audit

### Measurable Outcomes

100% of students will be enrolled in classes that include language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, visual/performing arts, health and physical education.

### State Priority #8—Other Student Outcomes

Pupil outcomes, if available, in the subject areas described above in #7, as applicable.

### Sub-priority A – English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal to Achieve Sub-priority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
<th>Method of Measurement</th>
<th>Measurable Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
All students will demonstrate at least one year of growth toward grade-level proficiency in reading and language arts.

- Formative, ongoing reading fluency assessments analysis
- Progress report analysis

CA Measurement of Academic Progress and Performance
- Progress reports
- Report cards
- Reading fluency and other formative assessments

All students will demonstrate at least one year’s growth as measured by reading fluency assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUB-pRIORITY B – MATHEMATICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All students will demonstrate at least one year of growth toward grade-level proficiency in mathematics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Formative, ongoing math fluency assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Progress report analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA Measurement of Academic Progress and Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Fluency and other formative assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All students will demonstrate at least one year’s growth as measured by math fluency assessments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUB-priority C – SOCIAL SCIENCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% of VCES students will score proficient (rubric score of 3) or advanced (rubric score of 4) as measured on the end of the semester progress report in the area of Social Studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Project rubric analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Progress report analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project rubrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% of students will score proficient or advanced in the area of social science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUB-priority D – SCIENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% of VCES students will score proficient (rubric score of 3) or advanced (rubric score of 4) as measured on the end of the semester progress report in the area of Science.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Project rubric analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Progress report analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project rubrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% of students will score proficient or advanced in the area of science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUB-priority E – VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

75% of VCES students will score proficient (rubric score of 3) or advanced (rubric score of 4) as measured on the end of the semester progress report in the area of Visual and Performing Arts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 75% of VCES students will score proficient (rubric score of 3) or advanced (rubric score of 4) as measured on the end of the semester progress report in the area of visual and performing arts. | - Project rubric analysis  
- Progress report analysis | Project rubrics  
Progress reports  
Report cards | 75% of students will score proficient or advanced in the area of visual and performing arts |

**SUB-PRIORITY F – PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% of all 5th grade students will achieve Healthy Fitness Zone as measured by the FitnessGram.</td>
<td>FitnessGram test results analysis</td>
<td>FitnessGram</td>
<td>90% of all 5th grade students will achieve Healthy Fitness Zone as measured by FitnessGram</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUB-PRIORITY G – HEALTH (GRADES 1-6 ONLY)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUB-PRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 75% of VCES students will score proficient (rubric score of 3) or advanced (rubric score of 4) as measured on the end of the semester progress report in the area of Science. | - Project rubric analysis  
- Progress report analysis | Project rubrics  
Progress reports  
Report cards | 75% of students will score proficient or advanced in the area of science |

**SUB-PRIORITY H – FOREIGN LANGUAGES (GRADES 7-12 ONLY) - NOT APPLICABLE**

**SUB-PRIORITY I – APPLIED ARTS (GRADES 7-12 ONLY) - NOT APPLICABLE**

**SUB-PRIORITY J – CTE (GRADES 7-12 ONLY) - NOT APPLICABLE**

**MEASURING PUPIL PROGRESS TOWARD OUTCOMES: FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT**

To determine the effectiveness of our educational and instructional program, VCES uses a variety of measurement strategies to gauge student progress in meeting and exceeding defined student outcomes. These assessments are consistent with the goals of our instructional program, that is, students will meet and/or exceed the Common Core State Standards for their grade level. VCES conducts all State-mandated assessments including the California Assessment of Pupil Performance and Progress (CAASPP) and the CELDT/English Language Proficiency...
Assessments for California (ELPAC).

During the school year, teachers engage in both formative and summative, and informal and formal assessments. Teachers use a variety of measures in order to ensure that instruction is differentiated to meet each individual student’s needs. Comprehensive information gained through varied assessments helps teachers redirect resources and drives instruction by promoting and supporting self-reflection among students and teachers. Each assessment is strongly connected to learning outcomes and instructional methods used in the classroom (e.g., differentiated instruction). In addition, they collectively focus on student progress towards grade level content standards and areas where more intervention or referrals are required.

As teachers introduce new concepts, assessments such as graded class work, observations, individual or group projects requiring real world application of concepts, and teacher or publisher created quizzes inform the pace and differentiation of instruction. Summative assessments such as teacher or publisher created unit tests allow more formal evaluation of students’ progress towards meeting standards and allow teachers to make instructional decisions regarding the next unit of study and plan for remediation as needed. End of the year benchmark tools help measure growth made by individual students.

**Benchmark Assessments:**

Benchmark measurements of language arts and mathematics are taken at the beginning of the school year to determine the current level of academic achievement of all students. These same benchmarks are given again throughout the school year, and at the end of the year to monitor academic growth.

In English Language Arts, teachers administer the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Reading Assessments (Levels A-Z) to assess students’ independent reading levels and AIMSweb to assess reading fluency. Both of these assessments are used at least three times a year as benchmarks for student progress.

The TCRWP assessments assist teachers in identifying a student’s independent guided reading level. Guided reading levels are based on the standards developed by Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell (1999). The levels are based on book features and level of content, and increase in complexity as a student develops his/her reading proficiency. At VCES, we follow the grade level equivalencies outlined below. These grade level outcome expectations are rigorous and align with the CCSS expectations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Guided Reading Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G</td>
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<td></td>
<td>H</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
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<td></td>
<td>J</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each TCRWP assessment includes a running record and literal and inferential comprehension questions. Completed assessments are analyzed so teachers can identify specific student needs in the area of reading and support students individually or in small strategy groups.

To assess reading fluency, VCES teachers use AIMSweb, a universal screening, progress monitoring, and data management system that supports tiered instruction. Benchmark assessments are given three times per year and are then used either weekly or monthly to progress monitor students not meeting grade level expectations. We evaluate student progress based on the national percentile norms developed by AIMSweb. The 50th percentile is our schoolwide minimum target for meeting grade level expectations.

Math computation fluency is also assessed three times per year using AIMSweb and expectations are guided by national norms. Again, teachers use the data to monitor the progress of students and make curricular decisions regarding curriculum and enrichment or intervention strategies.

References:

Other Formative/Summative Assessments:
Below is a chart of some assessments that are used to determine learning outcomes:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Tool</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Progress Measured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language Arts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCRWP Reading Assessments</td>
<td>Kinder - Fifth</td>
<td>3-6 times a year</td>
<td>Guided Reading Level including: Fluency- Intonation and accuracy, comprehension (literal and inferential), retelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIMSweb Letter Name and Letter Sound Recognition</td>
<td>Kinder - First</td>
<td>3-6 times a year</td>
<td>Mastery of the alphabet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIMSweb Reading Fluency Assessments</td>
<td>First - Fifth</td>
<td>3 times a year, and as needed</td>
<td>Fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCRWP High Frequency Word Assessments</td>
<td>Kinder - Second</td>
<td>3-6 times a year</td>
<td>High frequency word recognition, fluency, and automaticity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student/Teacher One on One Reading and Writing</td>
<td>Kinder - Fifth</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>Reading skills and strategies including: comprehension, fluency, decoding, making meaning, monitoring for sense, analyzing internal and external plot lines, mood, theme, author’s message, plot structure, character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-created Reading Engagement Inventory</td>
<td>Kinder - Fifth</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>Writing skills and strategies including: editing, revising, spelling, developing, voice, grammar and mechanics, use of figurative language, descriptive details, show not tell, using domain specific vocabulary, use of dialogue, sequencing Behavioral skills and strategies including: engagement, focus, stamina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORE Phonics Assessment</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Engagement, behavior, stamina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words Their Way</td>
<td>First - Fifth</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>Word Study including but not limited to spelling, word patterns, prefixes, suffixes, phonemes, diphthongs, digraphs, etymology, Greek and Latin roots, vowel/consonants, homophones, homographs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-created writing rubrics and TCRWP on-demand assessments</td>
<td>Kinder - Fifth</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>All writing standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Logs</td>
<td>First - Fifth</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>Amount of reading, stamina, genres read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand conversations, small group, and partner conversations</td>
<td>First - Fifth</td>
<td>Daily or Weekly</td>
<td>Listening and speaking skills, auditory and inferential comprehension, ability to analyze characters, plot, setting, etc., language development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELD Portfolios</td>
<td>Kinder - Fifth</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Language development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readers' Notebooks</td>
<td>Third - Fifth</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>Reading comprehension, analysis of reading, applying strategies, critique of reading, synthesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Unit Reading Assessments</td>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Reading comprehension and genre knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIMSweb Fluency</td>
<td>Kinder - Fifth</td>
<td>Benchmarks three times per year and as needed</td>
<td>Fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mathematics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIMSweb Math Computation Fluency</td>
<td>First - Fifth</td>
<td>Benchmarks three times per year and as needed</td>
<td>Math computation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIMSweb Number Identification</td>
<td>Kinder</td>
<td>Benchmarks three times per year and as needed</td>
<td>Number identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore Math and teacher-created end of unit assessments</td>
<td>Kinder - Fifth</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Math standards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

VCES uses a balance of classroom assessments and normed-based assessments to measure the progress of our students. Classroom assessments include tests from our Singapore math curriculum, writing publications, spelling pattern lists, and PBL presentations and tests. Data from these sources is gathered daily and analyzed by teachers just as often. When analyzing classroom data teachers take into consideration how the class did as a whole and how an individual did. Teachers do not just look at overall scores or if a question is right or wrong, but they analyze data by looking for trends and common mistakes. Data is also gathered from norm-based assessments, such as AIMSweb assessments for fluency and math and the TCRWP reading assessments. By using a consistent assessment in every grade level, the faculty is able to look at an individual student’s scores from year to year as well as trends in a grade level’s performance.

Data is analyzed to inform instruction on a daily basis, at the end of units, and annually. It is also analyzed by looking at classes, individual students, and grade levels. In writing, teachers use on-demands, at the start of the unit, to plan mini-lessons and small groups. The teacher will make observations about what areas individual students or the majority of the class needs help with. The teacher can also identify students’ strengths and plan strategy groups that will extend their current skills. Other classroom assessments, such as math tests and mid-unit quizzes, are analyzed to inform the teacher about what topics need to be retaught. Teachers use formal assessments, including TCRWP reading assessments and AIMSweb fluency and math assessments, to form strategy groups. If a student scores below the 50th percentile in fluency, that student receives extra lessons on fluency and her progress is monitored through the online web portal. Teachers are constantly collaborating, reevaluating, and monitoring student progress to make sure that their instruction matches the level of their students.

Data is not only analyzed to inform daily instruction, but it is used to monitor and improve our Charter School’s programs and operations on a larger scale. A composite view of students’ scores is stored in Excel spreadsheets, which are reviewed and evaluated regularly at faculty meetings and by the principal. By organizing data in this way, administrators and faculty are able to look at trends across grade levels and see what school-wide changes need to be made. After analysis of our students’ performance on the fluency portion of the TCRWP assessments, administration noticed, what research shows: there was a clear connection between fluency and comprehension rates. This observation resulted in a school wide focus on fluency and the
adoption of the AIMSweb normed assessments. Similarly, a review of the data made it abundantly clear that our most successful students in math had a strong number sense and high rate of automaticity. For this reason, faculty has increased the amount of time that math fluency is a preview of skills, not just a review. There has also been a great emphasis on bilateral counting, to increase students’ automaticity and flexibility with numbers. A third way we have used data to improve our educational program and operations is the addition of Thinking Maps to our curriculum. This implementation was a direct result of an analysis of data on our English Learners and research that shows the positive impact of frames for organizing thinking. Administration also felt Thinking Maps were an important addition to our curriculum because it was implemented in both elementary and middle schools, ensuring that there is a common language for organizing thinking.

Results from these myriad assessment activities are collected and analyzed continuously in order to drive program improvement across all facets of the school. We regularly report on and distribute information about school progress to the school community including, but not limited to:

- Summary data showing student progress toward the school’s goals and outcomes from assessment instruments and techniques as described in this section, including dissemination of the School Accountability Report Card (SARC).
- Summary data from an annual parent satisfaction survey.
- Summary data regarding standardized test scores, and pupil progress and expectations.

**GRADING, PROGRESS REPORTING AND PROMOTION/RETENTION**

**Grading and Progress Reports**

VCES teachers and administrators encourage parents to become involved in their child’s learning process and outcomes. Students are graded on classroom assignments using a four-point rubric. The faculty has created comprehensive CCSS-aligned progress reports for each grade level. Progress is measured on a rubric scale from 1 – 4. Progress reports are issued twice a year and parents attend formal parent–teacher (or parent-student-teacher) conferences twice a year.

Annually, the Charter School leadership team presents to the parents and the Board results of the CAASPP testing, API, AYP, school assessments, and other student data that has been compiled and analyzed. This data is used by the Board to review the effectiveness of the school’s academic program.

**Student Retention Policy**

If a student is not making adequate academic progress (or social/emotional progress in kindergarten) and becomes a candidate for retention, the Charter School will notify the parent in writing and will also contact the child’s parent by phone. The child’s teacher will consult with the principal and parent in each case concerning possible retention. In all cases, parents will be encouraged to remain involved throughout the process. Without parental agreement as part of the decision to retain, the success of the retention is questionable. After interventions have been implemented and the results documented, a collaborative decision to retain may be made.
Element 4 – Governance

“The governance structure of the school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(D).

GENERAL PROVISIONS

As an independent charter school, Charter School, operated as or by its nonprofit public benefit corporation, is a separate legal entity and shall be solely responsible for the debts and obligations of Charter School.

Charter School shall comply with the Brown Act and the Public Records Act.

All employees and representatives of Charter School, including members of Charter School’s governing board, members of school or governing board committees or councils, school administrators, and managers, shall comply with federal and state laws, nonprofit integrity standards, and LAUSD’s charter school policies, regarding ethics and conflicts of interest.

Charter School shall ensure that, at all times throughout the term of the Charter, the bylaws of its governing board and/or nonprofit corporation are and remain consistent with the provisions of this Charter. In the event that the governing board and/or nonprofit corporation operating Charter School amends the bylaws, Charter School shall provide a copy of the amended bylaws to CSD within 30 days of adoption.

Charter School shall send to the CSD copies of all governing board meeting agendas at the same time that they are posted in accordance with the Brown Act. Charter School shall also send to the CSD copies of all board meeting minutes within one week of governing board approval of the minutes. Timely posting of agendas and minutes on the school website will satisfy this requirement.

The District reserves the right to appoint a single representative to the Charter School governing board pursuant to Ed. Code section 47604(b).

TITLE IX, SECTION 504, AND UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Charter School shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), including any investigation of any complaint filed with Charter School alleging its noncompliance with these laws or alleging any actions which would be prohibited by these laws. Charter School shall notify all its students and employees of the name, office address, and telephone number of the designated employee or employees.

Charter School shall adopt and publish complaint procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited by Title IX or Section 504.

Charter School shall adopt and implement specific and continuing procedures for notifying applicants for admission and employment, students and parents of elementary and secondary school students, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with Charter School, that Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of sex or mental or
physical disability in the educational programs or activities which it operates, and that it is required by Title IX and Section 504 not to discriminate on any such basis.

Charter School shall establish and provide a uniform complaint procedure in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, including all applicable requirements of California Code of Regulations, title 5, sections 4600 et seq.

Charter School shall adhere to all applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding pupil fees, including Ed. Code sections 49010 – 49013, and extend its uniform complaint procedure to complaints filed pursuant to Ed. Code section 49013.

Charter School shall extend its uniform complaint procedure to complaints pursuant to the local control funding formula. Ed. Code § 52075.

**LEGAL AND POLICY COMPLIANCE**

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and District policy as it relates to charter schools, as they may be amended from time to time.

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal and state reporting requirements, including but not limited to the requirements of CBEDS, CALPADS, the Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999, and Ed. Code section 47604.33.

**RESPONDING TO INQUIRIES**

Charter School, including its nonprofit corporation, shall promptly respond to all inquiries, including but not limited to inquiries regarding financial records from the District, and shall cooperate with the District regarding any inquiries. Charter School, including its nonprofit corporation, acknowledges that it is subject to audit by LAUSD, including, without limitation, audit by the District Office of the Inspector General. Charter School shall provide the District with current and accurate contact information for the school, school administrators, and Board members.

If an allegation or other evidence of waste, fraud, abuse, or other material violation of law related to Charter School’s operations, or breach of charter, is received or discovered by the District, Charter School shall cooperate with any resulting investigation undertaken by the District and/or the Office of the Inspector General Investigations Unit.

**NOTIFICATION OF THE DISTRICT**

Charter School shall notify the Charter Schools Division in writing of any citations or notices of workplace hazards, investigations by outside regulatory or investigative agencies, lawsuits, changes in corporate or legal status (e.g. loss of IRS 501(c)(3) status), or other formal complaints or notices, within one week of receipt of such notices by Charter School. Unless prohibited by law, Charter School shall notify the CSD in writing of any internal investigations within one week of commencing investigation.

**STUDENT RECORDS**

When a student transfers for any reason from Charter School to any other school, Charter School shall transfer a copy of the student’s complete cumulative record within 10 school days of
receiving a records request from the receiving school. In the event Charter School closes, Charter School shall comply with the student records transfer provisions in Element 16. Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Ed. Code section 49060 et seq., regarding rights to access student records and transfer of records for youth in foster care.

**Non-profit Public Benefit Corporation**

VCES is operated by Valley Charter School, a California non-profit public benefit corporation with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. Valley Charter School also operates Valley Charter Middle School ("VCMS").

The Charter School will operate autonomously from the District, with the exception of the supervisory oversight as required by statute and other contracted services as negotiated between the District and the Charter School. Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(c), the District shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of the Charter School, operated by a California non-profit public benefit corporation, or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the Charter School as long as the District has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

The Valley Charter School Articles of Incorporation, and Bylaws, and Conflict of Interest Code are included in Tab 3.

**Board of Directors Responsibilities, Composition and Member Selection**

**Responsibilities**

The Valley Charter School Board of Directors ("Board of Directors” or “Board”) is responsible for all legal and fiduciary matters involving both VCES and VCMS. The Board provides fiscal accountability by approving and monitoring budgets and other financial matters. The Board also helps ensure effective organizational planning by approving long range goals and annual objectives, and monitoring such issues as health and safety, and the use and maintenance of facilities. The Board has the responsibility for hiring and evaluating the Executive Director. Approving the yearly budget, contributing to the financial well-being of the school, fiscal oversight, compliance, and upholding the mission of the school as outlined in the charter are essential responsibilities of the Board. In accordance with our school culture, the Board strives for consensus in making decisions and taking actions. If it cannot be reached, decisions are made by majority vote. See Tab 3 Bylaws.

The Board of Directors attend an annual in-services for the purposes of training individual board members on their responsibilities with topics to include at minimum Conflicts of Interest and the Brown Act. The Board will partner with CCSA and/or other experienced board governance professionals to provide in-service trainings on the Brown Act, conflicts of interest and other charter school governance practices.

The Board creates committees as needed to address issues related to fulfilling the mission or operational needs of VCES. Committees may include: Development, Governance/Nominating Committee, Finance, Strategic Planning and Assessment, and Site Development.

The Board may initiate and carry on any program or activity or may otherwise act in a manner which is not in conflict with or inconsistent with or preempted by any law and which are not in conflict with this charter or the purposes for which schools are established.

**Composition of Board, Election, and Terms of Office**
The Board of Directors is made up of Directors with expertise in education, finance/accounting, and nonprofit and community organizations. The Board of Directors consists of at least five (5) and no more than twenty-five (25) members. Currently, the Board has nine (9) Directors. The Governance/Nominating Committee of the Board, if appointed, will interview and propose all candidates to the full Board for vote. Families of current VCES students and families of current VCMS students each elect one parent representative to the Board annually. The Board of Directors will NOT include the Executive Director or School Principal, but will include an LAUSD representative, at the District’s election, in accordance with Education Code Section 47604(b). The composition of the Board will be as set forth in the Bylaws. Each Director on our Board serves for a two (2) year term, and may be elected to serve up to four (4) consecutive two (2) year terms. The current Board roster can be found on the intake checklist and resumes may be found in tab 7. The Valley Charter Schools’ Board of Directors is comprised of individuals with expertise in education, both public and private sector, finance, site oversight and development, public relations, human resources, non-profit and legal. There is a combination of elected parents and non-parent volunteers. Together we ensure the physical and emotional safety of students and staff, sound and ethical fiscal policies and operations, provide guidance and direction regarding school vision and mission, monitor how well students are achieving and the integrity of charter petition implementation.

No employee of Valley Charter School shall have any voting rights on the Board of Directors or be a member of the board.

Process for Selecting Board Members
Any member of the community may refer a potential candidate to the Board’s Governance/Nominating Committee, if appointed, for consideration either when there is a mid-term vacancy or an upcoming expiration of a regular Board term. The Governance/Nominating Committee will meet with all prospective candidates to determine whether or not to recommend them as candidates to the Board and whether they fit the stated needs of the Board recruitment strategy. If the candidate meets the needs of the Board at that time, the Governance/Nominating Committee will present the Nomination and the candidate’s resume during a Board meeting. If any Board members have questions or want to meet the potential member, the Governance/Nominating Committee will facilitate such a meeting. The Board strives for unanimous support for new Board Members, but per the Bylaws, a simple majority is all that is needed.

If a Nominating Committee is not appointed, Board membership will be determined by simple majority vote.

