VALLEY CHARTER
MIDDLE SCHOOL

Charter Renewal Petition
Submitted October 10, 2014

For the term July 1, 2015 through
June 30, 2020
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Affirmations and Assurances........................................................................................................3

Element 1: The Educational Program..........................................................................................4
  General Information.....................................................................................................................4
  Community Need for Charter School.........................................................................................5
  Student Population to be Served/Target Student Population..................................................10
  Goals and Philosophy.................................................................................................................11
  Instructional Design....................................................................................................................24
  Professional Development..........................................................................................................46
  Meeting the Needs of All Students............................................................................................47
  A Typical Day..............................................................................................................................47

Element 2: Measurable Pupil Outcomes/Element 3: Method by which Pupil Progress toward Outcomes will be Measured.................................................................70

Element 4: Governance..............................................................................................................84

Element 5: Employee Qualifications............................................................................................92

Element 6: Health and Safety Procedures....................................................................................99

Element 7: Means to Achieve Racial and Ethnic Balance..........................................................102

Element 8: Admission Requirements..........................................................................................107

Element 9: Annual Financial Audits...........................................................................................110

Element 10: Suspension and Expulsion Procedures....................................................................112

Element 11: Employee Retirement Systems.................................................................................125

Element 12: Public School Attendance Alternatives.................................................................126

Element 13: Rights of District Employees....................................................................................127

Element 14: Mandatory Dispute Resolution................................................................................128

Element 15: Exclusive Public School Employer.............................................................................130

Element 16: Charter School Closure Procedures.........................................................................131

Additional Provisions...................................................................................................................137
Assurances and Affirmations

Valley Charter Middle School (also referred to herein as “VCMS” 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).

GENERAL INFORMATION

- The contact person for Charter School is: Robert Burke, Executive Director
- The contact address for Charter School is: 16514 Nordhoff St. North Hills, CA 91343
- The contact phone number for Charter School is: 818-810-6713
- The proposed address or target community of Charter School is: 9229 Haskell Ave. North Hills, CA 91343
- This location is in LAUSD Board District: Board District 6
- This location is in LAUSD Educational Service Center: Educational Service Center North
- The grade configuration of Charter School is: 6th – 8th Grade
- The number of students in the first year of the renewal term will be: Approximately 192 Students
- The grade level(s) of the students in the first year of the renewal term will be: 6th – 8th Grade
- The scheduled opening date of Charter School is: August 24, 2015
- The enrollment capacity is: 384 Students
- The type of instructional calendar (e.g. traditional/year-round, single track/multi-track, extended day/year) will be: Traditional
- The bell schedule for Charter School will be: 8:30 am – 3:10 pm
- The term of this charter shall be from: July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2020

The Board of Directors for Valley Charter Middle School 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 6-8, site-based program that will serve a diverse student population in the San Fernando Valley.
COMMUNITY NEED FOR CHARTER SCHOOL

CHARTER RENEWAL

Education Code Section 47607(b) states: “[c]ommencing on January 1, 2005, or after a charter school has been in operation for four years, whichever date occurs later, a charter school shall meet at least one of the following criteria before receiving a charter renewal pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (a)…” (Emphasis added.) The criteria referred to here have come to be known as academic threshold requirements for renewal. The threshold requirements are only triggered once a charter school has been in operation for four years.

Valley Charter Middle School commenced its operations during the 2011-12 school year. Accordingly, VCMS has only been in operation for three years, and just started its fourth year. Therefore, the academic threshold requirements for renewal contained in Education Code Section 47607(b) do not apply to VCMS on their own terms, and VCMS does not need to demonstrate that it has met those requirements in order for its charter to be renewed.

OUR SCHOOL

In the three years of Valley Charter Middle School’s existence, the school has experienced great successes by using an innovative educational model. The school’s use of the constructivist teaching philosophy and problem/project-based learning (PBL) has enabled students to learn information more deeply than they would otherwise. This philosophy has also led naturally to the introduction and implementation of the Common Core State Standards. Many ideas embodied in these standards, including the weaving of literacy into all curricular areas and a focus on explaining a thinking process, rather than memorizing facts, have long been hallmarks of our program. We are extremely proud that in a parent satisfaction survey administered last year, 83.8% of responding parents reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall program at VCMS.

The VCMS academic program makes it a model amongst public middle schools. Teachers design their year-long curricular programs by thinking about the major themes and ideas that are woven throughout their content areas, rather than by thinking of the curriculum as a series of discreet sets of facts to be memorized. With a year-long focus clearly in place, teachers then develop thematic units covering the major ideas they have previously identified. Within each of these units, teachers design projects in which students will engage as they work towards mastery. These projects are collaborative, creative, and require critical thinking skills. Teachers are present to focus student thinking and facilitate the learning process, but they are not there to give students the answers. It is the students who must grapple with the challenge of solving an authentic problem, working as a team to arrive at a justifiable conclusion.

With our focus on constructivism and PBL, our school has been able to make notable achievements of over the last three years. These achievements have been particularly striking amongst our English learner (EL) and special education populations. Our school makes it a priority to provide EL instruction that allows our language learners to not only access the curriculum, but also become fully proficient in English as soon as possible. To this end, professional development for the teaching staff has included significant work on SDAIE strategies, which, while helpful for all students, are particularly beneficial to the EL community. As a result, the school is able to reclassify English Learners at a rate of 38%, which is higher than the District average. Additionally, our CELDT scores for the 2013-2014 school year show a marked increase over the previous year, as summarized in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2013-2014 Grade</th>
<th>Change in CELDT Scaled Listening Score</th>
<th>Change in CELDT Scaled Speaking Score</th>
<th>Change in CELDT Scaled Writing Score</th>
<th>Change in CELDT Scaled Reading Score</th>
<th>Change in Overall CELDT Scaled Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>+41.0</td>
<td>+17.5</td>
<td>+26.4</td>
<td>+12.5</td>
<td>+24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>+80.0</td>
<td>+10.8</td>
<td>+4.4</td>
<td>+38.3</td>
<td>+33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>+21.0</td>
<td>+119.2</td>
<td>+62.5</td>
<td>+34.5</td>
<td>+42.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>+47.2</td>
<td>+35.5</td>
<td>+27.6</td>
<td>+23.4</td>
<td>+30.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We are also proud of the fact that VCMS is a place where all students, be they general or special education students, learn, explore, and thrive. Currently, 21% of VCMS’ students are students with an IEP. We believe that one reason for this higher than average percentage of special education students is our commitment to differentiating instruction for all students, and providing learning that builds upon our students’ prior knowledge. Additionally, having smaller class sizes than LAUSD middle schools, having a teaching assistant in every classroom, and teaching through hands-on projects, which excite and engage students, all work to provide a beneficial learning environment for all our students, including those with special needs. Our RSP and general education teachers work extremely closely to explore the ways in which our program can continue to offer special education students a place to succeed. RSP teachers are present at weekly “kid talk” meetings, where teachers discuss successes and challenges students are facing in their classes and brainstorm solutions. Last year, one of our RSP teachers led a highly successful professional development day for all staff focusing on strategies for differentiating instruction. Indeed, our efforts to be an inclusive community for all our students have made us a highly desirable site for students with special needs.

With the suspension of the STAR testing program, VCMS has CST scores only for our first two years of existence. As a school in existence for less than four years, VCMS is exempt from the academic threshold requirements established for the renewal of charter schools. Nevertheless, our most recent API scores demonstrate that VCMS’ academic performance is equal to or greater than the most common resident schools our students would otherwise attend. These results are demonstrated in the chart below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of School</th>
<th>2013 API Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valley Charter MS</td>
<td>742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Nuys MS</td>
<td>742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive Vista MS</td>
<td>738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sepulveda MS</td>
<td>731</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even as we celebrate our successes, our school looks for ways to become even stronger. This year, we have implemented multiple programs to increase the feeling of community on our campus. Each week, the entire school gathers together for a community meeting. This is a chance to discuss what is going well at school and what needs to be improved. Students are encouraged
to submit their own ideas for community meeting topics, enabling them to feel their voices are heard. We have also begun the council program this year. Council is a unique learning opportunity in which students, given prompts by a teacher facilitator, have the chance to tell their stories. So often, middle school students struggle with truly listening to what those around them are saying. Council offers students the opportunity to genuinely listen, and be heard. In the first weeks of the school year, we have already noticed an increased sense of school community, which we believe is due in no small part to the introductions of these programs.