Governance Procedures and Operations
Board members meet monthly and more often as needed, and in accordance with the Brown Act. All Board meetings are open to parents, the community, and staff and language interpreters are made available upon request. Notice of Board meetings are posted in accordance with the Brown Act on our community email forum and in public places around the Charter School site. Meetings are noticed in accordance with Brown Act requirements. The Regular meeting schedule is publicized at the beginning of every academic year and each meeting is noticed 72 hours prior to the meeting along with the agenda. Special meetings are noticed 24 hours prior. Meeting agendas are posted on the VCES website, and physical copies are posted at all entrances, and copies are available during the meetings. The Board secretary records Board actions within the minutes that are approved on a regular basis. Minutes and all meeting materials are available in the Charter School’s central office for inspection by the public and on our website.
Meetings require quorum (more than 50% of board members present), and do not commence until quorum has been reached. All agenda items are noted on the agenda as being updates, for discussion, or action items. In order for the Board to take action on an item, that item must be on the agenda as an action item prior to the meeting. When actions are being voted upon, a voting member must make a motion, and another voting member can second. Discussions are held as needed, and then votes are taken by roll call. The Secretary records the motion, and who made it and seconded, and records the votes of each Board member.

Any telephonic meetings will be held in compliance with Brown Act requirements. Some of these requirements include: the location of each Board member on a telephone meeting is on the agenda, and each member posts the meeting agenda at their call-in location.

**Parent/Stakeholder Involvement**
Parents and families are given myriad opportunities to be involved in the life of the Charter School. For example, all families participate in the election of representatives to the Parent/Faculty Council (otherwise known as the Site-based Council). The Parent/Faculty Council is an advisory body of elected teachers and parents that discusses relevant school issues with the principal, including, but not limited to helping to set priorities and giving input to create the annual budget.

As a school that values parent support and volunteerism, the Charter School suggests that each family volunteers for a minimum of 50 hours each school year (75 if more than one student is enrolled). These are merely suggested hours and are neither a condition of enrollment nor of continued enrollment.

**Parent/Faculty Council**
The Parent/Faculty Council consists of a total of six members comprised of: three parent-elected parent representatives; two teacher-elected teacher representatives; and the Principal. The election process, directed by the Principal, will be transparent and inclusive, with candidates provided an opportunity to self-nominate, and presentations (written and/or oral) of nominees to the entire school community at least one week before a vote is held, followed by a vote. The Parent/Faculty Council meets at least once a month during the school year, or more often as the Council determines is necessary. Parent/Faculty Council and sub-committee meetings are held in accordance with the Brown Act. The Council is a means of ensuring that faculty and family voice is officially heard and responded to by the Charter School administration. It is also the means through which the Principal manages parent volunteers, community-building, fundraising and ad hoc committees.

**Parent Committees**
Separate and independent of the Parent/Faculty Council and Board of Directors, all parents are invited to join any of the committees in which they have an interest. Committees do not have a governing role in the Charter School, but rather serve as a means for coordinating volunteer efforts and planning school events under the supervision of the Principal. These committees are formed based on need at the request of the Principal or at the suggestion of parents, pending the approval of the Principal. The parent committees report back to the Parent/Faculty Council. Current, standing committees include:

- **Beautification Committee** - The Beautification Committee helps to improve the VCES campus by organizing clean-up days, greening up outdoor spaces and providing necessary repairs.
- **Carpooling Committee** - The Carpool Committee organizes carpooling for VCES families. This committee has the most work to do at the beginning of the year since new parents are trying to figure out their transportation arrangements.

- **Communications Committee** - The Communications Committee creates and manages content that supports our school committees and communicates with our families, prospective families, donors and partners. Sub-committees include: The Scoop! Newsletter, VCES Website, eBlast, Yearbook and Marketing Materials.

- **Diversity Committee** - The Diversity Committee is dedicated to supporting and enabling a positive, diverse environment for all the students, teachers, and families in the Valley Charter community. Diversity hosts education events, provides support for incoming families, hosts school-wide cultural and social events, and more.

- **Fundraising Committee** - Fundraising is a large committee whose main goal is to achieve the fundraising objective set forth by the Board of Directors in our annual school budget. Sub-committees include: Annual Giving Campaign, Spring Event, Grant Writing, Jogathon, and Merchandising.

- **Hospitality Committee** - The Hospitality Committee supports many of the events that take place at VCES, including Welcome Picnic, Back To School Night, Prospective Parent Nights, Teacher Appreciation, Principal and Parent/Faculty Council Meetings, Open House and some of the Fundraising and Special Events. Hospitality also ensures support for families during challenging times.

- **Hot Lunch Committee** - The Hot Lunch Committee serves a daily hot lunch to the students of VCES. Set up is at 11:45 a.m. and services finishes by 12:45 p.m. Parents who volunteer to serve hot lunch are asked to commit to a minimum of two lunches each month.

- **Micro-grant Committee** - The Micro-Grant Committee researches and applies for micro-grants, or grants usually under $5,000. This committee works with the teachers and their curriculum to try and find funding to supplement their planned activities. The committee also brings grants to the attention of teachers and helps get all the information needed for submission and/or submits on the teachers’ behalf.

- **Outreach Committee** - The Outreach Committee’s main goal is to create a highly diverse student population at VCES. Volunteering involves reaching out to new communities and building partnerships, assisting with school tours, orientation meetings and various outreach events.

- **Parent Education Committee** - Parent Ed is a small committee that works to bring speakers to VCES to talk on various parent education/child development topics that reflect and support the values and philosophy of the school.

- **Room Parent Committee** - Room Parents (3 per classroom) help teachers pass on important information to the classroom. Most communications are done through email. As a room parent, you may be asked to help make a class roster, organize field trips and parties, reach out for volunteers for different assignments or activities going on in the
classroom.

- **Safety Committee** - Members of the Safety Committee collect, organize and store comfort kits and emergency cards for each new student and update those items for existing students. Members also update all school emergency supplies and assist the principal and faculty in emergency preparedness needs.

- **Special Events Committee** - The Special Events Committee fosters a sense of community, school spirit and FUN through non-fundraising community events. Volunteer efforts include chairing events, planning activities, soliciting donations, making decorations, promoting events, planning menus/making food, securing entertainment/speakers, and volunteering at the event.

**Volunteer Committee** - The Volunteer Committee works with parents to fill their volunteer hours by finding appropriate and achievable volunteer opportunities. The committee also supports general committee development.

**Advisory Board**
The Board of Directors is supported in its efforts by an Advisory Board. The Advisory Board does not have any formal legal responsibilities, rather, the advisory board convenes to give advice and support as needed. Members of the Board of Directors as well as the Executive Director can nominate individuals to this Board. The Advisory Board has proven very useful as an idea-engine and a place for valued members of our community who have rotated off the governing board and wish to stay connected to the organization. Presently, the Advisory Board is comprised of leading experts who provide guidance to the Charter School’s educational, financial, site and growth-related endeavors. Current advisory members include:

**Nat Damon:** Mr. Damon is the Assistant Head of John Thomas Dye and has been an independent school coach, teacher and administrator for twenty-one years. Mr. Damon taught eighth and ninth grade English at Harvard-Westlake School and was the founding Academic Dean and Dean of Students at Sierra Canyon School. Connecticut College, BA; Middlebury College's Breadloaf School of English, Masters Degree in Literature.

**Ari Engelberg:** Mr. Engelberg has been in the education world for fourteen years, and is currently the Executive Director for Bright Star Schools. He taught eleventh grade history at Harvard-Westlake School and was the Assistant Coach of the Boys Varsity Basketball Team. Prior to 2001, Ari was a successful businessman and entrepreneur. Ari graduated with honors from UCLA School of Law / The Anderson Graduate School of Management. He holds a BA in Psychology and Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley, which he also received with high honors. He is presently Chief Executive Officer of Bright Star Schools.

**Lindsay Sturman:** Founder of both Larchmont Charter School and Larchmont West Hollywood, and Founding Chair of LCS Board of Directors. She spearheaded LCS’s charter authorization and implementation, ongoing assessment of school operations, and strategic growth. She has raised over a million dollars for the organization, developed partnerships with CBOs across the city and state, and was honored this year by CCSA as Volunteer of the Year. A television writer/producer, Ms. Sturman holds a BA from Harvard and a Masters from Columbia.
Governance Structure*

Board of Directors
Maximum of 25 members

Executive Director

Principal

Committees

Faculty and Staff

Advisory Board

LAUSD Non-Voting Representative

Parent/Faculty Council
3 parent-elected representatives; 2 teacher-elected representatives; principal

* Description of the major roles and responsibilities, within the governance structure, of VCS’ Board of Directors and executive-level employees may be found in the bylaws in Tab 3 and in Element 5 under Key Personnel.
ELEMENT 5 - Employee Qualifications

“The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the school, including the credentials held by the teachers of the school.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(E).

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity. Charter School shall not discriminate against applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, military and veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by California or federal law. Equal employment opportunity shall be extended to all aspects of the employer-employee relationship, including recruitment, selection, hiring, upgrading, training, promotion, transfer, discipline, layoff, recall, and dismissal from employment.

ESEA/NCLB AND CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS

Charter School shall adhere to all requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, also known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB)) that are applicable to teachers and paraprofessional employees. Charter School shall ensure that all teachers and paraprofessionals meet the requirements for employment set forth in Ed. Code section 47605(l). Teachers of core and/or college preparatory subjects, and special education teachers, must hold and maintain a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in a non-charter public school would be required to hold in the same assignment, including English Learner authorization. Charter School shall maintain current copies of all teacher credentials and make them readily available for inspection.

Employee Positions and Qualifications

VCES is committed to recruiting and hiring a community of professionals who are dedicated to the best practices education of all students. Regardless of his or her role in the Charter School, every person hired by VCES actively helps to promote the curricular philosophy, instructional program and the school community’s guiding principles. All requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law will be met.

All staff are expected to be sensitive to the linguistic and cultural needs of students, and to participate in staff development to enhance their skills in this area.

The administrative positions for VCES include:
- Executive Director
- VCES Principal
- Office Manager

Executive Director
The Executive Director/Head of School (ED) holds responsibility, accountability and authority for the Charter School’s overall performance and success in fulfilling the VCES mission. It is the
primary responsibility of the ED to ensure the organization meets annual revenue goals and generates an appropriate surplus without compromising the quality of the program, securing the Charter School’s long-term sustainability.

The ED reports to the Board of Directors and is responsible for the overall operations of the schools. The ED hires and evaluates the school Principal.

Qualifications include:

**Management and Leadership Experience:** The ideal candidate has extensive management experience with a record of success in leading and sustaining a school, fundraising, budgeting, government relations, and marketing. S/he has the ability to inspire excellence from a diverse staff and to leverage the talents of the Board of Directors. S/he is a confident decision-maker and possesses the ability to facilitate collaboration and teamwork.

**Visionary Experience:** As the charter school landscape is changing quickly, there will be many opportunities to take a leadership role in shaping the future of the charter school movement through partnering, innovation, and persuasion. The ideal candidate is able to think creatively and envision new ways of cultivating and expanding partnerships within the public and private sectors.

**Passion for Educational Excellence:** Experience in the field of education is required, with knowledge of excellent schools beyond those affiliated with LAUSD is absolutely essential. In addition, the candidate must demonstrate an ability to communicate a genuine passion for advancing educational achievement in diverse communities and embody the mission and vision of VCES.

**Fundraising Focus:** The ED must be able to make a compelling case for resources in an increasingly competitive environment. S/he must see building and maintaining relationships with individuals, foundations, members of the private sector, and government grant makers as an essential part of his/her role. Staying abreast of changing funding opportunities and challenges and working them to the school’s advantage will be a critical component of this position.

Responsibilities include:
- Extend fundraising beyond the school community to include outside sources of funds
- Facilitate strategic planning with the Board of Directors
- Create big picture educational program strategies with the Principal, but also respect the autonomy of the Principal in fulfilling the educational mission of the school
- Diagnose the gaps between where the school is versus where it aspires to be, and ensure that strategies and practices are implemented to close these gaps
- Develop and retain high-performing individuals who are passionate about the school and its mission
- Ensure that the annual fundraising target is met as well as additional funds to ensure long-term financial sustainability
- Develop and maintain relationships with philanthropic, business, and public sectors to increase awareness of the school and increase its donor base within a competitive nonprofit (specifically charter school) funding environment
- Work with the Board on a capital campaign to secure and develop permanent site(s)
- Oversee and manage the operating budget
- Ensure that VCES has suitable school site(s)
- Oversee school compliance with all applicable laws, regulatory reporting, contractual obligations, and donor restrictions
- Ensure that an effective performance management system is in place for all staff under his/her direct supervision
- Represent the school as a leader in the California charter school community in all advocacy efforts (e.g., legislative efforts to sustain charter school funding levels) as well as a community leaders to maintain support from the local communities
- Develop and maintain effective relationships with the LAUSD Charter Schools Division, school faculty and staff, students, parents, community members, partner businesses and organizations, and current and prospective supporters

**VCES Principal**
The Principal of VCES is the educational and instructional leader of the school, and works with the ED to create systems that ensure a data driven, project-based, standards-based, constructivist educational program.

A personnel committee may be formed as needed by the Executive Director in order to support efforts in hiring the school principal. The Executive Director is ultimately responsible for hiring the principal, who is ultimately responsible for hiring faculty and staff.

**Qualifications include:**
Our ideal principal is a visionary whose experience, knowledge, and drive will set the tone for a supportive school climate that challenges our motivated students, teachers, and families to achieve academic excellence, character growth, and social change. Resourcefulness, flexibility, and an entrepreneurial spirit are key qualities for a charter school leader. A required qualification is the ability of the principal to effectively implement a data driven instructional program and a project-based curriculum.

The ideal candidate will have (these are preferable but not required):
- Teaching experience in a variety of grade levels;
- A Master's Degree in Education and/or Administrative Credential (prior administrative experience desirable);
- Experience in a charter or independent school or traditional public school that has record of high achievement;
- Knowledge of or experience with diverse populations, English learners and GATE;
- Experience with a constructivist approach to teaching and learning; backward design and creation of a project-based curriculum; commitment to incorporating learning goals beyond the state standards;
- Strong computer skills;
- Excellent communication skills; experience motivating and working with parent volunteers; and
- A track record as a successful and progressive educator.

**Responsibilities include:**
Educational Leadership:
- Provide hands-on guidance to teachers as they create a project-based curriculum that relies on rubrics to assess student learning of both CCSS standards and additional learning goals (the school’s definition of an educated person in the 21st century);
• Lead backward design curriculum creation efforts that ensure students will master state standards and be prepared for state tests.
• Use multiple sources of data to develop a data-driven instructional plan for the improvement of student achievement;
• Help teachers develop their pedagogy in light of recent research on brain development and in keeping with a constructivist approach to teaching and learning;
• Work with teachers to develop a teacher evaluation process;
• Develop partnerships with university researchers to support teacher's action research endeavors;
• Develop partnerships with similar schools to enable VCES teachers to be both learners and mentors;
• Lead the design and implementation of the school’s programs for Special Education, EL, and GATE students;
• Hire and retain high quality faculty and staff;
• Promote the school mission and philosophy throughout the school community;
• Day to day site management with a commitment to ensuring the health and safety of students, faculty and staff.

School and Community Relations:
• Participate in all aspects of Charter renewal, review and compliance;
• Work with the ED in the strategic planning for the growth of the school;
• Schedule and participate in regular family and community meetings;
• Encourage and develop parent/guardian involvement/partnerships;
• Maintain positive relationships with LAUSD and its related entities;

School Management:
• Budget creation with the ED; Charter renewal; Outreach & Partnerships.

**Teaching Staff**
All VCES classroom teachers (of core classes), enrichment teachers (of non-core classes), and all paraprofessionals shall meet the requirements for employment of California Education Code section 47605(l) and the applicable provisions of ESEA. Evidence of credential and highly qualified status is maintained on file and monitored by the principal at VCES, and made available to LAUSD upon request. The Charter School principal holds the responsibility to monitor credentials and highly qualified staff.

The VCES Principal selects the teachers on an application, interview and teaching observation basis, with the help of a personnel committee per the discretion of the Principal. Selection of teachers is based on their teaching experience and their ability to demonstrate curriculum creation, implementation and assessment and classroom instructional capabilities. All candidates are required to teach a model lesson either at the school or at their current place of work.

**Classroom Teacher**
*The ideal elementary school teaching candidate has the following qualifications:*
• 2+ years experience teaching the relevant grades
• Maintains a valid and current California multiple subject teaching credential
• Experience with and passion for pedagogical practices grounded in constructivism and differentiated instruction
• Experience with and interest in creating project-based curriculum that is standards-based and incorporates additional learning goals that reflect the multiple intelligences.
• Commitment to the VCES mission and the goals of the VCES charter
Experience with and/or desire to develop as a professional educator

Responsibilities include:
- Preparing and implementing project-based curriculum that lead to student investigations and multiple assessments
- Pedagogical methods that emphasize active learning strategies
- Assessing student progress and maintaining accurate records
- Maintaining frequent communication with students, student’s families, colleagues, and other school stakeholders
- Maintaining regular, punctual attendance

Resource Specialist Teacher
The Resource Specialist Teacher candidate has the following qualifications:
- 2+ years experience teaching experience in the field of special education
- Holds at minimum a current and valid Education Specialist Credential and ideally, a Resource Specialist Authorization
- Experience with and passion for pedagogical practices grounded in constructivism and differentiated instruction
- Experience with and interest in assisting in modifying curriculum that is CCSS-based and incorporating additional learning goals that reflect the multiple intelligences.
- Commitment to the VCES mission and the goals of the VCES charter
- Experience with and/or desire to develop as a professional educator

Responsibilities include:
- Prepare student education plans in consultation with parents and IEP team members.
- Design instruction, both individual and small group, which parallels the general education curriculum.
- Act as case manager for all IEPs.
- Use Welligent for IEP documentation.
- Monitor student progress, participate in review and revision of IEP, as appropriate.
- Assess students with IEPs or possible IEPs.
- Maintain appropriate student data and other records and submit reports as required.
- Act as inclusion facilitator by providing support to teachers (planning, co-teaching, etc.) and social lessons in the classrooms.
- Attend all IEP meetings and parent-teacher conferences, when appropriate.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

Teacher’s Aides/Assistants
The VCES Principal works with each classroom teacher in order to select a teacher’s aide. The VCES Principal or teacher committee reviews incoming resumes and identifies individuals with appropriate qualifications, then the teacher interviews and, if time allows, spends time observing and working with the potential assistant.

Qualifications include:
- An Associate’s Degree or 48 college credits, Bachelor’s degree preferred.
- Demonstrated ability to respect diversity and help children develop a positive self-image as successful learners.
The ideal candidate has completed coursework in the education of elementary grade children and has experience working with elementary age children in a school setting.

**Responsibilities include:**
- Work as a teaching aide under the direction of the classroom teacher and Principal.
- The aide assists the teacher in providing a creative learning environment that embraces constructivist principles of teaching and learning.
- S/he works with students individually and in small group activities.
- In addition, s/he assists in the documentation of pupil progress, the making/preparing of instructional materials and the performance of other duties related to fostering a community of learners in the classroom.
- Supervises students during recess and lunch.

**Office Manager/Office Staff**
The Office Manager is hired by and reports to the Principal. The role of the Office Manager is to assure the smooth and efficient operation of the school office to maximize the positive impact of education for all students; to contribute to school/public relations by prompt and courteous handling of all inquiries and visitors; and to assist and relieve the principal of paperwork and impediments so that he/she may devote maximum attention to the central issues of education and educational administration.

**Qualifications include:**
- Operate standard office equipment including pertinent software and spreadsheet/database applications
- Plan/manage projects
- Perform basic bookkeeping and record keeping
- Communicate and write with appropriate grammar and punctuation
- Maintain confidentiality
- Meet deadlines and schedules
- Set priorities
- Work as part of a team
- Work with continual interruptions

**Responsibilities include:**
- Serve as office receptionist; answers and responds to telephone and in-person inquiries from students, parents, and the public. Receives, sorts, and distributes mail; prepares outgoing items for mailing. Greets visitors for the purpose of providing direction and/or ensuring that visitors sign in/out as required.
- Maintains documents, files and records (e.g. administrative and financial records, Principal’s calendar, registration, all forms, student cumulative folders, attendance records, report cards, data processing records, testing materials, immunization records, financial information, inventory records, etc.) for the purpose of providing up-to-date reference and audit trail.
- Process applications for the Free and Reduced Lunch program; explains program to parents; forwards information to Food Service Department. Distributes, retrieves, and summarizes federal survey forms.
- Type accident reports; forwards accident report information promptly.
- Monitor behavior of students in the office area; oversees behavior of students sent to office for disciplinary reasons.
- Coordinate a variety of programs and/or activities (e.g. staff trainings, work assignments, etc.) for the purpose of ensuring availability of facilities and/or equipment and delivering services in compliance with established guidelines.
- Disseminate all school notes and forms, and compile the information contained thereon and transmit such forms as appropriate (such as emergency cards, photo authorizations, school roster releases, etc.).
- Maintain up-to-date student roster lists.

Performance Evaluations

Evaluations are performed twice a year. Performance measures are used to evaluate all school personnel.

The Executive Director will be evaluated by the Board based on:
- Completion of required and enumerated (from job description) job duties
- Reaching objectives and benchmarks on the path to permanent school site, fundraising and financial sustainability
- Choice and oversight of school principal in regards to:
  - Implementing the charter and maintaining adherence to its guiding principles and requirements
  - Overall successful school academic program and achievement of educational goals
  - High parental and community involvement

The Principal will be evaluated by the ED based on:
- Completion of required and enumerated (from job description above) job duties
- Implementing the charter and maintaining adherence to its guiding principles and requirements
- Leadership principles and criteria
  - Creating a shared vision
  - Supervising instruction
  - Investing in teacher quality
  - Promoting a culture of learning and positive behavior
  - Engaging families and community
  - Overseeing systems and operations

Teachers will be evaluated by the principal based on:
- Effectiveness of teaching strategies
  - Engaging and supporting all students in learning
  - Creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning
  - Understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning
  - Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for all students
  - Assessing student learning
  - Developing as a professional educator
- Student progress as referenced from assessment measures

Non-certificated employees will be evaluated by the Principal or the ED (depending on the reporting structure for each staff member) based on completion of assigned job duties and regular, punctual attendance.
ELEMENT 6 - Health and Safety Procedures

“The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of students and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each school employee furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described by Education Code 44237. The procedures shall also address safe housing and employee clearance for tuberculosis.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(F).

HEALTH, SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PLAN

Charter School shall have a comprehensive site-specific Health, Safety and Emergency Plan, including but not limited to the acquisition and maintenance of adequate onsite emergency supplies, in place prior to beginning operation of the charter school each school year. Charter School shall ensure that all staff members receive annual training on Charter School’s health, safety, and emergency procedures, including but not limited to training on child abuse awareness and reporting and bloodborne pathogens awareness, and shall maintain a calendar for, and conduct, emergency response drills for students and staff. Charter School shall periodically review, and update and/or modify as necessary, its Health, Safety and Emergency Plan, and keep it readily available for use and review upon CSD request.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Charter School, including its employees and officers, shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Ed. Code § 49060 et seq. at all times.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS AND FINGERPRINTING

Charter School shall require the following persons to submit to criminal background checks and fingerprinting in accordance with state law: (1) all employees of Charter School, (2) any employees of vendors or independent contractors providing school site services who may have contact with students, and (3) all volunteers who will be performing services that are not under the direct supervision of a Charter School employee. Charter School shall maintain on file and available for inspection evidence that (1) Charter School has performed criminal background checks and cleared for employment all employees prior to employment, and (2) Charter School has obtained certification that independent contractors and vendors have conducted required criminal background checks for their employees prior to any contact with students. Charter School shall also ensure that it requests and receives subsequent arrest notifications from the California Department of Justice to ensure the ongoing safety of its students. Upon request, Charter School shall provide a copy of Department of Justice confirmation of Custodian of Records status for each Custodian of Records.

IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

Charter School shall require its employees, and any volunteer, vendor, or independent contractor who may have frequent or prolonged contact with students, to be examined and determined to be free of active tuberculosis as described in Ed. Code section 49406. Charter School shall maintain TB clearance records on file.
Charter School shall provide for the immunization and health screening of its students, including but not limited to screening for vision, hearing, and scoliosis, to the same extent as would be required if the students were attending a non-charter public school. Charter School shall maintain immunization records on file.

**SAFE PLACE TO LEARN ACT**

Charter School shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Safe Place to Learn Act, Ed. Code section 234 et seq.

**Health and Safety Policies**

In order to provide safety for all students and staff, the Charter School has adopted and implemented full health and safety policies and procedures and risk management policies at its school site in consultation with its insurance carriers and risk management experts. The policies are maintained at the school site.

The following is a summary of the health and safety policies of the Charter School:

**Role of Staff as Mandated Child Abuse Reporters**

All non-certificated and certificated staff are mandated child abuse reporters and will follow all applicable reporting laws, the same policies and procedures used by the District. Child abuse and neglect mandated reporter training occurs upon employment and on an annual basis to all staff.

**Medication in School**

The Charter School adheres to Education Code Section 49423 regarding administration of medication in school.

**Blood borne Pathogens**

The Charter School shall meet state and federal standards for dealing with blood borne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the work place. The Board shall establish a written infectious control plan designed to protect employees and students from possible infection due to contact with blood borne viruses. Whenever exposed to blood or other bodily fluids through injury or accident, staff and students shall follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.

**Drug-, Alcohol-, and Smoke-Free Environment**

The Charter School shall function as a drug-, alcohol-, and smoke-free environment.

**Comprehensive Discrimination and Harassment Policies and Procedures**

The Charter School is committed to providing a school that is free from discrimination and sexual harassment, as well as any harassment based upon such factors as race, religion, creed, color, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, ancestry, age, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability. The Charter School shall develop a comprehensive policy to prevent and immediately remediate any concerns about discrimination or harassment at the Charter School (including employee to employee, employee to student, and student to employee misconduct). Misconduct of this nature is very serious and will be addressed in accordance with the Charter School’s discrimination and harassment policies.
Element 7 – Means to Achieve Racial and Ethnic Balance

“The means by which the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its students that is reflective of the general population residing within the district’s territorial jurisdiction.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(G).

COURT-ORDERED INTEGRATION
Charter School shall comply with all requirements of the Crawford v. Board of Education, City of Los Angeles court order and the LAUSD Integration Policy adopted and maintained, pursuant to the Crawford court order, by the District’s Student Integration Services (collectively the “Court-ordered Integration Program”). The Court-ordered Integration Program applies to all schools within or chartered through LAUSD.

Charter School has set forth below its initial plan for achieving and maintaining the LAUSD’s Racial and Ethnic Balance goal of a 70:30 or 60:40 ratio. (Ratio represents the percentage of Predominantly Hispanic Black Asian Other (PHBAO) compared to Other White (OW)). The written plan lists specific dates and locations of recruitment activities that Charter School will undertake in order to achieve the District’s Racial and Ethnic Balance goal. Charter School shall monitor the implementation and outcomes of the initial plan, and modify it as necessary to achieve the District’s goal. Upon request, Charter School shall provide the District with a copy of its current written plan.

The District receives neither average daily attendance allocations nor Court-ordered Integration Program cost reimbursements for charter school students. Instead, the District now receives the Targeted Instructional Improvement Block Grant (TIIBG) for its Court-ordered Integration Program. The District retains sole discretion over the allocation of TIIBG funding, where available, and cannot guarantee the availability of this funding.

FEDERAL PROGRAM COMPLIANCE
As a recipient of federal funds, including federal Title I, Part A funds, Charter School has agreed to meet all of the programmatic, fiscal and other regulatory requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, also known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB)) and other applicable federal grant programs. Charter School understands that it is a local educational agency (LEA) for purposes of federal compliance and reporting purposes. Charter School agrees that it will keep and make available to the District any documentation necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of NCLB and other applicable federal programs, including, but not limited to, documentation related to funding, required parental notifications, appropriate credentialing of teaching and paraprofessional staff, the implementation of Public School Choice and Supplemental Educational Services, where applicable, or any other mandated federal program requirement. The mandated requirements of NCLB, Title I, Part A include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Notify all parents at the beginning of each school year of their “right to know” the professional qualifications of their child’s classroom teacher
- Notify each individual parent, in a timely manner, that the parent’s child has been assigned, or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified
- Develop jointly with, and distribute to, parents of participating children, a school-parent compact
- Hold an annual Title I meeting for parents of participating Title I students
- Develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parent involvement policy
- Submit biannual Consolidated Application to California Department of Education (CDE) requesting federal funds
- Complete and submit Local Education Agency (LEA) Plan to CDE
- Complete reform planning process with stakeholders and submit to CDE all appropriate documents for Title I Schoolwide Program eligibility and status, if applicable; otherwise, identify and maintain roster of eligible students for the Title I Targeted Assistance School Program
- Maintain inventory of equipment purchased with categorical funds, where applicable
- Maintain appropriate time-reporting documentation, including semi-annual certification and personnel activity report, for staff funded with categorical resources, where applicable
- Participate in any applicable federal program monitoring conducted by the California Department of Education
- Conduct an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of funds allocated through the Consolidated Application

Charter School also acknowledges that, as part of its oversight of Charter School, the District may conduct program review for federal as well as state compliance.

VCES is committed to making every effort to recruit students from various racial and ethnic groups so as to achieve a balance that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district. VCES maintains an accurate accounting of ethnic and racial balance of students enrolled in the school and keeps on file outreach event calendars and flyers to reflect the efforts the school has made to achieve racial and ethnic balance. Currently, VCES has a priority for Title 1 students (see Element 8 Admission Requirements).

Mixed SES Philosophy
Founded by a group of parents who wanted a “diverse, neighborhood school” for their community, VCES is the embodiment of Horace Mann's concept of a "common school" where children of all backgrounds gather under one roof to learn together and from each other. While school districts across the country are “re-segregating” by race and socio-economic status (particularly when courts strike down race-based desegregation), there is a nascent movement towards mixed SES (mixed socioeconomic status) schools and districts. Segregation in public schools goes against the ideals of America and exacerbates the growing achievement gap. A central part of the missions of VCES is to be a high-performing, mixed SES school that closes the achievement gap.

Closing the Achievement Gap
The failure to educate low-income students has been called “the most pressing moral issue of our day” and “the civil rights issue of our time.” There is compelling evidence that low-income children benefit enormously from going to mixed SES schools. Research shows that, in moving a child from a Title One school to a mixed SES school, that child can see his or her test scores reach and surpass grade level. In one study, researcher David Rusk found that “for every 1

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3 According to research conducted by David Rusk for The Century Foundation, economic school segregation increased in the 1990s in 55 of the largest 100 metropolitan areas, was stable in 14, and lessened in 12 (with data unavailable in 19). These trends are consistent with Harvard professor Gary Orfield’s research finding that American schools are re-segregating by race.


AND Dianne Lefly, research manager of the Denver Public Schools Assessment and Testing Department, May 2002: Some 53-54% of low income students attending schools where less than 50% of the classmates were low income had proficient or advanced reading scores on the Colorado Student Assessment Program, while only 33% had such scores in high poverty schools (those with 75% of more of students eligible for free and reduced price lunch.)
percent increase in middle-class classmates, low income students improved 0.64 percentage point in reading and 0.72 percentage point in math." Why such mixed SES can have such a profound effect is up for debate.  

**Means of Recruiting A Diverse Student Body to VCES – Outreach Plan**

VCES intends to expand upon the outreach model of building official partnerships and organizing informal events that has been implemented by VCES leadership. The Principal, Outreach Committee, and the Executive Director lead the efforts of building official partnerships by following the steps outlined below. After partnerships are in place, families expand upon this plan by implementing informal events. The partnership building process includes:

1. Research, examine and list all community service organizations, schools, religious and ethnic organizations, libraries, parks, community gathering places (farmer’s markets, performance spaces, etc.) serving the people within the Van Nuys, North Hollywood and North Hills geographical boundaries. In the interest of serving the greatest possible number of interested families, we will consider these boundaries to be Balboa Blvd to the West and Woodman Blvd to the East, Moorpark/Alameda Ave to the South and Devonshire St to the North.

2. Given the list to be created in Step (1), determine the language fluencies needed to best communicate with the populations in the area. If school leaders are not themselves proficient in the needed languages, a translator will be involved at every step of the communication process, and will translate all school materials as well.

3. Identify all local preschools and daycare facilities: meet with the leadership of these schools and arrange informational meetings with the parents to educate families about the charter school option, train and involve parent volunteers in speaking with potential parents at these locations. If the school to be recruited from includes a significant number of families that are unfamiliar with school choice or unaware of the benefits of VCES’s educational philosophy, an effort will be made by school leadership to identify families within that particular facility to lead the effort in reaching out to other families.

4. Identify all local community service organizations, including YMCA’s and community centers: meet with leadership of these organizations, schedule orientation meetings with families of school age children to be led by school leadership with the aid of trained registered parents, ensure an ongoing space in the building to leave charter school brochures/information

5. Contact leadership of all local libraries, post offices, supermarkets, drugstores and other local businesses to establish a physical location in the building to leave notices/brochures/information about the charter school for all local residents to access.

6. Identify all local religious and ethnic-centered organizations: meet with the leadership of these programs and arrange informational meetings with the parents to educate families about the charter school (led by school leaders with the help of registered parents), ensure an ongoing space in the building to leave charter school brochures/information

The goals in meeting with these community leaders include:

- Informing leaders and their constituents/clients/acquaintances of the school’s mission, programs, services

AND Jenny LaCoste, “Poverty can hinder student achievement,” Pensacola News Journal, May 19, 2002, p. 11A: In a study of students in Escambia County Florida using data from the 2000 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test, school district evaluation specialist Linda Haragoees told the Pensacola News Journal in May 2002 that “low-income children posted higher scores at schools where the majority of students came from working- or middle-class homes than they did where more than 60 percent of students were poor enough to qualify for the federal free lunch program.”


A common misconception ascribes the gap to the fault of low-income parents, despite the fact that this has little basis in research and is contradicted by the performance of low-income students at high performing public and charter schools. A more viable explanation for why a mixed SES so profoundly affects academic performance is that middle and high-income families often have the resources or “voice” to demand better. Low-income families, and particularly families lacking documentation, frequently lack the political voice to make such demands. By attending a school that also attracts parents with more choices, low-income families benefit from the high standards middle class parents have the luxury to demand.
• Hearing and addressing the needs, questions and concerns of all community members
• Fostering an ongoing mutually beneficial relationship with other organizations that are serving the community

In addition to utilizing the existing structures of organizations that serve the community, Charter School leadership will publicize the school to potential parents using the following means:
• Internet: website, yahoo-type groups, message boards, and other virtual communities that could be contacted and/or created
• Community events/fairs/festivals: the principal, in conjunction with parents will attend local events including fairs, festivals, farmers markets, and others in order to meet potential families.
• Local Park Information Sessions: To ensure that all potential families are included, every effort will be made to ensure that school representatives are present that speak a variety of languages. In addition, prior to the lottery each spring, school representatives will hold park events at local parks, near playgrounds. Outreach Committee parents will volunteer to set up tables with food, will decorate to draw attention, will advertise 3 weeks in advance through free venues, will organize and run activities for kids, will speak with potential parents about the school, and will hand out school brochures/registration information.
• Prospective Parent Meetings: The Principal and Executive Director will lead prospective parent meetings for parents to learn more about the school, and ask questions of our staff and Board members.
• School Tours: While Prospective Parent Meetings are informative and speak to the uniqueness of our program, school tours allow interested parents to see our philosophy and approach in action. These tours are led by the Principal as well as trained/well-informed parents.

Charter school leadership will assess the experiences and the results in order to annually update outreach strategies and adjust as necessary. The Principal, Outreach Committee, and Executive Director will continually monitor the greater Van Nuys area for new community organizations and businesses with which to form relationships. In addition, the principal will work with the ED to involve local organizations and businesses in supporting the school and its families.

**Outreach Calendar (revised annually) - Outreach activities include but are not limited to:**

**September:**
Revise collateral
Set up Northridge Mall dates
Schedule church visits

**October:**
Taste of Encino
Sherman Oaks Street Fair
Prospective Parents Meeting (Saturday at 10:00am)
Balboa Park Playdate

**November:**
School Tours (Every Tuesday from 8:45am/9:15am)
Balboa Park Playdate (Extravaganza!)
Prospective Parents Meeting (Thursday at 6:30 pm - with Spanish translation)

**December:**
School Tours (Every Tuesday from 8:45am/9:15am)
Prospective Parents Meeting (Thursday at 6:30 pm - with Spanish translation)
**January:**
School Tours (Every Tuesday from 8:45am/9:15am)
Balboa Park Playdate (Extravaganza!)
Prospective Parents Meeting (Thursday at 6:30 pm - with Spanish translation)
Community Fair (Saturday from 2:00pm – 4:00pm)
Element 8 – Admission Requirements

“Admission requirements, if applicable.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(H).

MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT

Charter School shall adhere to the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths. Charter School shall provide specific information, in its outreach materials, websites, at community meetings, open forums, and regional center meetings, that notifies parents that the school is open to enroll and provide services for all students, and provides a District standard contact number for access to additional information regarding enrollment.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Charter School shall not require a parent/legal guardian/student to provide information regarding a student’s disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, legal or economic status, primary language or English Learner status, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in section 422.55 of the Penal Code, or any other information that would violate federal or state law, prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment. Charter School may request, at the time of, and as part of, conducting its lottery process, the provision of information necessary to apply specific admissions preferences set forth in this Charter.

Charter School shall not request or require submission of a student’s IEP, 504 Plan, or any other record or related information prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment.

The Charter School shall admit all pupils who wish to attend the Charter School. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into the Charter School. The Charter School will comply with all laws establishing minimum and maximum age for public school attendance in charter schools. Admission, except in the case of a public random drawing, shall not be determined by the place of residence of the pupil or his or her parent or legal guardian within the state.

The Charter School shall require students who wish to attend the Charter School to complete an Intent to Enroll form. After admission, students will be required to submit an enrollment packet, which shall include the following:

1. Student enrollment form
2. Proof of Immunization
3. Home Language Survey
4. Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form
5. Proof of minimum age requirements, e.g. birth certificate
6. Release of records

For a description of the school’s outreach and student recruitment plan, please see Element 7.
Random Public Drawing

Applications will be accepted during a publicly advertised open enrollment period each year for enrollment in the following school year. Following the open enrollment period each year, applications shall be counted to determine whether any grade level has received more applications than availability. In the event that this happens, the Charter School will hold a public random drawing to determine admission for the impacted grade level, with the exception of existing students, who are guaranteed admission in the following school year. In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B), admission preferences in the case of a lottery shall be given to the following students in the following order:

Exemption from the lottery, in compliance with Federal law and non-regulatory guidance, will be offered to currently enrolled students and siblings of existing students and a small number of students who are children of Charter School faculty. The total number of students receiving the faculty exemption will not, in any one grade, exceed 10% of the total seats of that grade. Furthermore, a weighted priority, in which qualifying students receive a pre-determined ratio increase to better their chances at selection, will be given to students who meet the requirements for the federal school assistance initiatives included in Title I, for example students who qualify for Free and Reduced Price Lunch. Per SB 740 Charter School Facility Grant and Funding Determination regulations (Section 10170.3(c)(2)), preference will also be given to students who attend Gledhill Street Elementary School, or who live in the Gledhill Street Elementary School attendance boundaries. Finally, preference will be extended to residents of the District.

Accordingly, in the event of a public random drawing, admissions exemptions and preferences will be as follows:

- Siblings of existing students (exempt)
- Children of faculty (preference)*
- Students who qualify for federal school assistance programs under Title I (preference), not to exceed 25% of total enrollment
- Students who attend Gledhill Street School, or who live in the Gledhill Street School attendance area (preference)
- Residents of the District (preference)

Admissions preferences shall be granted in the following order:

- Residents of the District
- Children of faculty*
- Students who qualify for federal school assistance programs under Title I, not to exceed 25% of total enrollment
- Students who attend Gledhill Street School, or who live in the Gledhill Street School attendance area

*Children of faculty will not constitute more than 10% of the total seats in a given grade.

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, all students who were not granted admission due to capacity shall be given the option to put their name on a wait list according to their draw in the lottery. This wait list will allow students the option of enrollment in the case of an opening during the current school year. In no circumstance will a wait list carry over to the following school year.
Public random drawing rules, deadlines, dates and times will be communicated in the application form and on the Charter School’s website. Public notice for the date and time of the public random drawing will also be posted on the VCES website once the application deadline has passed. Enrollment opens on October 1 and closes at 4:00 p.m. on the first Friday of February. The Charter School will also inform parents of all applicants and all interested parties of the rules to be followed during the public random drawing process via mail or email at least two weeks prior to the lottery date.

The Charter School will conduct the lottery in the spring for enrollment in fall of that year.

The Charter School will designate an enrollment deadline (approximately February) and only applications received prior to the deadline will be included in the public random drawing. Enrollment forms will be accepted year-round. An explanation of the enrollment process will be available on our web site and in the Charter School office. Public notice will be posted at the Charter School site and on the VCES website regarding the date, time and location of the public drawing once the deadline date has passed, encouraging people to attend (time will be weekday evening to maximize attendance; the location will be at the Charter School site, exact location tbd). Applicants will be drawn publicly at random. During the same public random drawing, once enrollment is reached, the remaining names will continue to be drawn and will be placed on a waiting list in the order drawn. If vacancies occur during the school year, the vacancies will be filled according to the waiting list. The intent to enroll forms, original “pull number” cards and lists of names will be kept on file at the school in the event of the need for an audit.

VCES’ lottery application (intent to enroll) will be accessible through VCES’ website. If a family does not have access to internet, VCES main office staff (office manager or assistant) will provide the family with the form and/or allow individual families to use the school’s internet. The lottery process will be explained in detail on the same webpage as the lottery application, and the process will also be verbally explained to any families who hand in their paper application in-person. Lottery procedures include the following:

1) Lottery application for VCES will be available online or at the VCES site by the first of October each year. The lottery application will remain available until the end of the first week of February.

2) The second week of February will be used to prepare the lottery cards which will be drawn on the third Friday of February each year. The lottery will take place at the VCES site at a TBD exact location.