We were disappointed that our API score decreased between our first and second year of existence, and immediately began to take corrective action. Our school is a very different place now than it was during the 2012-2013 school year, when CST scores were last available. We have looked critically at our instructional program, and renewed our commitment to data-driven instruction.

Emblematic of our commitment to data guiding instruction is our use of AIMSweb, a nationally normed set of standardized tests in the areas of language and mathematics fluency. These benchmark assessments are administered to students three times a year, to determine current levels and gauge progress. The goal of VCMS is for all students to demonstrate an improvement of at least one grade level per year, and for those students below grade level to increase scores so that they are at or above the 50th percentile, when compared to national normed data, by the time they graduate. To date, we have administered our first benchmark assessment for the 2014-2015 school year, and have obtained the results summarized in the table below:

| Percent of Students in Each National Percentile Range – Language Arts Fluency |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Percentile Range                | 6th Grade | 7th Grade | 8th Grade | Overall |
| 10th or below                   | 12.1    | 17.0    | 9.1     | 12.7    |
| 11th-25th                      | 27.6    | 17.0    | 25.5    | 23.4    |
| 26th-50th                      | 24.1    | 29.8    | 18.2    | 24.0    |
| 51st-75th                      | 10.3    | 10.6    | 21.8    | 14.2    |
| 76th-90th                      | 13.8    | 2.1     | 3.9     | 11.2    |

| Percent of Students in Each National Percentile Range – Mathematics Computation |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Percentile Range                | 6th Grade | 7th Grade | 8th Grade | Overall |
| 10th or below                   | 0       | 7.8     | 5.4     | 4.4     |
| 11th-25th                      | 5.2     | 9.8     | 3.6     | 6.2     |
| 26th-50th                      | 15.5    | 15.7    | 16.1    | 15.8    |
| 51st-75th                      | 13.8    | 23.5    | 16.1    | 17.8    |
| 76th-90th                      | 19.0    | 27.4    | 21.4    | 22.6    |
| Above 90th                     | 46.6    | 15.7    | 37.5    | 33.3    |

We are deeply committed to providing remediation for those students who, based on these internal measures, are below grade level in language arts or math. To achieve this goal, VCMS has a tiered intervention system for students currently below the 50th percentile in math or language arts, or in danger of falling below this threshold. Intervention can occur in the classroom, after school, during a support class within the school day, or during “ZAP,” a period before lunch set aside for teachers to meet with small groups of students as needed. These strategies are detailed in element 1, section 29. Additionally, we offer a snapshot below:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 25th Percentile</td>
<td>Placement in a support class in place of elective; Check-in with teacher during the ZAP period; recommend participation in free after school tutoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26th – 50th Percentile</td>
<td>Placement in a support class in place of elective; Check-in with teacher during the ZAP period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50th – 75th Percentile</td>
<td>Check-in with teacher in class or during ZAP time to ensure that progress is being made</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By offering an engaging, project-based learning curriculum that motivates students, Valley Charter Middle School is providing a unique learning opportunity for students. By offering remediation as needed, the school ensures that all students are appropriately challenged.
Data retrieved from CDE/CALPADS and LAUSD
*School began operation 8/2011, thus data not available
**CALPADS has been updated to reflect correct number; CDE information not yet updated.

Student Population to be Served/Target Student Population

Currently, VCMS operates in North Hills and serves students from several neighborhoods in the San Fernando Valley: North Hills border to the West through Panorama City 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 four zip codes: 91343, 91402, 91405, and 91406. According to the 2010 population estimates, 232,774 people reside in these areas with approximately 77,631 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Age Children</th>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
<th>% Hispanic</th>
<th>% White</th>
<th>% African American</th>
<th>% Asian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Hills (91343)</td>
<td>60,254</td>
<td>20,693</td>
<td>$41,786</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panorama City (91402)</td>
<td>69,817</td>
<td>24,462</td>
<td>$32,496</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Nuys (91405)</td>
<td>51,145</td>
<td>16,328</td>
<td>$29,657</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Nuys (91406)</td>
<td>51,558</td>
<td>16,148</td>
<td>$37,178</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reaching at-risk students is a priority for VCMS. Currently 58% of our students are low-income and/or Title 1 eligible. While many charter schools have been criticized for neglecting their responsibility to meet the needs of students with IEPs, the percentage of VCMS students with IEPs is currently 21%, exceeding the percentage found at all local LAUSD and charter schools. With these responsibilities in mind, VCMS seeks to 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.