3) VCES public lottery will be conducted for all grades which have more applicants than enrollment seats available for the next school year. Should the amount of students who seek enrollment exceed the number of spaces, a random lottery will be held. Lottery spaces will be pulled in order of grade level by the Principal. The lottery procedure will be monitored by the Executive Director to ensure fair and accurate implementation. As names are pulled students will be assigned a number corresponding to the number of enrollment slots. Once all enrollment slots have been made available, remaining students will be added to the waitlist in the order in which they were randomly drawn.

4) Acceptance letters will be emailed (or mailed) to families by mid-March. Families will be given three business days after the receipt of the acceptance letters to respond in order to secure admission.
5) Because of the number of entries for the lottery, rejection letters will not be mailed out. It will be communicated to the families that students who were not granted enrollment for the next school year will remain on the waiting list unless otherwise requested by the parent to be taken off. The wait list is cleared at the end of the academic year for which the lottery was drawn. Therefore, the wait list does not carry from one year to the next.

6) Lottery cards (with original “pull numbers”) are kept for the duration of the school year. These are kept back-up to the electronic waiting list. The electronic waiting list is kept and managed by the office manager for the duration of the school year.

7) After the completion of the lottery, accepted families are provided with an enrollment application. Parents will be given 4 weeks from the time they accepted the spot to submit the enrollment application.
Element 9 – Annual Financial Audits

“The manner in which annual, independent financial audits shall be conducted. These audits shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the Board.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(I).

The annual audit shall be conducted in compliance with Ed. Code section 47605(b)(5)(I) as it is amended from time to time.

The following reports will be submitted to LAUSD, in the required format and within timelines to be specified by LAUSD, each year:

a. Provisional Budget – Spring prior to operating fiscal year
b. Final Budget – July of the budget fiscal year
c. First Interim Projections – November of operating fiscal year
d. Second Interim Projections – February of operating fiscal year
e. Unaudited Actuals – July following the end of the fiscal year
f. Audited Actuals – December 15 following the end of the fiscal year
g. Classification Report – monthly according to school’s Calendar
h. Statistical Report – monthly according to school’s Calendar of Reports

In addition:

i. Instructional Calendar – annually five weeks prior to first day of instruction
j. Other reports as requested by the District

Annual Independent Audit

An annual independent financial audit of the books and records of the Charter School will be conducted as required by Education Code Sections 47605(b)(5)(I) and 47605(m). The books and records of the Charter School will be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and as required by applicable law, the audit will employ generally accepted accounting procedures. The audit shall be conducted in accordance with applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller’s K-12 Audit Guide.

The Executive Director of the Charter School will select an independent auditor through a request for proposal format. The auditor will have, at a minimum, a CPA and educational institution audit experience and will be approved by the State Controller on its published list as an educational audit provider. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope will be expanded to include items and processes specified in applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars. The Executive Director is responsible for working with the auditor to complete the audit.

The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that the annual audit will be completed and forwarded to the District, the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and to the CDE by the 15th of December of each year. The Executive Director, along with the audit committee, if any, will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Charter School Board of Directors with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Board will submit a report to the District describing how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved to the satisfaction of the District along with an anticipated timeline for the same. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel (“EAAP”) in accordance with applicable law.

The independent financial audit of the Charter School is a public record to be provided to the public upon request.
Element 10 – Suspension and Expulsion Procedures

“The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(J).

**GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Charter School shall provide due process for all students, including adequate and timely notice to parents/guardians and students of the grounds for all suspension and expulsion recommendations and decisions and their due process rights regarding suspension and expulsion, including rights of appeal.

Charter School shall ensure that its policies and procedures regarding suspension and expulsion will be periodically reviewed, and modified as necessary, in order to conform to changes in state law.

Charter School shall ensure that its staff is knowledgeable about and complies with the District’s Discipline Foundation Policy and/or current equivalent policy, as required by the Modified Consent Decree. Charter School shall comply with the terms of the School Discipline Policy and School Climate Bill of Rights resolution adopted by the LAUSD Board of Education on May 6, 2013.

Charter School shall be responsible for the appropriate interim placement of students during and pending the completion of Charter School’s student expulsion process and shall facilitate the post-expulsion placement of expelled students.

Charter School shall document and implement the alternatives to suspension and expulsion that Charter School utilizes in response to attendance-related concerns, e.g. truancy or excessive tardiness.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Charter School shall implement operational and procedural guidelines ensuring compliance with federal and state laws and regulations regarding the discipline of students with disabilities. If a student is recommended for expulsion and the student receives or is eligible for special education, Charter School shall identify and provide special education programs and services at an appropriate interim educational placement, pending the completion of the expulsion process, to be coordinated with the LAUSD Special Education Service Center.

In the case of a student who has an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”), or a student who has a 504 Plan, Charter School shall ensure that it follows correct disciplinary procedures to comply with the mandates of state and federal laws, including IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973. As set forth in the MOU regarding special education between the District and Charter School, an IEP team will meet to conduct a manifestation determination and to discuss alternative placement utilizing the District’s Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual. Prior to recommending expulsion for a student with a 504 Plan, Charter School’s administrator will convene a Link Determination meeting to ask the following two questions:

A. Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student’s disability?
B. Was the misconduct a direct result of the Charter School’s failure to implement 504?
NOTIFICATION OF THE DISTRICT

Upon expelling any student, Charter School shall notify the Charter Schools Division by submitting an expulsion packet to the CSD immediately or as soon as practicable, which shall contain:

- Completed “Notification of Charter School Expulsion” [form available from the CSD website or office], including attachments as required on the form
- Documentation of the expulsion proceeding, including statement of specific facts supporting the expulsion and documentation that Charter School’s policies and procedures were followed
- Copy of parental notice of expulsion hearing
- Copy of expulsion notice provided to parent stating reason for expulsion, term of expulsion, rehabilitation plan, reinstatement notice with eligibility date and instructions for providing proof of student’s compliance for reinstatement, appeal process, and options for enrollment
- If the student is eligible for Special Education, documentation related to expulsion in compliance with IDEA and the MCD, including the Expulsion Analysis page of the pre-expulsion IEP
- If the student is eligible for Section 504 accommodations, documentation that Charter School conducted a Link Determination meeting to address two questions:
  A. Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student’s disability?
  B. Was the misconduct a direct result of Charter School’s failure to implement 504 Plan?

Notwithstanding the documentation sent to the Charter Schools Division as indicated above, if the student is a resident of a school district other than LAUSD, Charter School must notify the superintendent of the student’s district of residence within 30 days of the expulsion. Additionally, upon request of the receiving school district, Charter School shall forward student records no later than 10 school days from the date of the request as stated in Ed. Code section 49068 (a) and (b).

OUTCOME DATA

Charter School shall gather and maintain all data related to placement, tracking, and monitoring of student suspensions, expulsions, and reinstatements, and make such outcome data readily available to the District upon request.

REHABILITATION PLANS

Pupils who are expelled from Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by Charter School’s governing board at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. Terms of expulsion should be reasonable and fair with the weight of the expelling offense taken into consideration when determining the length of expulsion. Therefore, the rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may apply to Charter School for readmission. Charter School shall inform parents in writing of its processes for reinstatement and applying for expungement of the expulsion record.
READEMISSION

Charter School’s governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for the filing and processing of requests for readmission and the process for the required review of all expelled pupils for readmission. Upon completion of the readmission process, Charter School’s governing board shall readmit the pupil, unless Charter School’s governing board makes a finding that the pupil has not met the conditions of the rehabilitation plan or continues to pose a danger to campus safety. A description of the procedure shall be made available to the pupil and the pupil’s parent or guardian at the time the expulsion order is entered and the decision of the governing board, including any related findings, must be provided to the pupil and the pupil’s parent/guardian within a reasonable time.

REINSTATEMENT

Charter School’s governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for processing reinstatements, including the review of documents regarding the rehabilitation plan. Charter School is responsible for reinstating the student upon the conclusion of the expulsion period in a timely manner.

GUN-FREE SCHOOLS ACT

Charter School shall comply with the federal Gun-Free Schools Act.

This Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policy has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well being of all students at the Charter School. In creating this policy, the Charter School has reviewed Education Code Section 48900 et seq., which describes the noncharter schools’ list of offenses and procedures, to establish its list of offenses and procedures for suspensions and expulsions. The language that follows closely mirrors the language of Education Code Section 48900 et seq. The Charter School is committed to annual review of policies and procedures surrounding suspensions and expulsions and, as necessary, modification of the lists of offenses for which students are subject to suspension or expulsion.

When the Policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. This policy shall serve as the Charter School’s policy and procedures for student suspension and expulsion and it may be amended from time to time without the need to amend the charter so long as the amendments comport with legal requirements. Charter School staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. This Policy and its Procedures will be printed and distributed as part of the Student Handbook on an annual basis or upon enrollment and will clearly describe discipline expectations. Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of the Policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee’s use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

A. Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students
A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at anytime including but not limited to: a) while on school
B. Enumerated Offenses

1. Discretionary Suspension Offenses. Students may be suspended for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

   a) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
   b) Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
   c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
   d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
   e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
   f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
   g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
   h) Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a pupil.
   i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
   j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 11014.5.
   k) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
   l) Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
   m) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code Sections 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code Section 243.4.
   n) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
   o) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold prescription drugs, including Soma.
   p) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, “hazing” means a method of initiation or pre-initiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, “hazing” does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
   q) Made terroristic threats against school officials and/or school property. For purposes of this section, “terroristic threat” shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will
result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars ($1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family’s safety, or for the protection of school property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.

r) Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual’s academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.

s) Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.

t) Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.

u) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act.

1) “Bullying” means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

i. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student’s or those students’ person or property.

ii. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.

iii. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.

iv. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.

2) “Electronic Act” means the creation and transmission originated on or off the schoolsite, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device,
computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

i. A message, text, sound, or image.

ii. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
   (a) Posting to or creating a burn page. A “burn page” means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above.
   (b) Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. “Credible impersonation” means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
   (c) Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. “False profile” means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.

iii. Notwithstanding subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.

v) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (1).

w) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any knife unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Executive Director, Principal or designee’s concurrence.

2. Non-Discretionary Suspension Offenses: Students must be suspended and recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

   a) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Executive Director, Principal or designee’s concurrence.

3. Discretionary Expellable Offenses: Students may be recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

   a) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
   b) Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.

d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.

e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.

f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.

g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.

h) Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a pupil.

i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.

j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 11014.5.

k) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.

l) Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.

m) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code Sections 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code Section 243.4.

n) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.

o) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.

p) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, “hazing” means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, “hazing” does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.

q) Made terroristic threats against school officials and/or school property. For purposes of this section, “terroristic threat” shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars ($1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family’s safety, or for the protection of school property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.
r) Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual’s academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.

s) Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.

t) Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.

u) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act.

1) “Bullying” means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

i. Placing a reasonable student or students in fear of harm to that student’s or those students’ person or property.

ii. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.

iii. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.

iv. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.

2) “Electronic Act” means the creation and transmission originated on or off the school site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

i. A message, text, sound, or image.

ii. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:

(a) Posting to or creating a burn page. A “burn page” means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above.

(b) Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. “Credible impersonation” means to
knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.

(c) Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. “False profile” means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.

iii. Notwithstanding subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.

v) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (1).

w) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any knife unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Executive Director, Principal or designee’s concurrence.

4. Non-Discretionary Expellable Offenses: Students must be recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined pursuant to the procedures below that the pupil:

a) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Executive Director, Principal or designee’s concurrence.

If it is determined during an expulsion hearing that a student has brought a firearm or destructive device, as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, on to campus or to have possessed a firearm or dangerous device on campus, the student shall be expelled for one year, pursuant to the Federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994.

The term “firearm” means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm.

The term “destructive device” means (A) any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, including but not limited to: (i) bomb, (ii) grenade, (iii) rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, (iv) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, (v) mine, or (vi) device similar to any of the devices described in the preceding clauses.

C. Suspension Procedure
Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

1. Conference
Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the Executive
Director, Principal or designee with the student and his or her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher or other Charter School employee who referred the student to the Executive Director, Principal or designee.

The conference may be omitted if the Executive Director, Principal or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An “emergency situation” involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or Charter School personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of the student’s right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.

At the conference, the pupil shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him or her and shall be given the opportunity to present his or her version and evidence in his or her defense. This conference shall be held within two school days of when the student was suspended, unless the pupil waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason including, but not limited to, incarceration or hospitalization. No penalties may be imposed on a pupil for failure of the pupil’s parent or guardian to attend a conference with Charter School officials. Reinstatement of the suspended pupil shall not be contingent upon attendance by the pupil’s parent or guardian at the conference.

2. Notice to Parents/Guardians
At the time of the suspension, the Principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension and the date of return following suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense(s) committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time when the student may return to school. If Charter School officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

3. Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Expulsion
Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension. Upon a recommendation of expulsion by the Executive Director, Principal or designee, the pupil and the pupil’s guardian or representative will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the pupil should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination will be made by the Executive Director, Principal or designee upon either of the following: 1) the pupil’s presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the pupil poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the pupil’s suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing. The student will have the opportunity, at the discretion of the Executive Director, Principal and/or the classroom teacher, to complete instructional activities missed due to his or her suspension and will be able to communicate with designated school staff for any questions and for evaluation of work.

D. Authority to Expel
A student may be expelled by an Administrative Panel following a hearing before it, and preceded by recommendation from the Executive Director, Principal, or designee. The Administrative Panel shall consist of at least three members who are certificated employees and neither a teacher of the pupil or a Board member of the Charter School’s governing board. The Charter School’s Board will appoint an Administrative Panel. The Administrative Panel may expel any student found to have committed an expellable offense.

A student and his or her parents may appeal an expulsion decision by the Administrative Panel to the Charter School’s Board, which will make the final determination.

E. Expulsion Procedures
Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. If requested by the student, and unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the Executive Director or designee determines that the student has committed an expellable offense and recommends the student for expulsion. The Administrative Panel will hold a hearing on the case, and will make a determination whether to expel. The hearing shall be held in closed session (complying with all pupil confidentiality rules under FERPA) unless the student makes a written request for a public hearing three (3) days prior to the hearing.

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student’s parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the pupil. The notice shall include:

1. The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
2. A statement of the specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
3. A copy of the Charter School’s disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
4. Notification of the student’s or parent/guardian’s obligation to provide information about the student’s status at the Charter School to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;
5. The opportunity for the student or the student’s parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;
6. The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
7. The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
8. The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student’s behalf including witnesses.

F. Special Procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Sexual Assault or Battery Offenses

The Charter School may, upon a finding of good cause, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of the witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of sworn declarations that shall be examined only by the Charter School or the administrative panel. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the pupil.

1. The complaining witness in any sexual assault or battery case must be provided with a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of his/her right to (a) receive five days notice of his/her scheduled testimony, (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons of his/her choosing present in the hearing at the time he/she testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, and (c) elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.
2. The Charter School must also provide the victim a room separate from the hearing room for the complaining witness’ use prior to and during breaks in testimony.
3. At the discretion of the Administrative Panel, the complaining witness shall be allowed periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which he or she may leave the hearing room.
4. The Administrative Panel may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.
5. The Administrative Panel may also limit time for taking the testimony of the complaining witness to the hours he/she is normally in school, if there is no good cause to take the testimony during other hours.
6. Prior to a complaining witness testifying, the support persons must be admonished that the hearing is confidential. Nothing in the law precludes the person presiding over the hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The Administrative Panel may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany him or her to the witness stand.

7. If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, the Charter School must present evidence that the witness’ presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to the Charter School. The administrative panel shall permit the witness to stay unless it is established that there is a substantial risk that the testimony of the complaining witness would be influenced by the support person, in which case the presiding officer of the administrative panel shall admonish the support person or persons not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way. Nothing shall preclude the administrative panel from exercising its discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom he or she believes is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.

8. The testimony of the support person shall be presented before the testimony of the complaining witness and the complaining witness shall be excluded from the courtroom during that testimony.

9. Especially for charges involving sexual assault or battery, if the hearing is to be conducted in public at the request of the pupil being expelled, the complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a closed session when testifying at a public meeting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are no alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing room by means of closed-circuit television.

10. Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness’ prior sexual conduct is presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the administrative panel that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstance can be made, the witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.

G. Record of Hearing
A record of the hearing shall be made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, as long as a reasonably accurate and complete written transcription of the proceedings can be made.

H. Presentation of Evidence
While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A determination by the Administrative Panel to expel must be supported by substantial evidence that the student committed an expellable offense. Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay. Sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the Administrative Panel determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

If, due to a written request by the expelled pupil, the hearing is held at a public meeting, and the
charge is committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in Education Code Section 48900, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his or her testimony heard in a session closed to the public.

The decision of the Administrative Panel shall be in the form of written findings of fact. If the Administrative Panel decides not to recommend expulsion, the pupil shall immediately be returned to his/her educational program.

I. Written Notice to Expel
Within five (5) school days, the Executive Director, Principal or designee, following a decision of the Administrative Panel to expel, shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Administrative Panel’s adopted findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian. (a) Notice of the specific offense(s) committed by the student; (b) the term of the expulsion, including the possible readmission date; (c) rehabilitation plan; (d) explanation that Charter School shall work cooperatively with parents/guardians as requested by parents/guardians or by the school district of residence to assist with locating alternative placements during expulsion; and (e) Notice of the student’s or parent/guardian’s obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student’s status with the Charter School.

The Executive Director, Principal or designee shall send a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the District. This notice shall include the following: (a) The student’s name; and (b) The specific expellable offense committed by the student.

J. Disciplinary Records
The Charter School shall maintain records of all student suspensions and expulsions at the Charter School. Such records shall be made available to the authorizer upon request.

K. Right to Appeal
The pupil shall have the right to appeal an expulsion decision from the Administrative Panel to the Charter School Board. The appeal must be submitted in writing within five (5) school days of the date of the written decision to expel. The Charter School Board will consider the appeal within ten (10) school days of receipt of the written appeal. The Charter School Board’s decision to expel shall be final.

L. Expelled Pupils/Alternative Education
Pupils who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within the County or their school district of residence. The Charter School shall work cooperatively with parents/guardians as requested by parents/guardians or by the school district of residence to assist with locating alternative placements during expulsion.
Element 11 – Employee Retirement Systems

“The manner by which staff members of the charter schools will be covered by the State Teachers’ Retirement System, the Public Employees’ Retirement System, or federal social security.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(K).

Retirement System

Staff at VCES will participate in the federal social security system and have access to other school-sponsored retirement plans according to policies adopted by the Board of Directors for the school’s employees.

VCES certificated employees will participate in the State Teachers’ Retirement System (“STRS”) and Valley Charter School will coordinate such participation. VCES, as a participant in STRS, will work directly with the Los Angeles County Office of Education to forward in a timely fashion any required payroll deductions and related data.

Non-certificated employees will participate in the Social Security system. A 403(b) retirement program will be offered to employees who cannot participate in STRS, with VCES contributing 3% of salary.

The Executive Director in coordination with ExEd will ensure that appropriate arrangements for STRS, 403B, and Social Security coverage are made.
Element 12 – Public School Attendance Alternatives

“The public school attendance alternatives for students residing within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(L).

No student may be required to attend the Charter School. Pupils who choose not to attend Charter School may choose to attend other public schools in their district of residence or pursue inter-district transfers in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of the District. Parents and guardians of each student enrolled in the Charter School will be informed on admissions forms that students have no right to admission in a particular school of a local education agency as a consequence of enrollment in the Charter School, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the local education agency.
Element 13 – Rights of District Employees

“A description of the rights of any employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(M).

Employees of the District who choose to leave the employment of the District to work at Charter School shall have no automatic rights of return to the District after employment at Charter School unless specifically granted by the District through a leave of absence or other agreement or policy of the District as aligned with the collective bargaining agreements of the District. Leave and return rights for District union-represented employees and former employees who accept employment with Charter School will be administered in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements and any applicable judicial rulings.
**Element 14 – Mandatory Dispute Resolution**

“*The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter.*” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(N).

The staff and governing board members of Charter School agree to resolve any claim, controversy or dispute arising out of or relating to the Charter agreement between the District and Charter School, except any controversy or claim that is in any way related to revocation of this Charter (“Dispute”), pursuant to the terms of this Element 14.

Any Dispute between the District and Charter School shall be resolved in accordance with the procedures set forth below:

1) Any Dispute shall be communicated in writing (“Written Notification”). The Written Notification must identify the nature of the Dispute and any supporting facts. The Written Notification shall be tendered to the other party by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Notification shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.

All Written Notifications to the District and Charter School shall be addressed respectively as follows:

Director
Charter Schools Division
Los Angeles Unified School District
333 South Beaudry Avenue, 20th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90017

Executive Director/Principal
Charter School
[See Element 14]

2) A written response (“Written Response”) shall be tendered to the other party within twenty (20) business days from the date of receipt of the Written Notification. The parties agree to schedule a conference to discuss the Dispute identified in the Written Notice (“Issue Conference”). The Issue Conference shall take place within fifteen (15) business days from the date the Written Response is received by the other party. The Written Response may be tendered by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.

3) If the Dispute cannot be resolved by mutual agreement at the Issue Conference, either party may then request that the Dispute be resolved by mediation. Each party shall bear its own attorneys’ fees, costs and expenses associated with the mediation. The mediator’s fees and the administrative fees of the mediation shall be shared equally among the parties. Mediation proceedings shall commence within 120 days from the date of either party’s request for mediation following the Issue Conference. The parties shall mutually agree upon the selection
of a mediator to resolve the Dispute. The mediator may be selected from the approved list of mediators prepared by the American Arbitration Association. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, mediation proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial mediation procedures of the American Arbitration Association.

4) If the mediation is not successful, then the parties agree to resolve the Dispute by binding arbitration conducted by a single arbitrator. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, arbitration proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial arbitration rules of the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator must be an active member of the State Bar of California or a retired judge of the state or federal judiciary of California. Each party shall bear its own attorney’s fees, costs and expenses associated with the arbitration. The arbitrator’s fees and the administrative fees of the arbitration shall be shared equally among the parties. However, any party who fails or refuses to submit to arbitration as set forth herein shall bear all attorney’s fees, costs and expenses incurred by such other party in compelling arbitration of any controversy or claim.

A. Disputes Arising from Within the School

Disputes arising from within the school, including all disputes among and between students, staff, parents, volunteers, Board members, and partner organizations, will be resolved pursuant to policies and practices developed by the school. The Los Angeles Unified School District will, as an initial step, promptly refer any complaints or reports regarding such internal disputes to the Board or administrative staff of VCES for resolution.
Element 15 – Exclusive Public School Employer

“A declaration as to whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for purposes of Chapter 10.7 (commencing with Section 3540) of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(O).

Valley Charter School is deemed the exclusive public school employer of all employees of the charter school for collective bargaining purposes. As such, Valley Charter School shall comply with all provisions of the Educational Employment Relations Act (“EERA”), and shall act independently from LAUSD for collective bargaining purposes. In accordance with the EERA, employees may join and be represented by an organization of their choice for collective bargaining purposes.
Element 16 – Charter School Closure Procedures

“A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(P).

REVOCATION OF THE CHARTER

The District may revoke the Charter if Charter School commits a breach of any provision set forth in a policy related to charter schools adopted by the District Board of Education and/or any provisions set forth in the Charter Schools Act of 1992. The District may revoke the charter of Charter School if the District finds, through a showing of substantial evidence, that Charter School did any of the following:

- Charter School committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the Charter.
- Charter School failed to meet or pursue any of the pupil outcomes identified in the Charter.
- Charter School failed to meet generally accepted accounting principles, or engaged in fiscal mismanagement.
- Charter School violated any provision of law.

Prior to revocation, and in accordance with Ed. Code section 47607(d) and state regulations, the LAUSD Board of Education will notify Charter School in writing of the specific violation, and give Charter School a reasonable opportunity to cure the violation, unless the LAUSD Board of Education determines, in writing, that the violation constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of the pupils. Revocation proceedings are not subject to the dispute resolution clause set forth in this Charter.

Pursuant to AB 97, charter schools may be identified for assistance based on state evaluation rubrics and be subject to revocation pursuant to Ed. Code section 47607.3.

CLOSURE ACTION

The decision to close Charter School, either by the governing board of Charter School or by the LAUSD Board of Education, must be documented in a “Closure Action”. A Closure Action shall be deemed to have been automatically taken when any of the following occur: the Charter is revoked or non-renewed by the LAUSD Board of Education; the governing board of Charter School votes to close Charter School; or the Charter lapses.

CLOSURE PROCEDURES

The procedures for charter school closure set forth below are guided by Ed. Code sections 47604.32, 47605, and 47607 as well as California Code of Regulations, title 5, sections 11962 and 11962.1, and are based on “Charter School Closure Requirements and Recommendations (Revised 08/2009)” posted on the California Department of Education website. All references to “Charter School” apply to Charter School, including its nonprofit corporation and governing board.
**Designation of Responsible Person(s) and Funding of Closure**

Upon the taking of a Closure Action by either the governing board of Charter School or the LAUSD Board of Education, the governing board of Charter School shall immediately designate a person or persons responsible for conducting all closure-related procedures and activities, and determine how Charter School will fund these activities.

**Notification of Closure Action**

Upon the taking of a Closure Action, Charter School shall send written notice of its closure to:

1. The LAUSD Charter Schools Division (CSD), if the Closing Action is an act of Charter School. Charter School shall provide CSD with a copy of the governing board resolution or minutes that documents its Closure Action. Note: If the Closure Action is a revocation or nonrenewal by the LAUSD Board of Education, the charter school does not need to send separate written notice of its closure to the CSD.

2. Parents/guardians of all students, and all majority age and emancipated minor students, currently enrolled in Charter School within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of the written parent notification to the CSD.

3. Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE). Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action to LACOE by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of this notification to the CSD.

4. The Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) in which the school participates. Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action to the SELPA in which Charter School participates by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of this notification to the CSD.

5. The retirement systems in which the school’s employees participate. Within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Closure Action, Charter School shall notify, as applicable, the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS), Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), the Social Security Administration, and the Los Angeles County Office of Education of the Closure Action, and follow their respective procedures for dissolving contracts and reporting. Charter School shall provide a copy of this notification and correspondence to the CSD.

6. The California Department of Education (CDE). Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action to the CDE by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this notification to the CSD.

7. Any school district that may be responsible for providing education services to the former students of Charter School. Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action within 72 hours of the Closure Action. This notice must include a list of potentially returning students and their home schools based on student residence. Charter School shall provide a copy of these notifications, if any, to the CSD.

8. All school employees and vendors within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of the written employee and vendor notification to the CSD.
Notification of all the parties above, with the exception of employees and vendors, must include but is not limited to the following information:

1. The effective date of the school closure
2. The name(s) and contact information for the person(s) handling inquiries regarding the closure
3. The students’ school districts of residence
4. How parents/guardians of all students, and all majority age and emancipated minor students, may obtain copies of student records and transcripts, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements

In addition to the four required items above, notification of the CDE shall also include:

1. A description of the circumstances of the closure
2. The location of student and personnel records

In addition to the four required items above, notification of parents/guardians of all students, and all majority age and emancipated minor students, shall also include:

1. Information on how to enroll or transfer the student to an appropriate school
2. A certified packet of student information that includes closure notice, a copy of the student’s cumulative record, which will include grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, completed coursework, credits that meet graduation requirements, a transcript, and state testing results
3. Information on student completion of college entrance requirements, for all high school students affected by the closure

Notification of employees and vendors shall include:

1. The effective date of the school closure
2. The name(s) and contact information for the person(s) handling inquiries regarding the closure
3. The date and manner, which shall be no later than 30 days from the effective date of school closure, by which Charter School shall provide employees with written verification of employment

Within 30 days of the effective date of closure, Charter School shall provide all employees with written verification of employment. Charter School shall send copies of such letters to the CSD.

School and Student Records Retention and Transfer
Charter School shall adhere to the following requirements regarding the transfer and maintenance of school and student records:

1. Charter School shall provide the District with original student cumulative files and behavior records pursuant to District policy and applicable handbook(s) regarding cumulative records for secondary and elementary schools for all students both active and inactive, of Charter School. Transfer of the complete and organized original student records to the District, in accordance with District procedures applicable at the time of closure, shall occur within seven (7) calendar days of the effective date of closure.
2. Charter School’s process for transferring student records to the receiving schools shall be in accordance with LAUSD procedures for students moving from one school to another.

3. Charter School shall prepare and provide an electronic master list of all students to the Charter Schools Division in accordance with the District procedures applicable at the time of closure. This list shall include the student’s identification number, Statewide Student Identifier (SSID), birthdate, grade, full name, address, home school/school district, enrollment date, exit code, exit date, parent/guardian name(s), and phone number(s). If the Charter School closure occurs before the end of the school year, the list also shall indicate the name of the school to which each student is transferring, if known. This electronic master list shall be delivered to the CSD in the form of a CD or otherwise in accordance with District procedures.

4. Charter School must organize the original cumulative files for delivery to the District in two categories: active students and inactive students. Charter School will coordinate with the CSD for the delivery and/or pickup of the student records.

5. Charter School must update all student records in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) prior to closing.

6. Charter School must provide to the CSD a copy of student attendance records, teacher gradebooks, school payroll and personnel records, and Title I records (if applicable). Personnel records must include any and all employee records including, but not limited to, records related to performance and grievance.

Charter School shall ensure that all records are boxed and clearly labeled by classification of documents and the required duration of storage in accordance with District procedures.

Charter School shall provide to the responsible person(s) designated by the governing board of Charter School to conduct all closure-related activities a list of students in each grade level and, for each student, a list of classes completed and the student’s district of residence.

Financial Close-Out

After receiving notification of closure, the CDE will notify the charter school and the authorizing entity of any liabilities the charter school owes the state, which may include overpayment of apportionments, unpaid revolving fund loans or grants, and/or similar liabilities. The CDE may ask the county office of education to conduct an audit of the charter school if it has reason to believe that the school received state funding for which it was not eligible.

Charter School shall ensure completion of an independent final audit within six months after the closure of the school that includes:

1. An accounting of all financial assets. These may include cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value.

2. An accounting of all liabilities. These may include accounts payable or reduction in apportionments due to loans, unpaid staff compensation, audit findings, or other investigations.

3. An assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to the charter school.

This audit may serve as the school’s annual audit.
Charter School shall pay for the financial closeout audit of Charter School. This audit will be conducted by a neutral, independent licensed CPA who will employ generally accepted accounting principles. Any liability or debt incurred by Charter School will be the responsibility of Charter School and not LAUSD. Charter School understands and acknowledges that Charter School will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of Charter School. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source. Charter School understands and acknowledges that only unrestricted funds will be used to pay creditors. Any unused AB 602 funds will be returned to the District SELPA or the SELPA in which Charter School participates, and other categorical funds will be returned to the source of funds. Charter School understands and acknowledges that Charter School will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of Charter School. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source. Charter School understands and acknowledges that only unrestricted funds will be used to pay creditors. Any unused AB 602 funds will be returned to the District SELPA or the SELPA in which Charter School participates, and other categorical funds will be returned to the source of funds.

Charter School shall ensure the completion and filing of any annual reports required. These reports include but are not necessarily limited to:

1. Preliminary budgets
2. Interim financial reports
3. Second interim financial reports
4. Final unaudited reports

These reports must be submitted to the CDE and the authorizing entity in the form required. If Charter School chooses to submit this information before the forms and software are available for the fiscal year, alternative forms can be used if they are approved in advance by the CDE. These reports should be submitted as soon as possible after the Closure Action, but no later than the required deadline for reporting for the fiscal year.

For apportionment of categorical programs, the CDE will count the prior year average daily attendance (ADA) or enrollment data of the closed charter school with the data of the authorizing entity. This practice will occur in the first year after the closure and will continue until CDE data collection processes reflect ADA or enrollment adjustments for all affected LEAs due to the charter closure.

**Disposition of Liabilities and Assets**

The closeout audit must identify the disposition of all liabilities of the charter school. Charter school closure procedures must also ensure appropriate disposal, in accordance with Charter School’s bylaws, fiscal procedures, and any other applicable laws and regulations, of any net assets remaining after all liabilities of the charter school have been paid or otherwise addressed. Such disposal includes, but is not limited to:

1. Charter School, at its cost and expense, shall return to the District any and all property, furniture, equipment, supplies, and other assets provided to Charter School by or on behalf of the District. The District discloses that the California Education Code sets forth the requirements for the disposition of the District’s personal property and Charter School shall bear responsibility and liability for any disposition in violation of statutory requirements.
2. The return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any terms and conditions set when the donations were accepted.
3. The return of any grant and restricted categorical funds to their sources according to the terms of the grant or state and federal law.
4. The submission of final expenditure reports for any entitlement grants and the filing of Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as appropriate.
If Charter School is operated by a nonprofit corporation, and if the corporation does not have any functions other than operation of Charter School, the corporation shall be dissolved according to its bylaws.

Charter School shall retain sufficient staff, as deemed appropriate by the Charter School governing board to complete all necessary tasks and procedures required to close the school and transfer records in accordance with these closure procedures.

Charter School’s governing board shall adopt a plan for wind-up of the school and, if necessary, the corporation, in accordance with the requirements of the Corporations Code.

Charter School shall provide LAUSD within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Closure Action with written notice of any outstanding payments due to staff and the time frame and method by which the school will make the payments.

Prior to final close-out, Charter School shall complete all actions required by applicable law, including but not limited to the following:

a. File all final federal, state, and local employer payroll tax returns and issue final W-2s and Form 1099s by the statutory deadlines.
b. File a Federal Notice of Discontinuance with the Department of Treasury (Treasury Form 63).
c. Make final federal tax payments (employee taxes, etc.)
d. File its final withholding tax return (Treasury Form 165).
e. File its final return with the IRS (Form 990 and Schedule).

This Element 16 shall survive the revocation, expiration, termination, cancellation of this Charter, or any other act or event that would end Charter School’s authorization to operate as a charter school or cause Charter School to cease operation. Charter School agrees that, due to the nature of the property and activities that are the subject of this Charter, the District and public shall suffer irreparable harm should Charter School breach any obligation under this Element 16. The District therefore reserves the right to seek equitable relief to enforce any right arising under this Element 16 or any provision of this Element 16 or to prevent or cure any breach of any obligation undertaken, without in any way prejudicing any other legal remedy available to the District. Such legal relief shall include, without limitation, the seeking of a temporary or permanent injunction, restraining order, or order for specific performance, and may be sought in any appropriate court.
Additional Provisions

**FACILITIES**

**District-Owned Facilities**
If Charter School is using District facilities as of the date of the submittal of this charter petition or takes occupancy of District facilities prior to the approval of this charter petition, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by the District for the use of the District facilities as a condition of the approval of the charter petition. If at any time after the approval of this charter petition Charter School will occupy and use any District facilities, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by the District for the use of the District facilities prior to occupancy and commencing use.

Notwithstanding any provision of any existing agreement for the use of District facilities, no agreement for the use of District facilities shall automatically renew or extend its term with the renewal of the charter petition. The circumstances of Charter School’s occupancy of District facilities may change over time such as, but not limited to, enrollment, programs, and the conditions of facilities, and the District has a vested interest in having an agreement that is appropriate for the situation.

Prop. 39 Single Year Co-Location Use Agreement shall be limited to one (1) school year and expire on the date stated in said instrument. There is no automatic renewal.

For the Sole Occupant Agreement or any other use agreement that is not a lease issued through the Notice of Intent and bid process, the term shall not exceed five (5) years or shall be co-terminus with the charter petition, whichever is shorter. Charter School and the District shall negotiate any modifications of the agreement with the goal of such amendment or new agreement being considered by the LAUSD Board of Education with the renewal of the charter petition. If Charter School and the District cannot execute an agreement in time for such to be considered by the Board of Education with the renewal of the charter petition, the approval of the renewal of the charter petition shall be conditioned upon Charter School and the District executing an amendment to the existing use agreement or a new agreement no later than May 1st or within nine (9) months of the date of the Board of Education’s approval of the renewal of the charter petition. During such time period Charter School shall be permitted to remain in occupancy of the District facilities under the terms and conditions of the immediately preceding, executed use agreement; provided, that if Charter School and the District cannot agree upon and execute an amendment or new use agreement by said deadline, Charter School shall vacate the District facilities on or before June 30th of said school year.

Charter School agrees that occupancy and use of District facilities shall be in compliance with applicable laws and District policies for the operation and maintenance of District facilities and furnishings and equipment. All District facilities (i.e. schools) will remain subject to those laws applicable to public schools.

In the event of an emergency, all District facilities (i.e. schools) are available for use by the American Red Cross and public agencies as emergency locations, which may disrupt or prevent Charter School from conducting its educational programs. If Charter School will share the use of District facilities with other District user groups, Charter School agrees it will participate in and
observe all District safety policies (e.g., emergency chain of information and participation in safety drills).

The use agreements provided by the District for District facilities shall contain terms and conditions addressing issues such as, but not limited to, the following:

- **Use:** Charter School will be restricted to using the District facilities for the operation of a public school providing educational instruction to public school students consistent with the terms of the Charter and incidental related uses. The District shall have the right to inspect District facilities upon reasonable notice to Charter School.

- **Furnishings and Equipment:** The District shall retain ownership of any furnishings and equipment, including technology, (“F&E”) that it provides to Charter School for use. Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, shall provide maintenance and other services for the good and safe operation of the F&E.

- **Leasing; Licensing:** Use of the District facilities by any person or entity other than Charter School shall be administered by the District. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement in the use agreement.

- **Programs, Services, and Activities Outside Instructional Program; Third Party Vendors**
  1. Any program, service, or activity provided outside the instructional program shall be subject to the terms and provisions of the use agreement, and, additionally, may require a license, permit, or additional agreement issued by the District. The term “instructional program” is defined, per Ed. Code 47612 and 5 CCR § 11960, as those required educational activities that generate funding based on “average daily attendance” and includes those extracurricular programs, services, and/or activities that students are required to participate in and do not require the payment of any consideration or fee.
  2. Any program, service, or activity requiring the payment of any consideration or fee or provided by a third party vendor (defined as any person or entity other than Charter School), whether paid or volunteer and regardless of whether such may be within the instructional program, shall be subject to the terms and provisions of the use agreement and such third party vendor shall be required to obtain a license, permit, or additional agreement from the District.

- **Minimum Payments or Charges to be Paid to District Arising From the Facilities:**
  1. **Pro Rata Share:** The District shall collect and Charter School shall pay a Pro Rata Share for facilities costs as provided in the Charter Schools Act of 1992 and its regulations. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding facilities costs in the use agreement; and
  2. **Taxes; Assessments:** Generally, Charter School shall pay any assessment or fee imposed upon or levied on the LAUSD facilities that it is occupying or Charter School’s legal or equitable interest created by the use agreement.

- **Maintenance & Operations Services:** In the event the District agrees to allow Charter School to perform any of the operation and maintenance services, the District shall have the right to inspect the District facilities, and the costs incurred in such inspection shall be paid by Charter School.
(i) Co-Location: If Charter School is co-locating or sharing the District facilities with another user, the District shall provide the operations and maintenance services for the District facilities and Charter School shall pay the Pro Rata Share. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such in the use agreement.

(ii) Sole Occupant: If Charter School is a sole occupant of District facilities, the District shall allow Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, to provide some operations and maintenance services for the District facilities in accordance with applicable laws and LAUSD’s policies on operations and maintenance services for facilities and F&E. NOTWITHSTANDING THE FOREGOING, the District shall provide all services for regulatory inspections which as the owner of the real property it is required to submit, and deferred maintenance, and Charter School shall pay LAUSD for the cost and expense of providing those services. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such services in the use agreement.

Real Property Insurance: Prior to occupancy, Charter School shall satisfy requirements to participate in LAUSD’s property insurance or, if Charter School is the sole occupant of LAUSD facilities, obtain and maintain separate property insurance for the LAUSD facilities. Charter School shall not have the option of obtaining and maintaining separate property insurance for the LAUSD facility IF Charter School is co-locating or sharing the LAUSD facility.

Non-District-Owned Facilities
Occupancy and Use of the Site: Prior to occupancy or use of any school site or facility, Charter School shall provide the CSD with a current Certificate of Occupancy or equivalent document issued by the applicable permitting agency that allows Charter School to use and occupy the site as a charter school. Charter School shall not exceed the operating capacity of the site and shall operate within any limitations or requirements provided by the Certificate of Occupancy and any applicable permit. Charter School may not open or operate without providing a copy of an appropriate Certificate of Occupancy to the CSD. If Charter School intends to move or expand to another facility during the term of this Charter, Charter School shall adhere to any and all District policies and procedures regarding charter material revision and non-material amendment. Prior to occupancy or use of any such additional or changed school site, Charter School shall provide an appropriate Certificate of Occupancy to the CSD for such facility. Notwithstanding any language to the contrary in this Charter, the interpretation, application, and enforcement of this provision are not subject to the Dispute Resolution Process outlined in Element 14.

Facility Compliance: Prior to occupancy or use of any school site or facility, Charter School shall provide adequate documentation to the CSD that the charter school facility complies with all applicable building codes, standards and regulations adopted by the city and/or county agencies responsible for building and safety standards for the city in which Charter School is to be located, federal and state accessibility requirements (including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504), and all other applicable fire, health, and structural safety and access requirements. This requirement shall also apply to the construction, reconstruction, alteration of or addition to the charter school facility. Charter School shall
resolve in a timely manner any and all corrective actions, orders to comply, or notices issued by
the authorized building and safety agency or the District. Charter School cannot exempt itself
from applicable building and zoning codes, ordinances, and ADA/Section 504 requirements.
Charter School shall maintain on file readily accessible records that document facilities
compliance and provide such documentation to the CSD upon request..

**Pest Management:** Charter School shall comply with the Healthy Schools Act, Ed. Code
section 17608, which details pest management requirements for schools.

**Asbestos Management:** Charter School shall comply with the asbestos requirement as cited in
the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), 40 C.F.R. part 763. AHERA
requires that any building leased or acquired that is to be used as a school or administrative
building shall maintain an asbestos management plan.

**INSURANCE**

**Insurance Requirements**
No coverage shall be provided to Charter School by the District under any of the District’s self-
insured programs or commercial insurance policies. Charter School shall secure and maintain, at
a minimum, insurance as set forth below with insurance companies acceptable to the District
[A.M. Best A-, VII or better] to protect Charter School from claims which may arise from its
operations. Each Charter School location shall meet the below insurance requirements
individually.

It shall be Charter School’s responsibility, not the District’s, to monitor its vendors, contractors,
partners, and/or sponsors for compliance with the insurance requirements.