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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>64</td>
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<td>128</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GOALS AND PHILOSOPHY

Our Mission Statement

The mission of Valley Charter Middle 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 vision 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 Valley Charter Schools, 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. VCMS 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. VCMS also adheres to the belief that students should be given opportunities to direct their own learning. VCMS students are asked to explore their interests through the process of choosing specific projects and formulating essential questions that drive their learning experiences. Similarly, teachers develop their own questions about student learning and examine their practices through action research projects.

**Our Pedagogical Practices**

Current research (Amaral, 2002; Mester, 2008; Hollins, King, J. and Hayman, 1994; Mathison & Young, 1995; Thornton & McEntee, 1995; McCombs, 1994; O'Neil & Drillings, 1997; Freire, 1995) 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**

VCMS’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. Teachers 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.

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 VCMS, 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 VCMS 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>Atlanta Charter Middle School</td>
<td>40% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, 60% African American, 8% Hispanic</td>
<td>8th graders on Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT): Percent scoring proficient or above was 100% in Reading, 98% in Language Arts and 96% in Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avon Grove Charter</td>
<td>82% White, 5% Asian, 5% Hispanic, 3% African American</td>
<td>8th graders on Pennsylvania System of Standardized Assessments: Percent scoring proficient or above was 90% in Reading, 88% in Writing</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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Student Demographics</th>
<th>Weighted 3 Year Average API</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alameda Community Learning Center</td>
<td>19% Hispanic, 18% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>API 840, Hispanic 768, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged 813</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Alameda, California)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanger Academy Charter School</td>
<td>82% Hispanic, 70% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, 30% English Learners</td>
<td>API 902, Hispanic 892, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged 895, English Learners 878</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sanger, California)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quail Lake Environmental Charter</td>
<td>27% Hispanic, 31% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>API 946, Hispanic 916, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged 908</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Clovis, California)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discover Charter School</td>
<td>44% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged, 81% African American, 11% Asian, 8% Latino</td>
<td>5%-100% of 8th graders at or above proficient on NJ ASK (assessment of skills &amp; know.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Newark, New Jersey)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Research.** Evidence from research in the fields of cognitive science, brain function and education lead 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 inspire children to engage in ongoing practice of self-reflection and self-assessment, that facilitate 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. Incorporate 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 and new Next Generation Science Standards, VCMS will work towards:

- **Developing self-motivated learners:** VCMS believes that self-motivation requires students to internalize the benefits of learning. VCMS 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, VCMS can provide students with the means of making connections between their studies, themselves and life beyond the school’s walls. Furthermore, VCMS’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 all 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. VCMS’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 CCSS 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

**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.
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.

### VALLEY CHARter MIDDLE SCHOOL

**GOALS AND ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE STATE PRIORITIES**

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 “subpriorities.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE PRIORITY #1—BASIC SERVICES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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))</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOALS TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</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. VCMS 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</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Subpriority B – Instructional Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All students need appropriate access to the instructional materials</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>

### Subpriority C – Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students attend school in a safe and clean facility</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>- Custodial addresses health and safety issues, when they arise, within 24 hours, and resolved within 5 business days.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Collect feedback on facilities through Annual student, parent, and faculty surveys and respond to concerns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 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**

### Subpriority A – CCSS Implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instruction is fully aligned to Common Core State Standards</td>
<td>All teachers are proficient at developing CCSS-aligned units of study anchored by performance tasks/measures.</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 EL students for all teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Creation of CCSS-aligned writing</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Subpriority B – EL Students & Academic Content Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</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 EL students for all teachers.  
- Creation of CCSS-aligned writing rubrics for use across the curriculum |

### Subpriority C – EL Students & English Language Proficiency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| EL students will demonstrate language proficiency                   | 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. | - Analysis of CELDT, RFEP, and subgroup achievement results  
- Set individual student targets  
- Unit reviews and lesson tuning protocols |

### 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

### Subpriority A – Achieving/Maintaining Parental Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</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 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>SUBPRIORITY B – PROMOTING PARENT PARTICIPATION</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEED</strong></td>
<td><strong>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</strong></td>
<td><strong>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</strong></td>
</tr>
<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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>SUBPRIORITY A – CAASPP: ELA/LITERACY AND MATHEMATICS</strong></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEED</strong></td>
<td><strong>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</strong></td>
<td><strong>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 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 | CA Measurement of Academic Progress and Performance on statewide assessment (as available) Annually, the percent of VCMS 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. | - Implement CAASPP assessments annually and analyze data by subgroup
- 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 below proficient |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>SUBPRIORITY B – API</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEED</strong></td>
<td><strong>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</strong></td>
<td><strong>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All students will demonstrate grade level</td>
<td>The Academic Performance Index (API) (as available)</td>
<td>- Implement interventions for students falling below proficiency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
mastery of State standards and will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as comparable district schools for pupil achievement

- 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%

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 below proficient

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBPRIORITY C – UC/CSU COURSE REQUIREMENTS (OR CTE) - NOT APPLICABLE</th>
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</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBPRIORITY D – EL PROFICIENCY RATES</th>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EL students will demonstrate language proficiency</td>
<td>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)</td>
<td>-Systematically collect home language survey and implement EL diagnostic</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annually, 90% of students progress at least one level on the CELDT and ELPAC annually</td>
<td>-Administer the CELDT annually to all EL students</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBPRIORITY E – EL RECLASSIFICATION RATES</th>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EL students will demonstrate language proficiency</td>
<td>All student will progress toward RFEP each year with 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></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| SUBPRIORITY F – AP EXAM PASSAGE RATE - NOT APPLICABLE |

| SUBPRIORITY G – COLLEGE PREPAREDNESS/EAP - NOT APPLICABLE |

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBPRIORITY A – STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATES</th>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Students will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as comparable district schools regarding pupil engagement

VCMS students will have an average 95% attendance rate. All statistically significant subgroups will demonstrate proportional rates of absenteeism.

-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

### Subpriority B – Student Absenteeism Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as comparable district schools regarding pupil engagement</td>
<td>VCMS 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></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Calls to parents of chronic absentees (or SARB Board reporting as needed)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Quarterly Student Information System and CALPADS reports analysis</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Subpriority C – Middle School Dropout Rates

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will meet or exceed the same accountability standards as comparable district schools regarding pupil engagement</td>
<td>VCMS will have a dropout rate of less than 1%.</td>
<td>-Quarterly Student Information System and CALPADS analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Subpriority D – High School Dropout Rates - Not Applicable

### Subpriority E – High School Graduation Rates - Not Applicable

### 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

**All State Priority #6 Goal Targets to be met by Fall, 2015 and annually thereafter**

### Subpriority A – Pupil Suspension Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The climate and culture</td>
<td>Pupil suspension rates will remain</td>
<td>Provide all students with an interest-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of the school is safe, 
supportive, engaging, 
and enriching

<5%. Suspension rates are 
proportional across sub-groups. 
Special Education students are not 
disproportionally suspended.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBPRIORITY B – PUPIL EXPULSION RATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEED</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The climate and culture of the school is safe, supportive, engaging, and enriching</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBPRIORITY C – OTHER SCHOOL SAFETY AND SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS MEASURES (SURVEYS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEED</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The climate and culture of the school is safe, supportive, engaging, and enriching</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE PRIORITY #7 — COURSE ACCESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Broad course of study” includes the following, as applicable:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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))</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th><strong>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</strong></th>
<th><strong>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All students have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study</td>
<td>All VCMS 6th graders 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. All VCMS 7th and 8th graders will participate in a broad course of study that includes all of the above as well foreign language.</td>
<td>-Annually evaluate the effectiveness of class assignments and impact on kids</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Annual master schedule audit analysis</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE PRIORITY #8 — OTHER STUDENT OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupil outcomes, if available, in the subject areas described above in #7, as applicable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| SUBPRIORITY A – ENGLISH |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</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 analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Progress reports, end of semester report cards analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUBPRIORIT Y B – MATHEMATICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</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 reports, end of semester report cards analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUBPRIORIT Y C – SOCIAL SCIENCES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will demonstrate proficiency in social science</td>
<td>75% of VCMS 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 reports, end of semester report cards analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUBPRIORIT Y D – SCIENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will demonstrate proficiency in science</td>
<td>75% of VCMS 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>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>-Progress reports, end of semester report cards analysis</td>
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**SUBPRIORIT Y E – VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEED</th>
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<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 VCMS 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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**SUBPRIORIT Y F – PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