The following insurance policies are required:

1. **Commercial General Liability**, including Fire Legal Liability, coverage of $5,000,000 per
   Occurrence and in the Aggregate. The policy shall be endorsed to name the Los Angeles
   Unified School District and the Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles (“Board
   of Education”) as named additional insureds and shall provide specifically that any
   insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be
deemed excess and Charter School’s insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting
provisions in Charter School’s policy. Coverage shall be maintained with no Self-Insured
Retention above $15,000 without the prior written approval of the Division of Risk
Management and Insurance Services for the LAUSD.

2. **Workers’ Compensation Insurance** in accordance with provisions of the California Labor
Code adequate to protect Charter School from claims that may arise from its operations
pursuant to the Workers’ Compensation Act (Statutory Coverage). The Workers’
Compensation Insurance coverage must also include Employers Liability coverage with
limits of $1,000,000/$1,000,000/$1,000,000.

3. **Commercial Auto Liability**, including Owned, Leased, Hired, and Non-
owned, coverage
with limits of $1,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence if Charter School does
not operate a student bus service. If Charter School provides student bus services, the
required coverage limit is $5,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence.
4. Crime Insurance or Fidelity Bond coverage shall be maintained by Charter School to cover all Charter School employees who handle, process or otherwise have responsibility for Charter School funds, supplies, equipment or other assets. Minimum amount of coverage shall be $50,000 per occurrence, with no self-insured retention.

5. Professional Educators Errors and Omissions liability coverage with minimum limits of $3,000,000 per occurrence and $3,000,000 general aggregate.

6. Sexual Molestation and Abuse coverage with minimum limits of $3,000,000 per occurrence and $3,000,000 general aggregate. Coverage may be held as a separate policy or included by endorsement in the Commercial General Liability or the Errors and Omissions Policy.

7. Employment Practices Legal Liability coverage with limits of $3,000,000 per occurrence and $3,000,000 general aggregate.

8. Excess/umbrella insurance with limits of not less than $10,000,000 is required of all high schools and any other school that participates in competitive interscholastic or intramural sports programs.

Coverages and limits of insurance may be accomplished through individual primary policies or through a combination of primary and excess policies. The policy shall be endorsed to name the Los Angeles Unified School District and Its Board of Education as named additional insureds and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and Charter School's insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in Charter School's policy.

**Evidence of Insurance**
Charter School shall furnish to the District’s Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services located at 333 S. Beaudry Ave, 28th Floor, Los Angeles CA 90017 within 30 days of all new policies inceptions, renewals or changes, certificates or such insurance signed by authorized representatives of the insurance carrier. Certificates shall be endorsed as follows:

“Charter school shall be required to provide LAUSD with 30 days prior written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, if the insurance afforded by this policy shall be suspended, cancelled, reduced in coverage limits or non-renewed.”

Facsimile or reproduced signatures may be acceptable upon review by the Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services. However, the District reserves the right to require certified copies of any required insurance policies.

Should Charter School deem it prudent and/or desirable to have insurance coverage for damage or theft to school, employee or student property, for student accident, or any other type of insurance coverage not listed above, such insurance shall not be provided by the District and its purchase shall be the responsibility of Charter School.

**Hold Harmless/Indemnification Provision**
To the fullest extent permitted by law, Charter School does hereby agree, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members,
officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses including but not limited to attorneys’ fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever, arising out of, or relating to, this Charter agreement. Charter School further agrees to the fullest extent permitted by law, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses including but not limited to attorneys’ fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever for claims, damages, losses and expenses arising from or relating to acts or omission of acts committed by Charter School and/or its officers, directors, employees or volunteers. Moreover, Charter School agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless “the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers, for any contractual liability resulting from third party contracts with Charter School’s vendors, contractors, partners or sponsors.

**FISCAL MATTERS**

**District Oversight Costs**
The District may charge for the actual costs of oversight of Charter School not to exceed 1% of Charter School’s revenue, or the District may charge for the actual costs of oversight of Charter School not to exceed 3% if Charter School is able to obtain substantially rent free facilities from the District. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District may charge the maximum oversight fee allowed under the law as it may change from time to time. The oversight fee provided herein is separate and distinct from the charges arising under charter school facilities use agreements.

**Cash Reserves**
Charter School acknowledges that the recommended cash reserve is 5% of expenditures, as provided in section 15450, title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

**Special Education Revenue Adjustment/Payment for Services**
In the event that Charter School owes funds to the District for the provision of agreed upon or fee for service or special education services or as a result of the State’s adjustment to allocation of special education revenues from Charter School, Charter School authorizes the District to deduct any and all of the in lieu property taxes that Charter School otherwise would be eligible to receive under section 47635 of the Ed. Code to cover such owed amounts. Charter School further understands and agrees that the District shall make appropriate deductions from the in lieu property tax amounts otherwise owed to Charter School. Should this revenue stream be insufficient in any fiscal year to cover any such costs, Charter School agrees that it will reimburse the District for the additional costs within forty-five (45) business days of being notified of the amounts owed.

**Audit and Inspection of Records**
Charter School agrees to observe and abide by the following terms and conditions as a requirement for receiving and maintaining its charter authorization:

- Charter School is subject to District oversight.
- The District’s statutory oversight responsibility continues throughout the life of the Charter and requires that the District, among other things, monitors the fiscal condition of Charter School.
- The District is authorized to revoke this Charter for, among other reasons, the failure of Charter School to meet generally accepted accounting principles or if Charter School
engages in fiscal mismanagement.

Accordingly, the District hereby reserves the right, pursuant to its oversight responsibility, to audit Charter School books, records, data, processes and procedures through the District Office of the Inspector General or other means. The audit may include, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Compliance with terms and conditions prescribed in the Charter agreement,
- Internal controls, both financial and operational in nature,
- The accuracy, recording and/or reporting of Charter School’s financial information,
- Charter School’s debt structure,
- Governance policies, procedures and history,
- The recording and reporting of attendance data,
- Charter School’s enrollment process,
- Compliance with safety plans and procedures, and
- Compliance with applicable grant requirements.

Charter School shall cooperate fully with such audits and shall make available any and all records necessary for the performance of the audit upon 30 days notice to Charter School. When 30 days notice may defeat the purpose of the audit, the District may conduct the audit upon 24- hours notice.

**Internal Fiscal Controls**
Charter School will develop and maintain sound internal fiscal control policies governing all financial activities.

**Apportionment Eligibility for Students Over 19 Years of Age**
Charter School acknowledges that, in order for a pupil over nineteen (19) years of age to remain eligible for generating charter school apportionment, the pupil shall be continuously enrolled in public school and make satisfactory progress toward award of a high school diploma. Ed. Code § 47612(b).

**Local Control and Accountability Plan**
In accordance with California Education Code sections 47604.33 and 47606.5, Charter School shall include in its annual update a “listing and description of the expenditures for the fiscal year implementing the specific actions included in the charter as a result of the reviews and assessment required by paragraph (1)” of section 47606.5(a). These expenditures shall be “classified using the California School Accounting Manual pursuant to Section 41010.” Ed. Code § 47606.5(b).
ADDENDUM
District Required Language for Independent Charter School
Petitions (New and Renewal) and Material Revisions

Assurances and Affirmations

[Charter School] (also referred to herein as “[short form of school name]” and “Charter School”) shall:

- Be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. California Education Code (hereinafter “Ed. Code”) § 47605(d)(1).


- Not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in section 422.55 of the Penal Code. Ed. Code § 47605(d)(1).

- Except as provided in Ed. Code section 47605(d)(2), admission to a charter school shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the pupil, or of his or her parent or legal guardian, within this state, except that an existing public school converting partially or entirely to a charter school under this part shall adopt and maintain a policy giving admission preference to pupils who reside within the former attendance area of that school. Ed. Code § 47605(d)(1).


- Except for existing students of the charter school, determine attendance by a public random drawing if the number of pupils who wish to attend the charter school exceeds the school’s capacity. Preference shall be extended to pupils currently attending the charter school and pupils who reside in the Los Angeles Unified School District (also referred to herein as “LAUSD” and “District”). Ed. Code § 47605(d)(2)(B).

- If a pupil is expelled or leaves the charter school without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the charter school shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil’s last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card, and health information. Ed. Code § 47605(d)(3).

- Meet all statewide standards and conduct the pupil assessments required pursuant to Ed. Code sections 60605 and 60851 and any other statewide standards authorized in statute or pupil assessments applicable to pupils in non-charter public schools. Ed. Code § 47605(c)(1).
Consult, on a regular basis, with the charter school’s parents, legal guardians, and teachers regarding the school’s educational programs. Ed. Code § 47605(c)(2).

NOTE: This charter contains specific “District Required Language” (DRL), including the Assurances and Affirmations above. The DRL should be highlighted in gray within each element or section. The charter includes a consolidated addendum of the DRL. This intentional redundancy facilitates efficient charter petition review while ensuring ready access to the DRL for any given section of the charter. To the extent that any inconsistency should exist between any provision contained within the body of the charter and the DRL contained in the addendum, the provisions of the DRL addendum shall control.

**Element 1 – The Educational Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENERAL INFORMATION</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The contact person for Charter School is:</td>
<td>Robert Burke, Executive Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The contact address for Charter School is:</td>
<td>16514 Nordhoff St. North Hills, CA 91343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The proposed phone number for Charter School is:</td>
<td>818-810-6713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The proposed address or target community of Charter School is:</td>
<td>16514 Nordhoff St. North Hills, CA 91343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• This location is in LAUSD Board District:</td>
<td>Board District 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• This location is in LAUSD Educational Service Center:</td>
<td>Educational Service Center North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The grade configuration of Charter School is:</td>
<td>TKindergarten – 5th Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The number of students in the first year of the renewal term will be:</td>
<td>Approximately 264 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The grade level(s) of the students in the first year of the renewal term will be:</td>
<td>TKindergarten – 5th Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The scheduled opening date of Charter School is:</td>
<td>August 24, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The enrollment capacity is: (Enrollment capacity is defined as all students who are enrolled in Charter School regardless of student residency).</td>
<td>264 Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The type of instructional calendar (e.g. traditional/year-round, single track/multi-track, extended day/year) will be:</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The bell schedule for Charter School will be:</td>
<td>8:15 am – 2:40 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The term of this charter shall be from:</td>
<td>July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**LOCAL CONTROL FUNDING FORMULA (LCFF) AND LOCAL CONTROL AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN (LCAP)**

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that it must comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (Local Control Funding Formula), as they may be amended from time to time, which include the requirement that Charter School shall annually submit a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) or LCAP update, as appropriate, to the Charter Schools Division and the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools on or before July 1. In accordance with Ed. Code sections 47604.33 and 47606.5, Charter School shall annually update its goals and annual actions to achieve those goals identified in the charter pursuant to Ed. Code section 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii), using the Local Control and Accountability Plan template adopted by the State Board of Education, as it may be changed from time to time. Charter School shall comply with all requirements of Ed. Code section 47606.5, including but not limited to the requirement that Charter School “shall consult with teachers, principals, administrators, other school personnel, parents, and pupils in developing the annual update.” Ed. Code § 47606.5(e).

**ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND SCHEDULES**

Charter School shall offer, at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction set forth in Ed. Code section 47612.5, and the number of school days required by California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 11960.

**TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN**

Charter School shall comply with all applicable requirements regarding transitional kindergarten.

**WASC ACCREDITATION**

If Charter School serves students in grades 9-12, Charter School shall obtain Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation before Charter School graduates its first class of students.

**ENGLISH LEARNERS**

Charter School is required to timely identify potential English Learners (ELs) and provide them with an effective English language acquisition program that affords meaningful access to the school’s academic core curriculum. Instructional plans for English Learners must be (1) based on sound educational theory; (2) adequately supported with trained teachers and appropriate materials and resources; and (3) periodically evaluated to make sure the program is successful and modified when the program is not successful.
On an annual basis (on or about October 1), Charter School shall submit a certification to the LAUSD Charter Schools Division (CSD) that certifies that Charter School will either adopt and implement LAUSD’s English Learner Master Plan or implement Charter School’s own English Learner Master Plan. If Charter School chooses to implement its own EL plan, the plan shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

- How English Learners’ needs will be identified
- What services will be offered
- How, where, and by whom the services will be provided
- How the school will evaluate its EL program each year, and how the results of this evaluation will be used to improve the program, including the provision of EL services

Each year, Charter School shall provide to the CSD a report on its annual EL program assessment. Upon request, Charter School shall provide a copy of its current EL Master Plan to the CSD.

Charter School shall administer the CELDT/ELPAC annually in accordance with federal and state requirements.

Charter School shall reclassify English Learners in accordance with federal and state requirements.

Charter School shall ensure that it will provide parent outreach services and meaningfully inform parents with limited English proficiency of important information regarding school matters to the same extent as other parents.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

**Federal Law Compliance**
Charter School shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.

**Special Education Program**
Charter schools must ensure that no student otherwise eligible to enroll in their charter school will be denied enrollment due to a disability or to the charter school’s inability to provide necessary services. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure the recruitment, enrollment and retention of students with disabilities at charter schools.
Prior to LAUSD Board of Education approval, Charter School will execute a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") by and between LAUSD and Charter School regarding the provision and funding of special education services consistent with the requirements of the LAUSD Special Education Local Plan Area ("SELPA") Local Plan for Special Education.

**SELPA Reorganization**
The Los Angeles Unified School District is approved to operate as a single-District SELPA under the provisions of Ed. Code § 56195.1(a) and intends to continue operating as a single-District SELPA as in the current structure but has created two school sections (District-operated Programs and Charter-operated Programs) under the administration of one single Administrative Unit pursuant to a reorganization plan approved by the Board of Education on January 4, 2011 (149/10-11). Full implementation of the reorganized LAUSD SELPA commenced in the 2013-2014 school year requiring all District-authorized charter schools to elect one of the three options available under the LAUSD SELPA. Prior to an Option election, all District-authorized charter schools were required to participate as a school of the District under the District-Operated Programs Unit. Prior to the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year, all District-authorized charter schools, other than those that had previously executed an Option 3 Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU"), were required to execute a new MOU setting forth the LAUSD SELPA option election for the remainder of the charter petition term. The Charter-operated Program schools do not have LEA status but will function in a similar role in that each charter school will be responsible for all special education issues including services, placement, due process, related services, special education classes, and special education supports. Charter schools may apply for membership in the Charter-operated Program section of the SELPA. These schools will receive support from a Special Education Director for the Charter-operated Programs.

**Modified Consent Decree Requirements**
All charter schools approved by the LAUSD Board of Education are bound by and must adhere to the terms, conditions and requirements of the Chanda Smith Modified Consent Decree ("MCD") and other court orders imposed upon the District pertaining to special education. The MCD is a consent decree entered in a federal court class action lawsuit initially brought on behalf of students with disabilities in LAUSD. It is an agreement of the parties approved by the federal court and monitored by a court-appointed independent monitor. The MCD includes nineteen statistically measureable outcomes and facilities obligations that the District has to achieve to disengage from the MCD and federal court oversight. All charter schools are required to use the District’s Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual and Welligent, the District-wide web-based software system used for online Individualized Education Programs ("IEPs") and tracking of related services provided to students during the course of their education.

As part of fulfilling the District’s obligations under the MCD, student level data requests from District-operated and Charter-operated schools are made on a regular basis. The requested data must be submitted in the Office of the Independent Monitor’s ("OIM") required format in accordance with the OIM’s required timelines and as follows:
• End of Year Suspension  
  District ID, CSIS ID, last name, first name, date of birth, gender, grade, date of suspension, number of days suspended, and reason for suspension.

• Statewide Assessment Data (Including Charter Schools)  
  The usual file including District ID.

• Norm day  
  District ID, CSIS ID, last name, first name, date of birth, gender, grade, location code, school name and local district for all students enrolled on norm day.

• CBEDS (Including Charter Schools)  

• All Students enrolled as of December 1 of each school year  
  District ID, CSIS ID, last name, first name, date of birth, gender, grade, location code, school name and local district for all students enrolled on norm day.

• Dropout (Including Charter Schools)  
  District ID, CSIS ID, last name, first name, middle name, date of birth, grade, last location, school name and local district

• Monthly SESAC and Suspension data (Including Charter Schools)  

• Graduation roster from all LAUSD schools (Including Charter Schools) with 12th grade SWD

The MCD requires charter schools to implement the District’s integrated student information system which is referred to as My Integrated Student Information System (MiSiS). MiSiS is a suite of applications which is designed to capture all District student data. All charter schools are required to utilize MiSiS beginning August 1, 2014 upon the release of Milestone 8 which includes the final set of functionalities required to comply with the MCD. Upon charter school full utilization of MiSiS, the list of required data above will automatically be captured within MiSiS.
Element 2 – Measurable Pupil Outcomes and
Element 3 – Method by which Pupil Progress Toward Outcomes will be Measured

“The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. “Pupil outcomes,” for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school’s educational program. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both schoolwide and for all groups of pupils served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 47607. The pupil outcomes shall align with the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(B).

“The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured. To the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(C).

Measurable Goals of the Educational Program

Charter School shall meet all statewide content and performance standards and targets. Ed. Code §§ 47605(c)(1), 60605.

Charter School shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (Local Control Funding Formula) and AB 484, as they may be amended from time to time, including all requirements pertaining to pupil outcomes.

Standardized Testing

Charter School agrees to comply with and adhere to state requirements for participation and administration of all state-mandated tests. If Charter School does not test with the District, Charter School hereby grants authority to the State of California to provide a copy of all test results directly to the District as well as Charter School.

Element 4 – Governance

“The governance structure of the school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(D).

General Provisions
As an independent charter school, Charter School, operated as or by its nonprofit public benefit corporation, is a separate legal entity and shall be solely responsible for the debts and obligations of Charter School.

Charter School shall comply with the Brown Act and the Public Records Act.

All employees and representatives of Charter School, including members of Charter School’s governing board, members of school or governing board committees or councils, school administrators, and managers, shall comply with federal and state laws, nonprofit integrity standards, and LAUSD’s charter school policies, regarding ethics and conflicts of interest.

Charter School shall ensure that, at all times throughout the term of the Charter, the bylaws of its governing board and/or nonprofit corporation are and remain consistent with the provisions of this Charter. In the event that the governing board and/or nonprofit corporation operating Charter School amends the bylaws, Charter School shall provide a copy of the amended bylaws to CSD within 30 days of adoption.

Charter School shall send to the CSD copies of all governing board meeting agendas at the same time that they are posted in accordance with the Brown Act. Charter School shall also send to the CSD copies of all board meeting minutes within one week of governing board approval of the minutes. Timely posting of agendas and minutes on the school website will satisfy this requirement.

The District reserves the right to appoint a single representative to the Charter School governing board pursuant to Ed. Code section 47604(b).

**TITLE IX, SECTION 504, AND UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

Charter School shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), including any investigation of any complaint filed with Charter School alleging its noncompliance with these laws or alleging any actions which would be prohibited by these laws. Charter School shall notify all its students and employees of the name, office address, and telephone number of the designated employee or employees.

Charter School shall adopt and publish complaint procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited by Title IX or Section 504.

Charter School shall adopt and implement specific and continuing procedures for notifying applicants for admission and employment, students and parents of
elementary and secondary school students, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with Charter School, that Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of sex or mental or physical disability in the educational programs or activities which it operates, and that it is required by Title IX and Section 504 not to discriminate on any such basis.

Charter School shall establish and provide a uniform complaint procedure in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, including all applicable requirements of California Code of Regulations, title 5, sections 4600 et seq.

Charter School shall adhere to all applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding pupil fees, including Ed. Code sections 49010 – 49013, and extend its uniform complaint procedure to complaints filed pursuant to Ed. Code section 49013.

Charter School shall extend its uniform complaint procedure to complaints pursuant to the local control funding formula. Ed. Code § 52075.

LEGAL AND POLICY COMPLIANCE

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and District policy as it relates to charter schools, as they may be amended from time to time.

Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal and state reporting requirements, including but not limited to the requirements of CBEDS, CALPADS, the Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999, and Ed. Code section 47604.33.

RESPONDING TO INQUIRIES

Charter School, including its nonprofit corporation, shall promptly respond to all inquiries, including but not limited to inquiries regarding financial records from the District, and shall cooperate with the District regarding any inquiries. Charter School, including its nonprofit corporation, acknowledges that it is subject to audit by LAUSD, including, without limitation, audit by the District Office of the Inspector General. Charter School shall provide the District with current and accurate contact information for the school, school administrators, and Board members.

If an allegation or other evidence of waste, fraud, abuse, or other material violation of law related to Charter School’s operations, or breach of charter, is received or discovered by the District, Charter School shall cooperate with any resulting investigation undertaken by the District and/or the Office of the Inspector General Investigations Unit.
NOTIFICATION OF THE DISTRICT

Charter School shall notify the Charter Schools Division in writing of any citations or notices of workplace hazards, investigations by outside regulatory or investigative agencies, lawsuits, changes in corporate or legal status (e.g. loss of IRS 501(c)(3) status), or other formal complaints or notices, within one week of receipt of such notices by Charter School. Unless prohibited by law, Charter School shall notify the CSD in writing of any internal investigations within one week of commencing investigation.

STUDENT RECORDS

When a student transfers for any reason from Charter School to any other school, Charter School shall transfer a copy of the student’s complete cumulative record within 10 school days of receiving a records request from the receiving school. In the event Charter School closes, Charter School shall comply with the student records transfer provisions in Element 16. Charter School shall comply with the requirements of Ed. Code section 49060 et seq., regarding rights to access student records and transfer of records for youth in foster care.