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<tr>
<td>Students will demonstrate proficiency in physical education</td>
<td>90% of all 7th grade students will achieve Healthy Fitness Zone as measured by the FitnessGram.</td>
<td>FitnessGram test results analysis</td>
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### Subpriority G – Health (Grades 1-6 Only)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Students will demonstrate proficiency in health education | 75% of VCMS 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 reports, end of semester report cards analysis |

### Subpriority H – Foreign Languages (Grades 7-12 Only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
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</table>
| Students will demonstrate proficiency in all subject areas | 75% of 7th and 8th grade VCMS 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 Spanish. | -Project rubric analysis  
-Progress reports, end of semester report cards analysis |

### Subpriority I – Applied Arts (Grades 7-12 Only) - Not Applicable

### Subpriority J – CTE (Grades 7-12 Only) - Not Applicable

### Instructional Design

The VCMS program is based on our belief in the efficacy of three distinct, yet related ideas in education: constructivism, problem-based learning, and the implementation of reform strategies outlined in *Taking Center Stage: Act II*.

**Constructivism**

VCMS teachers implement learning experiences grounded in constructivist learning theory. Numerous independent researchers have documented the success of the constructivist model of education with historically under-served populations. When children from disadvantaged neighborhoods, including recent immigrants and EL students, are given the opportunity to attend a school like VCMS, their test scores and, as well, their self-confidence and personal development, improve. (Amaral, 2002; Mester, 2008; Hollins, King, J. and Hayman, 1994; Mathison & Young, 1995; Thornton & McEntee, 1995; McCombs, 1994; O'Neil & Drillings,1997; Freire, 1995.)

In order to bring these theories to life, the administration of VCMS supports our teachers in developing and implementing curriculum that includes real-world activities, multiple representations, metacognition, and critical theory. It should be emphasized that VCMS 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.” Student discussion is essential to learning since the mental processes involved in formulating one’s thoughts into words contribute to development and concept-formation. 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). VCMS is aware of these potential problems and overcomes them by always ensuring that appropriate guidance is taking place. One way to provide such guidance is to model effective cooperative group and conflict resolution strategies, as we consistently do in our advisory and council programs.

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. The full text of *How People Learn* is freely available at the website of the National Academies Press (nap.edu).

*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?

In order to implement the active learning described in *How People Learn*, teachers at VCMS are given time and resources to fill their lessons with student ‘Investigations.’ These activities are designed to develop subject-specific skills in a problem-based learning environment and to develop skills and knowledge related to students’ project work. Investigations are 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 at their own pace
4. Work individually, or in groups, depending on the specific investigation’s design

This active engagement of students in their own learning through highly structured yet creative learning experiences is the foundation of the VCMS understanding of constructivism.

*Problem/Project Based Learning*

VCMS infuses problem-based learning (PBL) experiences into the classroom as much as appropriate, because it is entirely consistent with a constructivist approach to teaching and learning. VCMS accepts the definition of PBL advocated by the Project on the Effectiveness of Problem Based Learning (PEPBL). This consortium of educational researchers organized by professors at England’s Middlesex University, established criteria for defining the PBL instructional model in 2000 as follows:

- Curriculum is organized around problems rather than disciplines, with an emphasis on cognitive skills as well as knowledge.
- The learning environment uses small groups, active learning, and independent study, and it is student centered. Teachers are facilitators, providing knowledgeable structure for the learners.
- Outcomes focus on skills development and motivation, as well as abilities, for lifelong learning. (Newman et al., 2003)
Research thus far indicates that PBL is effective with diverse students in the K-12 context. In K-12 science instruction, for example, research has supported that problem-based instruction benefits English Learners significantly (Amaral, Garrison, & Klentschy, 2002; Bredderman, 1983; Gibbons, 2003; Valadez, 2002). Researchers (Gordon, Rogers, Comfort, Gavula, McGee, 2001) implementing PBL with an urban minority, at-risk middle school population over a two-year period found that students showed increased academic performance in science and improved behavior ratings. More recent researchers (Liu, Hsieh, Cho, Schallert, 2006) also found that middle school students had a better understanding of science concepts and felt more confident about being successful learners after they completed a computer-enhanced PBL unit. Overall, “young adolescents are more likely to engage in the classroom when they connect content and learning tasks with life beyond the classroom walls.” (Caskey & Anfara, 2007; Learning Point Associates, 2005).