Element 5 – Employee Qualifications

“The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the school.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(E).

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Charter School acknowledges and agrees that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity. Charter School shall not discriminate against applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, military and veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by California or federal law. Equal employment opportunity shall be extended to all aspects of the employer-employee relationship, including recruitment, selection, hiring, upgrading, training, promotion, transfer, discipline, layoff, recall, and dismissal from employment.

ESEA/NCLB AND CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS

Charter School shall adhere to all requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, also known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB)) that are
applicable to teachers and paraprofessional employees. Charter School shall ensure that all teachers and paraprofessionals meet the requirements for employment set forth in Ed. Code section 47605(l). Teachers of core and/or college preparatory subjects, and special education teachers, must hold and maintain a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in a non-charter public school would be required to hold in the same assignment, including English Learner authorization. Charter School shall maintain current copies of all teacher credentials and make them readily available for inspection.

Element 6 – Health and Safety Procedures

“The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(f).

Health, Safety and Emergency Plan

Charter School shall have a comprehensive site-specific Health, Safety and Emergency Plan, including but not limited to the acquisition and maintenance of adequate onsite emergency supplies, in place prior to beginning operation of the charter school each school year. Charter School shall ensure that all staff members receive annual training on Charter School’s health, safety, and emergency procedures, including but not limited to training on child abuse awareness and reporting and bloodborne pathogens awareness, and shall maintain a calendar for, and conduct, emergency response drills for students and staff. Charter School shall periodically review, and update and/or modify as necessary, its Health, Safety and Emergency Plan, and keep it readily available for use and review upon CSD request.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Charter School, including its employees and officers, shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Ed. Code § 49060 et seq. at all times.

Criminal Background Checks and Fingerprinting

Charter School shall require the following persons to submit to criminal background checks and fingerprinting in accordance with state law: (1) all employees of Charter School, (2) any employees of vendors or independent contractors providing schoolsite services who may have contact with students, and (3) all volunteers who will be performing services that are not under the direct supervision of a Charter School employee. Charter School shall maintain on file and available for inspection
evidence that (1) Charter School has performed criminal background checks and cleared for employment all employees prior to employment, and (2) Charter School has obtained certification that independent contractors and vendors have conducted required criminal background checks for their employees prior to any contact with students. Charter School shall also ensure that it requests and receives subsequent arrest notifications from the California Department of Justice to ensure the ongoing safety of its students. Upon request, Charter School shall provide a copy of Department of Justice confirmation of Custodian of Records status for each Custodian of Records.

**IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH SCREENING REQUIREMENTS**

Charter School shall require its employees, and any volunteer, vendor, or independent contractor who may have frequent or prolonged contact with students, to be examined and determined to be free of active tuberculosis as described in Ed. Code section 49406. Charter School shall maintain TB clearance records on file.

Charter School shall provide for the immunization and health screening of its students, including but not limited to screening for vision, hearing, and scoliosis, to the same extent as would be required if the students were attending a non-charter public school. Charter School shall maintain immunization records on file.

**SAFE PLACE TO LEARN ACT**

Charter School shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Safe Place to Learn Act, Ed. Code section 234 et seq.

**Element 7 – Means to Achieve Racial and Ethnic Balance**

“The means by which the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(G).

**COURT-ORDERED INTEGRATION**

Charter School shall comply with all requirements of the Crawford v. Board of Education, City of Los Angeles court order and the LAUSD Integration Policy adopted and maintained, pursuant to the Crawford court order, by the District’s Student Integration Services (collectively the “Court-ordered Integration Program”). The Court-ordered Integration Program applies to all schools within or chartered through LAUSD.
Charter School has set forth below its initial plan for achieving and maintaining the LAUSD’s Racial and Ethnic Balance goal of a 70:30 or 60:40 ratio. (Ratio represents the percentage of Predominantly Hispanic Black Asian Other (PHBAO) compared to Other White (OW)). The written plan lists specific dates and locations of recruitment activities that Charter School will undertake in order to achieve the District’s Racial and Ethnic Balance goal. Charter School shall monitor the implementation and outcomes of the initial plan, and modify it as necessary to achieve the District’s goal. Upon request, Charter School shall provide the District with a copy of its current written plan.

The District receives neither average daily attendance allocations nor Court-ordered Integration Program cost reimbursements for charter school students. Instead, the District now receives the Targeted Instructional Improvement Block Grant (TIIBG) for its Court-ordered Integration Program. The District retains sole discretion over the allocation of TIIBG funding, where available, and cannot guarantee the availability of this funding.

**Federal Program Compliance**

As a recipient of federal funds, including federal Title I, Part A funds, Charter School has agreed to meet all of the programmatic, fiscal and other regulatory requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, also known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB)) and other applicable federal grant programs. Charter School understands that it is a local educational agency (LEA) for purposes of federal compliance and reporting purposes. Charter School agrees that it will keep and make available to the District any documentation necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of NCLB and other applicable federal programs, including, but not limited to, documentation related to funding, required parental notifications, appropriate credentialing of teaching and paraprofessional staff, the implementation of Public School Choice and Supplemental Educational Services, where applicable, or any other mandated federal program requirement. The mandated requirements of NCLB, Title I, Part A include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Notify all parents at the beginning of each school year of their “right to know” the professional qualifications of their child’s classroom teacher
- Notify each individual parent, in a timely manner, that the parent’s child has been assigned, or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified
- Develop jointly with, and distribute to, parents of participating children, a school-parent compact
- Hold an annual Title I meeting for parents of participating Title I students
- Develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parent involvement policy

- Submit biannual Consolidated Application to California Department of Education (CDE) requesting federal funds

- Complete and submit Local Education Agency (LEA) Plan to CDE

- Complete reform planning process with stakeholders and submit to CDE all appropriate documents for Title I Schoolwide Program eligibility and status, if applicable; otherwise, identify and maintain roster of eligible students for the Title I Targeted Assistance School Program

- Maintain inventory of equipment purchased with categorical funds, where applicable

- Maintain appropriate time-reporting documentation, including semi-annual certification and personnel activity report, for staff funded with categorical resources, where applicable

- Participate in any applicable federal program monitoring conducted by the California Department of Education

- Conduct an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of funds allocated through the Consolidated Application

Charter School also acknowledges that, as part of its oversight of Charter School, the District may conduct program review for federal as well as state compliance.

**Element 8 – Admission Requirements**

"Admission requirements, if applicable." Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(H).

**McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act**

Charter School shall adhere to the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths. Charter School shall provide specific information, in its outreach materials, websites, at community meetings, open forums, and regional center meetings, that notifies parents that the school is open to enroll and provide services for all students, and provides a District standard contact number for access to additional information regarding enrollment.
NON-DISCRIMINATION

Charter School shall not require a parent/legal guardian/student to provide information regarding a student’s disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, legal or economic status, primary language or English Learner status, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in section 422.55 of the Penal Code, or any other information that would violate federal or state law, prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment. Charter School may request, at the time of, and as part of, conducting its lottery process, the provision of information necessary to apply specific admissions preferences set forth in this Charter.

Charter School shall not request or require submission of a student’s IEP, 504 Plan, or any other record or related information prior to admission, participation in any admissions or attendance lottery, or pre-enrollment event or process, or as a condition of admission or enrollment.

Element 9 – Annual Financial Audits

“The manner in which annual, independent financial audits shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering authority.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(I).

The annual audit shall be conducted in compliance with Ed. Code section 47605(b)(5)(I) as it is amended from time to time.

The following reports will be submitted to LAUSD, in the required format and within timelines to be specified by LAUSD, each year:

k. Provisional Budget – Spring prior to operating fiscal year
l. Final Budget – July of the budget fiscal year
m. First Interim Projections – November of operating fiscal year
n. Second Interim Projections – February of operating fiscal year
o. Unaudited Actuals – July following the end of the fiscal year
p. Audited Actuals – December 15 following the end of the fiscal year
q. Classification Report – monthly according to school’s Calendar
r. Statistical Report – monthly according to school’s Calendar of Reports

In addition:

• P1, first week of January
• P2, first week of April

s. Instructional Calendar – annually five weeks prior to first day of instruction
t. Other reports as requested by the District
Element 10 – Suspension and Expulsion Procedures

“The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(J).

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Charter School shall provide due process for all students, including adequate and timely notice to parents/guardians and students of the grounds for all suspension and expulsion recommendations and decisions and their due process rights regarding suspension and expulsion, including rights of appeal.

Charter School shall ensure that its policies and procedures regarding suspension and expulsion will be periodically reviewed, and modified as necessary, in order to conform to changes in state law.

Charter School shall ensure that its staff is knowledgeable about and complies with the District’s Discipline Foundation Policy and/or current equivalent policy, as required by the Modified Consent Decree. Charter School shall comply with the terms of the School Discipline Policy and School Climate Bill of Rights resolution adopted by the LAUSD Board of Education on May 6, 2013.

Charter School shall be responsible for the appropriate interim placement of students during and pending the completion of Charter School’s student expulsion process and shall facilitate the post-expulsion placement of expelled students.

Charter School shall document and implement the alternatives to suspension and expulsion that Charter School utilizes in response to attendance-related concerns, e.g. truancy or excessive tardiness.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Charter School shall implement operational and procedural guidelines ensuring compliance with federal and state laws and regulations regarding the discipline of students with disabilities. If a student is recommended for expulsion and the student receives or is eligible for special education, Charter School shall identify and provide special education programs and services at an appropriate interim educational placement, pending the completion of the expulsion process, to be coordinated with the LAUSD Special Education Service Center.

In the case of a student who has an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”), or a student who has a 504 Plan, Charter School shall ensure that it follows correct disciplinary procedures to comply with the mandates of state and federal laws, including IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973. As set forth in the
MOU regarding special education between the District and Charter School, an IEP team will meet to conduct a manifestation determination and to discuss alternative placement utilizing the District’s Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual. Prior to recommending expulsion for a student with a 504 Plan, Charter School’s administrator will convene a Link Determination meeting to ask the following two questions:

C. Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student’s disability?
D. Was the misconduct a direct result of the Charter School’s failure to implement 504?

**NOTIFICATION OF THE DISTRICT**

Upon expelling any student, Charter School shall notify the Charter Schools Division by submitting an expulsion packet to the CSD immediately or as soon as practicable, which shall contain:

- Completed “Notification of Charter School Expulsion” [form available from the CSD website or office], including attachments as required on the form
- Documentation of the expulsion proceeding, including statement of specific facts supporting the expulsion and documentation that Charter School’s policies and procedures were followed
- Copy of parental notice of expulsion hearing
- Copy of expulsion notice provided to parent stating reason for expulsion, term of expulsion, rehabilitation plan, reinstatement notice with eligibility date and instructions for providing proof of student’s compliance for reinstatement, appeal process, and options for enrollment
- If the student is eligible for Special Education, documentation related to expulsion in compliance with IDEA and the MCD, including the Expulsion Analysis page of the pre-expulsion IEP
- If the student is eligible for Section 504 accommodations, documentation that Charter School conducted a Link Determination meeting to address two questions:
  C. Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student’s disability?
  D. Was the misconduct a direct result of Charter School’s failure to implement 504 Plan?

Notwithstanding the documentation sent to the Charter Schools Division as indicated above, if the student is a resident of a school district other than LAUSD, Charter School must notify the superintendent of the student’s district of residence within 30 days of the expulsion. Additionally, upon request of the receiving school district, Charter School shall forward student records no later than 10 school days from the date of the request as stated in Ed. Code section 49068 (a) and (b).
OUTCOME DATA

Charter School shall gather and maintain all data related to placement, tracking, and monitoring of student suspensions, expulsions, and reinstatements, and make such outcome data readily available to the District upon request.

REHABILITATION PLANS

Pupils who are expelled from Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by Charter School’s governing board at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. Terms of expulsion should be reasonable and fair with the weight of the expelling offense taken into consideration when determining the length of expulsion. Therefore, the rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may apply to Charter School for readmission. Charter School shall inform parents in writing of its processes for reinstatement and applying for expungement of the expulsion record.

READMISSION

Charter School’s governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for the filing and processing of requests for readmission and the process for the required review of all expelled pupils for readmission. Upon completion of the readmission process, Charter School’s governing board shall readmit the pupil, unless Charter School’s governing board makes a finding that the pupil has not met the conditions of the rehabilitation plan or continues to pose a danger to campus safety. A description of the procedure shall be made available to the pupil and the pupil’s parent or guardian at the time the expulsion order is entered and the decision of the governing board, including any related findings, must be provided to the pupil and the pupil’s parent/guardian within a reasonable time.

REINSTATEMENT

Charter School’s governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for processing reinstatements, including the review of documents regarding the rehabilitation plan. Charter School is responsible for reinstating the student upon the conclusion of the expulsion period in a timely manner.

GUN-FREE SCHOOLS ACT

Charter School shall comply with the federal Gun-Free Schools Act.
**Element 11 – Employee Retirement Systems**

“The manner by which staff members of the charter schools will be covered by the State Teachers’ Retirement System, the Public Employees’ Retirement System, or federal social security.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(K).

[NOTE: No District Required Language is being provided for inclusion in this element.]

**Element 12 – Public School Attendance Alternatives**

“The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(L).

Pupils who choose not to attend Charter School may choose to attend other public schools in their district of residence or pursue inter-district transfers in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of the District.

**Element 13 – Rights of District Employees**

“A description of the rights of any employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(M).

Employees of the District who choose to leave the employment of the District to work at Charter School shall have no automatic rights of return to the District after employment at Charter School unless specifically granted by the District through a leave of absence or other agreement or policy of the District as aligned with the collective bargaining agreements of the District. Leave and return rights for District union-represented employees and former employees who accept employment with Charter School will be administered in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements and any applicable judicial rulings.

**Element 14 – Mandatory Dispute Resolution**

“The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(N).

The staff and governing board members of Charter School agree to resolve any claim, controversy or dispute arising out of or relating to the Charter agreement between the District and Charter School, except any controversy or claim that is in any way related to revocation of this Charter (“Dispute”), pursuant to the terms of this Element 14.
Any Dispute between the District and Charter School shall be resolved in accordance with the procedures set forth below:

5) Any Dispute shall be communicated in writing (“Written Notification”). The Written Notification must identify the nature of the Dispute and any supporting facts. The Written Notification shall be tendered to the other party by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Notification shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.

All Written Notifications to the District and Charter School shall be addressed respectively as follows:

Director
Charter Schools Division
Los Angeles Unified School District
333 South Beaudry Avenue, 20th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90017

Director/Principal
Charter School
[See Element 14]

6) A written response (“Written Response”) shall be tendered to the other party within twenty (20) business days from the date of receipt of the Written Notification. The parties agree to schedule a conference to discuss the Dispute identified in the Written Notice (“Issue Conference”). The Issue Conference shall take place within fifteen (15) business days from the date the Written Response is received by the other party. The Written Response may be tendered by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.

7) If the Dispute cannot be resolved by mutual agreement at the Issue Conference, either party may then request that the Dispute be resolved by mediation. Each party shall bear its own attorneys’ fees, costs and expenses associated with the mediation. The mediator’s fees and the administrative fees of the mediation shall be shared equally among the parties. Mediation proceedings shall commence within 120 days from the date of either party’s request for mediation following the Issue Conference. The parties shall mutually agree upon the selection of a mediator to resolve the Dispute. The mediator may be selected from the approved list of mediators prepared by the American Arbitration Association. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise,
mediation proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial mediation procedures of the American Arbitration Association.

8) If the mediation is not successful, then the parties agree to resolve the Dispute by binding arbitration conducted by a single arbitrator. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, arbitration proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial arbitration rules of the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator must be an active member of the State Bar of California or a retired judge of the state or federal judiciary of California. Each party shall bear its own attorney’s fees, costs and expenses associated with the arbitration. The arbitrator’s fees and the administrative fees of the arbitration shall be shared equally among the parties. However, any party who fails or refuses to submit to arbitration as set forth herein shall bear all attorney’s fees, costs and expenses incurred by such other party in compelling arbitration of any controversy or claim.

**Element 15 – Exclusive Public School Employer**

“A declaration whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for purposes of Chapter 10.7 (commencing with Section 3540) of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(O).

Charter School is deemed the exclusive public school employer of all employees of the charter school for collective bargaining purposes. As such, Charter School shall comply with all provisions of the Educational Employment Relations Act (“EERA”), and shall act independently from LAUSD for collective bargaining purposes. In accordance with the EERA, employees may join and be represented by an organization of their choice for collective bargaining purposes.

**Element 16 – Charter School Closure Procedures**

“A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records.” Ed. Code § 47605(b)(5)(P).

**REVOCATION OF THE CHARTER**

The District may revoke the Charter if Charter School commits a breach of any provision set forth in a policy related to charter schools adopted by the District Board of Education and/or any provisions set forth in the Charter Schools Act of 1992. The District may revoke the charter of Charter School if the District finds, through a showing of substantial evidence, that Charter School did any of the following:

- Charter School committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the Charter.
- Charter School failed to meet or pursue any of the pupil outcomes identified in the Charter.

- Charter School failed to meet generally accepted accounting principles, or engaged in fiscal mismanagement.

- Charter School violated any provision of law.

Prior to revocation, and in accordance with Ed. Code section 47607(d) and state regulations, the LAUSD Board of Education will notify Charter School in writing of the specific violation, and give Charter School a reasonable opportunity to cure the violation, unless the LAUSD Board of Education determines, in writing, that the violation constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of the pupils. Revocation proceedings are not subject to the dispute resolution clause set forth in this Charter.

Pursuant to AB 97, charter schools may be identified for assistance based on state evaluation rubrics and be subject to revocation pursuant to Ed. Code section 47607.3.

**Closure Action**

The decision to close Charter School, either by the governing board of Charter School or by the LAUSD Board of Education, must be documented in a “Closure Action”. A Closure Action shall be deemed to have been automatically taken when any of the following occur: the Charter is revoked or non-renewed by the LAUSD Board of Education; the governing board of Charter School votes to close Charter School; or the Charter lapses.

**Closure Procedures**

The procedures for charter school closure set forth below are guided by Ed. Code sections 47604.32, 47605, and 47607 as well as California Code of Regulations, title 5, sections 11962 and 11962.1, and are based on “Charter School Closure Requirements and Recommendations (Revised 08/2009)” posted on the California Department of Education website. All references to “Charter School” apply to Charter School, including its nonprofit corporation and governing board.

**Designation of Responsible Person(s) and Funding of Closure**

Upon the taking of a Closure Action by either the governing board of Charter School or the LAUSD Board of Education, the governing board of Charter School shall immediately designate a person or persons responsible for conducting all closure-related procedures and activities, and determine how Charter School will fund these activities.

**Notification of Closure Action**
Upon the taking of a Closure Action, Charter School shall send written notice of its closure to:

9. The LAUSD Charter Schools Division (CSD), if the Closing Action is an act of Charter School. Charter School shall provide CSD with a copy of the governing board resolution or minutes that documents its Closure Action. Note: If the Closure Action is a revocation or nonrenewal by the LAUSD Board of Education, the charter school does not need to send separate written notice of its closure to the CSD.

10. Parents/guardians of all students, and all majority age and emancipated minor students, currently enrolled in Charter School within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of the written parent notification to the CSD.

11. Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE). Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action to LACOE by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of this notification to the CSD.

12. The Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) in which the school participates. Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action to the SELPA in which Charter School participates by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of this notification to the CSD.

13. The retirement systems in which the school’s employees participate. Within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Closure Action, Charter School shall notify, as applicable, the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS), Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), the Social Security Administration, and the Los Angeles County Office of Education of the Closure Action, and follow their respective procedures for dissolving contracts and reporting. Charter School shall provide a copy of this notification and correspondence to the CSD.

14. The California Department of Education (CDE). Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action to the CDE by registered mail within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this notification to the CSD.

15. Any school district that may be responsible for providing education services to the former students of Charter School. Charter School shall send written notification of the Closure Action within 72 hours of the Closure Action. This notice must include a list of potentially returning students and their home schools based on student residence. Charter School shall provide a copy of these notifications, if any, to the CSD.
16. All school employees and vendors within 72 hours of the Closure Action. Charter School shall simultaneously provide a copy of the written employee and vendor notification to the CSD.

Notification of all the parties above, with the exception of employees and vendors, must include but is not limited to the following information:

5. The effective date of the school closure

6. The name(s) and contact information for the person(s) handling inquiries regarding the closure

7. The students’ school districts of residence

8. How parents/guardians of all students, and all majority age and emancipated minor students, may obtain copies of student records and transcripts, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements

In addition to the four required items above, notification of the CDE shall also include:

3. A description of the circumstances of the closure

4. The location of student and personnel records

In addition to the four required items above, notification of parents/guardians of all students, and all majority age and emancipated minor students, shall also include:

4. Information on how to enroll or transfer the student to an appropriate school

5. A certified packet of student information that includes closure notice, a copy of the student’s cumulative record, which will include grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, completed coursework, credits that meet graduation requirements, a transcript, and state testing results

6. Information on student completion of college entrance requirements, for all high school students affected by the closure

Notification of employees and vendors shall include:

4. The effective date of the school closure

5. The name(s) and contact information for the person(s) handling inquiries regarding the closure
6. The date and manner, which shall be no later than 30 days from the effective date of school closure, by which Charter School shall provide employees with written verification of employment

Within 30 days of the effective date of closure, Charter School shall provide all employees with written verification of employment. Charter School shall send copies of such letters to the CSD.