VCMS is committed to beginning this form of study in middle school because research has shown the long-term positive effects of this form of learning. For example, a study of 10th-grade Earth science students corroborated that PBL instruction improved their knowledge of the material as measured on an achievement test as compared to their peers in more traditional classes (Chang, 2001). High school students using PBL in pre-12th grade classes such as biology, chemistry, and Earth science, outscored their peers on 44% of the items on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) science test given during their 12th-grade year (Schneider, Krajcik, Marx, & Soloway, 2002).

**Middle School Reform**

The reform document “Taking Center Stage – Act II” (TCSII) outlines a blueprint for middle school reform that Valley Charter Middle School fully embraces. In the document, the authors call for a “new three R’s” – rigor, relevance, and relationships (http://pubs.cde.ca.gov/tcsii/index.aspx). By embracing a constructivist philosophy, focusing on problem-based learning and a whole child approach, our school achieves success in these areas.

Students are engaged in a rigorous education when they acquire knowledge about the world, think creatively, learn how to access new sources of information, and gain an ability to communicate well with other people (National Center on Education and the Economy, 2007). To this end, VCMS creates thematic units where students engage in collaborative group work to answer a guiding question or solve a problem. It is not the teacher’s role to provide the answers. Rather her or she provides the students with ways to access the information, and then gives students time and space to arrive at conclusions on their own.

Relevance is also built into every unit students encounter at VCMS. The Southern Regional Education Board (2003) writes that, “high levels of engagement appear to relate positively to higher academic achievement for all populations.” This engagement happens organically when students are presented with material that is of interest to them. For this reason, teachers using the constructivist philosophy do not teach items as discrete sets of facts to be memorized, but rather, “make sure (they) understand the students' preexisting conceptions, and guide the activity to address them and then build on them” (Educational Broadcasting Corporation, 2004) When students see how the work they are doing relates to their prior knowledge, outside interests, and development as individuals, they become more engaged and more likely to learn.
At VCMS, we embrace a whole-child approach to learning, fully embracing Parker J. Palmer’s (1993) argument that, "Real learning does not happen until students are brought into a relationship with the teacher, with each other, and with the subject.” We reach this sense of community in a number of ways. All students have an advisory class where, with students in the same grade level, they learn skills such as team building, goal setting, and enhancing their social and emotional health. All students participate in council, a program in which students tell and listen to the stories of their classmates, learning the importance of truly hearing what their peers have to say. The school comes together once a week to hold a community meeting, a chance to reflect on what is going well at school and what needs to be improved.

With a focus on rigor, relevance, and relationships, VCMS is able to offer an exemplary middle grades education while serving as a reform model for other middle schools. We are proud to be a leader in middle grades reform and an example of what can be achieved when administrators, teachers, and parents work as a team to create an school based on what research has shown to work in education.

References:

California Department of Education. “Taking Center Stage – Act II.”

Educational Broadcasting Corporation. “Constructivism as a paradigm for teaching and learning.”