**School and Student Records Retention and Transfer**
Charter School shall adhere to the following requirements regarding the transfer and maintenance of school and student records:

7. Charter School shall provide the District with original student cumulative files and behavior records pursuant to District policy and applicable handbook(s) regarding cumulative records for secondary and elementary schools for all students both active and inactive, of Charter School. Transfer of the complete and organized original student records to the District, in accordance with District procedures applicable at the time of closure, shall occur within seven (7) calendar days of the effective date of closure.

8. Charter School’s process for transferring student records to the receiving schools shall be in accordance with LAUSD procedures for students moving from one school to another.

9. Charter School shall prepare and provide an electronic master list of all students to the Charter Schools Division in accordance with the District procedures applicable at the time of closure. This list shall include the student’s identification number, Statewide Student Identifier (SSID), birthdate, grade, full name, address, home school/school district, enrollment date, exit code, exit date, parent/guardian name(s), and phone number(s). If the Charter School closure occurs before the end of the school year, the list also shall indicate the name of the school to which each student is transferring, if known. This electronic master list shall be delivered to the CSD in the form of a CD or otherwise in accordance with District procedures.

10. Charter School must organize the original cumulative files for delivery to the District in two categories: active students and inactive students. Charter School will coordinate with the CSD for the delivery and/or pickup of the student records.

11. Charter School must update all student records in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) prior to closing.

12. Charter School must provide to the CSD a copy of student attendance records, teacher gradebooks, school payroll and personnel records, and Title I records.
Personnel records must include any and all employee records including, but not limited to, records related to performance and grievance.

13. Charter School shall ensure that all records are boxed and clearly labeled by classification of documents and the required duration of storage in accordance with District procedures.

14. Charter School shall provide to the responsible person(s) designated by the governing board of Charter School to conduct all closure-related activities a list of students in each grade level and, for each student, a list of classes completed and the student’s district of residence.

**Financial Close-Out**

After receiving notification of closure, the CDE will notify the charter school and the authorizing entity of any liabilities the charter school owes the state, which may include overpayment of apportionments, unpaid revolving fund loans or grants, and/or similar liabilities. The CDE may ask the county office of education to conduct an audit of the charter school if it has reason to believe that the school received state funding for which it was not eligible.

Charter School shall ensure completion of an independent final audit within six months after the closure of the school that includes:

4. An accounting of all financial assets. These may include cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value.

5. An accounting of all liabilities. These may include accounts payable or reduction in apportionments due to loans, unpaid staff compensation, audit findings, or other investigations.

6. An assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to the charter school.

This audit may serve as the school’s annual audit.

Charter School shall pay for the financial closeout audit of Charter School. This audit will be conducted by a neutral, independent licensed CPA who will employ generally accepted accounting principles. Any liability or debt incurred by Charter School will be the responsibility of Charter School and not LAUSD. Charter School understands and acknowledges that Charter School will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of Charter School. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source. Charter School understands and acknowledges that only unrestricted funds will be used to pay creditors. Any unused AB 602 funds will be returned to the District SELPA or the SELPA in which Charter School participates, and other categorical funds will be returned to the source of funds.
Charter School shall ensure the completion and filing of any annual reports required. These reports include but are not necessarily limited to:

5. Preliminary budgets
6. Interim financial reports
7. Second interim financial reports
8. Final unaudited reports

These reports must be submitted to the CDE and the authorizing entity in the form required. If Charter School chooses to submit this information before the forms and software are available for the fiscal year, alternative forms can be used if they are approved in advance by the CDE. These reports should be submitted as soon as possible after the Closure Action, but no later than the required deadline for reporting for the fiscal year.

For apportionment of categorical programs, the CDE will count the prior year average daily attendance (ADA) or enrollment data of the closed charter school with the data of the authorizing entity. This practice will occur in the first year after the closure and will continue until CDE data collection processes reflect ADA or enrollment adjustments for all affected LEAs due to the charter closure.

Disposition of Liabilities and Assets

The closeout audit must identify the disposition of all liabilities of the charter school. Charter school closure procedures must also ensure appropriate disposal, in accordance with Charter School’s bylaws, fiscal procedures, and any other applicable laws and regulations, of any net assets remaining after all liabilities of the charter school have been paid or otherwise addressed. Such disposal includes, but is not limited to:

5. Charter School, at its cost and expense, shall return to the District any and all property, furniture, equipment, supplies, and other assets provided to Charter School by or on behalf of the District. The District discloses that the California Education Code sets forth the requirements for the disposition of the District’s personal property and Charter School shall bear responsibility and liability for any disposition in violation of statutory requirements.

6. The return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any terms and conditions set when the donations were accepted.

7. The return of any grant and restricted categorical funds to their sources according to the terms of the grant or state and federal law.

8. The submission of final expenditure reports for any entitlement grants and the filing of Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as appropriate.
If Charter School is operated by a nonprofit corporation, and if the corporation does not have any functions other than operation of Charter School, the corporation shall be dissolved according to its bylaws.

Charter School shall retain sufficient staff, as deemed appropriate by the Charter School governing board to complete all necessary tasks and procedures required to close the school and transfer records in accordance with these closure procedures.

Charter School’s governing board shall adopt a plan for wind-up of the school and, if necessary, the corporation, in accordance with the requirements of the Corporations Code.

Charter School shall provide LAUSD within fourteen (14) calendar days of the Closure Action with written notice of any outstanding payments due to staff and the time frame and method by which the school will make the payments.

Prior to final close-out, Charter School shall complete all actions required by applicable law, including but not limited to the following:

- File all final federal, state, and local employer payroll tax returns and issue final W-2s and Form 1099s by the statutory deadlines.
- File a Federal Notice of Discontinuance with the Department of Treasury (Treasury Form 63).
- Make final federal tax payments (employee taxes, etc.)
- File its final withholding tax return (Treasury Form 165).
- File its final return with the IRS (Form 990 and Schedule).

This Element 16 shall survive the revocation, expiration, termination, cancellation of this Charter, or any other act or event that would end Charter School’s authorization to operate as a charter school or cause Charter School to cease operation. Charter School agrees that, due to the nature of the property and activities that are the subject of this Charter, the District and public shall suffer irreparable harm should Charter School breach any obligation under this Element 16. The District therefore reserves the right to seek equitable relief to enforce any right arising under this Element 16 or any provision of this Element 16 or to prevent or cure any breach of any obligation undertaken, without in any way prejudicing any other legal remedy available to the District. Such legal relief shall include, without limitation, the seeking of a temporary or permanent injunction, restraining order, or order for specific performance, and may be sought in any appropriate court.

Additional Provisions
**FACILITIES**

**District-Owned Facilities**
If Charter School is using District facilities as of the date of the submittal of this charter petition or takes occupancy of District facilities prior to the approval of this charter petition, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by the District for the use of the District facilities as a condition of the approval of the charter petition. If at any time after the approval of this charter petition Charter School will occupy and use any District facilities, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by the District for the use of the District facilities prior to occupancy and commencing use.

Notwithstanding any provision of any existing agreement for the use of District facilities, no agreement for the use of District facilities shall automatically renew or extend its term with the renewal of the charter petition. The circumstances of Charter School’s occupancy of District facilities may change over time such as, but not limited to, enrollment, programs, and the conditions of facilities, and the District has a vested interest in having an agreement that is appropriate for the situation.

Prop. 39 Single Year Co-Location Use Agreement shall be limited to one (1) school year and expire on the date stated in said instrument. There is no automatic renewal.

For the Sole Occupant Agreement or any other use agreement that is not a lease issued through the Notice of Intent and bid process, the term shall not exceed five (5) years or shall be co-terminus with the charter petition, whichever is shorter. Charter School and the District shall negotiate any modifications of the agreement with the goal of such amendment or new agreement being considered by the LAUSD Board of Education with the renewal of the charter petition. If Charter School and the District cannot execute an agreement in time for such to be considered by the Board of Education with the renewal of the charter petition, the approval of the renewal of the charter petition shall be conditioned upon Charter School and the District executing an amendment to the existing use agreement or a new agreement no later than May 1st or within nine (9) months of the date of the Board of Education’s approval of the renewal of the charter petition. During such time period Charter School shall be permitted to remain in occupancy of the District facilities under the terms and conditions of the immediately preceding, executed use agreement; provided, that if Charter School and the District cannot agree upon and execute an amendment or new use agreement by said deadline, Charter School shall vacate the District facilities on or before June 30th of said school year.

Charter School agrees that occupancy and use of District facilities shall be in compliance with applicable laws and District policies for the operation and maintenance of District facilities and furnishings and equipment. All District facilities (i.e. schools) will remain subject to those laws applicable to public schools.
In the event of an emergency, all District facilities (i.e. schools) are available for use by the American Red Cross and public agencies as emergency locations, which may disrupt or prevent Charter School from conducting its educational programs. If Charter School will share the use of District facilities with other District user groups, Charter School agrees it will participate in and observe all District safety policies (e.g., emergency chain of information and participation in safety drills).

The use agreements provided by the District for District facilities shall contain terms and conditions addressing issues such as, but not limited to, the following:

- **Use:** Charter School will be restricted to using the District facilities for the operation of a public school providing educational instruction to public school students consistent with the terms of the Charter and incidental related uses. The District shall have the right to inspect District facilities upon reasonable notice to Charter School.

- **Furnishings and Equipment:** The District shall retain ownership of any furnishings and equipment, including technology, (“F&E”) that it provides to Charter School for use. Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, shall provide maintenance and other services for the good and safe operation of the F&E.

- **Leasing; Licensing:** Use of the District facilities by any person or entity other than Charter School shall be administered by the District. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement in the use agreement.

- **Programs, Services, and Activities Outside Instructional Program; Third Party Vendors**
  
  (i) Any program, service, or activity provided outside the instructional program shall be subject to the terms and provisions of the use agreement, and, additionally, may require a license, permit, or additional agreement issued by the District. The term “instructional program” is defined, per Ed. Code 47612 and 5 CCR § 11960, as those required educational activities that generate funding based on “average daily attendance” and includes those extracurricular programs, services, and/or activities that students are required to participate in and do not require the payment of any consideration or fee.

  (ii) Any program, service, or activity requiring the payment of any consideration or fee or provided by a third party vendor (defined as any person or entity other than Charter School), whether paid or volunteer and regardless of whether such may be within the instructional program, shall be subject to the terms and provisions of the use agreement and such third party vendor shall be required to obtain a license, permit, or additional agreement from the District.

- **Minimum Payments or Charges to be Paid to District Arising From the Facilities:**
  
  (iii) Pro Rata Share: The District shall collect and Charter School shall pay a Pro Rata Share for facilities costs as provided in the Charter Schools Act.
of 1992 and its regulations. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding facilities costs in the use agreement; and

(iv) Taxes; Assessments: Generally, Charter School shall pay any assessment or fee imposed upon or levied on the LAUSD facilities that it is occupying or Charter School’s legal or equitable interest created by the use agreement.

- **Maintenance & Operations Services**: In the event the District agrees to allow Charter School to perform any of the operation and maintenance services, the District shall have the right to inspect the District facilities, and the costs incurred in such inspection shall be paid by Charter School.

  (iii) Co-Location: If Charter School is co-locating or sharing the District facilities with another user, the District shall provide the operations and maintenance services for the District facilities and Charter School shall pay the Pro Rata Share. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such in the use agreement.

  (iv) Sole Occupant: If Charter School is a sole occupant of District facilities, the District shall allow Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, to provide some operations and maintenance services for the District facilities in accordance with applicable laws and LAUSD’s policies on operations and maintenance services for facilities and F&E. NOTWITHSTANDING THE FOREGOING, the District shall provide all services for regulatory inspections which as the owner of the real property it is required to submit, and deferred maintenance, and Charter School shall pay LAUSD for the cost and expense of providing those services. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such services in the use agreement.

- **Real Property Insurance**: Prior to occupancy, Charter School shall satisfy requirements to participate in LAUSD’s property insurance or, if Charter School is the sole occupant of LAUSD facilities, obtain and maintain separate property insurance for the LAUSD facilities. Charter School shall **not** have the option of obtaining and maintaining separate property insurance for the LAUSD facility if Charter School is co-locating or sharing the LAUSD facility with another user.

**Non-District-Owned Facilities**

**Occupancy and Use of the Site**: Prior to occupancy or use of any school site or facility, Charter School shall provide the CSD with a current Certificate of Occupancy or equivalent document issued by the applicable permitting agency that allows Charter School to use and occupy the site as a charter school. Charter School shall not exceed the operating capacity of the site and shall operate within
any limitations or requirements provided by the Certificate of Occupancy and any applicable permit. Charter School may not open or operate without providing a copy of an appropriate Certificate of Occupancy to the CSD. If Charter School intends to move or expand to another facility during the term of this Charter, Charter School shall adhere to any and all District policies and procedures regarding charter material revision and non-material amendment. Prior to occupancy or use of any such additional or changed school site, Charter School shall provide an appropriate Certificate of Occupancy to the CSD for such facility. Notwithstanding any language to the contrary in this Charter, the interpretation, application, and enforcement of this provision are not subject to the Dispute Resolution Process outlined in Element 14.

Facility Compliance: Prior to occupancy or use of any school site or facility, Charter School shall provide adequate documentation to the CSD that the charter school facility complies with all applicable building codes, standards and regulations adopted by the city and/or county agencies responsible for building and safety standards for the city in which Charter School is to be located, federal and state accessibility requirements (including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504), and all other applicable fire, health, and structural safety and access requirements. This requirement shall also apply to the construction, reconstruction, alteration of or addition to the charter school facility. Charter School shall resolve in a timely manner any and all corrective actions, orders to comply, or notices issued by the authorized building and safety agency or the District. Charter School cannot exempt itself from applicable building and zoning codes, ordinances, and ADA/Section 504 requirements. Charter School shall maintain on file readily accessible records that document facilities compliance and provide such documentation to the CSD upon request.

Pest Management: Charter School shall comply with the Healthy Schools Act, Ed. Code section 17608, which details pest management requirements for schools.

Asbestos Management: Charter School shall comply with the asbestos requirement as cited in the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), 40 C.F.R. part 763. AHERA requires that any building leased or acquired that is to be used as a school or administrative building shall maintain an asbestos management plan.

INSURANCE

Insurance Requirements
No coverage shall be provided to Charter School by the District under any of the District’s self-insured programs or commercial insurance policies. Charter School shall secure and maintain, at a minimum, insurance as set forth below with
insurance companies acceptable to the District [A.M. Best A-, VII or better] to protect Charter School from claims which may arise from its operations. Each Charter School location shall meet the below insurance requirements individually.

It shall be Charter School's responsibility, not the District's, to monitor its vendors, contractors, partners, and/or sponsors for compliance with the insurance requirements.

The following insurance policies are required:

5. Commercial General Liability, including Fire Legal Liability, coverage of $5,000,000 per Occurrence and in the Aggregate. The policy shall be endorsed to name the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles ("Board of Education") as named additional insureds and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and Charter School's insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in Charter School's policy. Coverage shall be maintained with no Self-Insured Retention above $15,000 without the prior written approval of the Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services for the LAUSD.

6. Workers' Compensation Insurance in accordance with provisions of the California Labor Code adequate to protect Charter School from claims that may arise from its operations pursuant to the Workers' Compensation Act (Statutory Coverage). The Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage must also include Employers Liability coverage with limits of $1,000,000/$1,000,000/$1,000,000.

7. Commercial Auto Liability, including Owned, Leased, Hired, and Non-owned, coverage with limits of $1,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence if Charter School does not operate a student bus service. If Charter School provides student bus services, the required coverage limit is $5,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence.

8. Crime Insurance or Fidelity Bond coverage shall be maintained by Charter School to cover all Charter School employees who handle, process or otherwise have responsibility for Charter School funds, supplies, equipment or other assets. Minimum amount of coverage shall be $50,000 per occurrence, with no self-insured retention.

9. Professional Educators Errors and Omissions liability coverage with minimum limits of $3,000,000 per occurrence and $3,000,000 general aggregate.
10. Sexual Molestation and Abuse coverage with minimum limits of $3,000,000 per occurrence and $3,000,000 general aggregate. Coverage may be held as a separate policy or included by endorsement in the Commercial General Liability or the Errors and Omissions Policy.

11. Employment Practices Legal Liability coverage with limits of $3,000,000 per occurrence and $3,000,000 general aggregate.

12. Excess/umbrella insurance with limits of not less than $10,000,000 is required of all high schools and any other school that participates in competitive interscholastic or intramural sports programs.

Coverages and limits of insurance may be accomplished through individual primary policies or through a combination of primary and excess policies. The policy shall be endorsed to name the Los Angeles Unified School District and Its Board of Education as named additional insureds and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and Charter School’s insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in Charter School’s policy.

**Evidence of Insurance**
Charter School shall furnish to the District’s Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services located at 333 S. Beaudry Ave, 28th Floor, Los Angeles CA 90017 within 30 days of all new policies inceptions, renewals or changes, certificates or such insurance signed by authorized representatives of the insurance carrier. Certificates shall be endorsed as follows:

“Charter school shall be required to provide LAUSD with 30 days prior written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, if the insurance afforded by this policy shall be suspended, cancelled, reduced in coverage limits or non-renewed.”

Facsimile or reproduced signatures may be acceptable upon review by the Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services. However, the District reserves the right to require certified copies of any required insurance policies.

Should Charter School deem it prudent and/or desirable to have insurance coverage for damage or theft to school, employee or student property, for student accident, or any other type of insurance coverage not listed above, such insurance shall not be provided by the District and its purchase shall be the responsibility of Charter School.

**Hold Harmless/Indemnification Provision**
To the fullest extent permitted by law, Charter School does hereby agree, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses
including but not limited to attorneys’ fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever, arising out of, or relating to, this Charter agreement. Charter School further agrees to the fullest extent permitted by law, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses including but not limited to attorneys’ fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever for claims, damages, losses and expenses arising from or relating to acts or omission of acts committed by Charter School and/or its officers, directors, employees or volunteers. Moreover, Charter School agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless “the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers, for any contractual liability resulting from third party contracts with Charter School’s vendors, contractors, partners or sponsors.

**FISCAL MATTERS**

**District Oversight Costs**
The District may charge for the actual costs of oversight of Charter School not to exceed 1% of Charter School’s revenue, or the District may charge for the actual costs of oversight of Charter School not to exceed 3% if Charter School is able to obtain substantially rent free facilities from the District. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District may charge the maximum oversight fee allowed under the law as it may change from time to time. The oversight fee provided herein is separate and distinct from the charges arising under charter school facilities use agreements.

**Cash Reserves**
Charter School acknowledges that the recommended cash reserve is 5% of expenditures, as provided in section 15450, title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

**Special Education Revenue Adjustment/Payment for Services**
In the event that Charter School owes funds to the District for the provision of agreed upon or fee for service or special education services or as a result of the State’s adjustment to allocation of special education revenues from Charter School, Charter School authorizes the District to deduct any and all of the in lieu property taxes that Charter School otherwise would be eligible to receive under section 47635 of the Ed. Code to cover such owed amounts. Charter School further understands and agrees that the District shall make appropriate deductions from the in lieu property tax amounts otherwise owed to Charter School. Should this revenue stream be insufficient in any fiscal year to cover any such costs, Charter School agrees that it will reimburse the District for the additional costs within forty-five (45) business days of being notified of the amounts owed.
Audit and Inspection of Records

Charter School agrees to observe and abide by the following terms and conditions as a requirement for receiving and maintaining its charter authorization:

- Charter School is subject to District oversight.
- The District’s statutory oversight responsibility continues throughout the life of the Charter and requires that the District, among other things, monitors the fiscal condition of Charter School.
- The District is authorized to revoke this Charter for, among other reasons, the failure of Charter School to meet generally accepted accounting principles or if Charter School engages in fiscal mismanagement.

Accordingly, the District hereby reserves the right, pursuant to its oversight responsibility, to audit Charter School books, records, data, processes and procedures through the District Office of the Inspector General or other means. The audit may include, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Compliance with terms and conditions prescribed in the Charter agreement,
- Internal controls, both financial and operational in nature,
- The accuracy, recording and/or reporting of Charter School’s financial information,
- Charter School’s debt structure,
- Governance policies, procedures and history,
- The recording and reporting of attendance data,
- Charter School’s enrollment process,
- Compliance with safety plans and procedures, and
- Compliance with applicable grant requirements.

Charter School shall cooperate fully with such audits and shall make available any and all records necessary for the performance of the audit upon 30 days notice to Charter School. When 30 days notice may defeat the purpose of the audit, the District may conduct the audit upon 24-hour notice.

Internal Fiscal Controls
Charter School will develop and maintain sound internal fiscal control policies governing all financial activities.

Apportionment Eligibility for Students Over 19 Years of Age
Charter School acknowledges that, in order for a pupil over nineteen (19) years of age to remain eligible for generating charter school apportionment, the pupil shall be continuously enrolled in public school and make satisfactory progress toward award of a high school diploma. Ed. Code § 47612(b).
Local Control and Accountability Plan
In accordance with California Education Code sections 47604.33 and 47606.5, Charter School shall include in its annual update a “listing and description of the expenditures for the fiscal year implementing the specific actions included in the charter as a result of the reviews and assessment required by paragraph (1)” of section 47606.5(a). These expenditures shall be “classified using the California School Accounting Manual pursuant to Section 41010.” Ed. Code § 47606.5(b).