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

Course Offerings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Sixth Grade, Semester One</th>
<th>Sixth Grade, Semester Two</th>
<th>Seventh Grade, Semester One</th>
<th>Seventh Grade, Semester Two</th>
<th>Eighth Grade, Semester One</th>
<th>Eighth Grade, Semester Two</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English/Language Arts</td>
<td>Language Arts 6A</td>
<td>Language Arts 6B</td>
<td>Language Arts 7A</td>
<td>Language Arts 7B</td>
<td>Language Arts 8A</td>
<td>Language Arts, 8B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Math 6A</td>
<td>Math 6B</td>
<td>Math 7A or Pre-Algebra A</td>
<td>Math 7B or Pre-Algebra B</td>
<td>Pre-Algebra A or Algebra A</td>
<td>Pre-Algebra B or Algebra B</td>
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</table>
Valley Charter Middle School (VCMS) is a unique educational environment where instruction is delivered in a variety of ways. As part of our focus on problem-based learning, educators at VCMS employ teaching strategies that include direct instruction, student-led discussions, cooperative and collaborative learning, and inquiry-based learning activities as a basis for solving authentic problems. Research has shown that cooperative project based-learning leads to more effective learning outcomes for high, average, and low achievers (Bandura, 1997). The strategy has shown itself to be effective for both boys and girls, and African-American and Hispanic students, when compared to traditional teaching methods (Slavin, 1998). In addition, VCMS’ constructivist teaching philosophy emphasizes student-centered learning, where the student is transformed from a passive recipient of information to an active participant in the learning process. According to the constructivist theory of learning, students learn information most effectively when they can have meaningful experiences and interactions with the new information (Slavin, 1998). VCMS’ educational philosophy creates this learning environment.

**English Language Arts (Core)**

English language arts is taught through reading and writing workshop. This method of instruction offers a strategic means of differentiation, and is designed to meet the needs of all learners in the classroom. Through the workshop teaching model, reading and writing skills are taught through direct instruction, read alouds, shared readings, and individual or small group conferences. The workshop teaching model also fosters an environment where teaching reading and language arts is an active, student-centered process that gives students, individually and in groups, much of the responsibility for making decisions about what will be studied and why. The workshop structure is especially helpful in working with English learners (Ehri et. al., 2007) and corresponds to English Language Development (ELD) standards because the workshop model facilitates the collaborative, interpretive, and productive modes of communication identified in the ELD standards.

When participating in workshop, students read a variety of texts and genres independently based on their interests and reading levels. Students are asked to respond meaningfully to what they have read in their reader’s notebooks. Additionally, as writers, students publish personal narratives, fiction, essays, persuasive writing, and responses to literature. Grammar, spelling, and mechanics instruction, rather than being viewed as stand-alone topics, is integrated into daily lessons.

**Reading Workshop**

By middle school, many students have strong opinions about reading. At VCMS we aim to encourage and push those who love to read and change the minds of those who are less enthusiastic. The freedom of choice in reading material, reading across genres, and the reading of books, as opposed to excerpts, opens the minds of once reluctant readers (Guthrie and Davis, 2003). We work to create readers who seek answers and enjoyment in their texts. We do not teach books; we teach skills and strategies used across genres, disciplines, and ability level.

**Reading Instruction**
Reading workshop is used for reading instruction. The goal of reading workshop is to teach students skills and strategies for reading, as opposed to teaching a particular text. Students choose books based on their interests and reading level, as determined by assessments from The Reading and Writing Project at Columbia Teachers College (http://readingandwritingproject.org). Students are given time to read independently in class and are required to read a minimum of 40 minutes per evening (http://readingandwritingproject.org/about/research-base). By allowing students to choose their books based on interest and ability, students are more engaged in their reading, read more frequently, and improve their skills (Guthrie and Davis, 2003). While students are afforded a great deal of choice in their reading, choices are discussed with the teacher to ensure appropriateness. Students are required to read a variety of genres across fiction and nonfiction. This is in accordance with Common Core Standards’ mandate that students read a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction text.

Reading skills and strategies are taught through direct instruction, modeled read alouds, and small group instruction. During a 10-15 minute mini-lesson, students are taught a reading skill or strategy and record it in their reader’s notebook to use as a reference. Mini-lessons for a unit on character may include lessons on the use of dialogue to understand characters, the use of inner thinking to understand characters, and making connections to understand a character’s actions. The teacher first explains the strategy, and then how to use it to enhance their independent reading. Students then practice the strategy by applying it to their own reading or the class read aloud, and share their responses with a reading partner or the whole class. The teacher facilitates the class discussion or moves throughout the pairs of reading partners to listen to conversations and monitor initial understanding. Students then return to their independent reading to practice the skills taught. During independent reading, the teacher may re-teach a mini-lesson or extend a lesson for students who are struggling or ready for a higher-level skill.

Read alouds are used to model fluent reading, expose students to a wider variety of texts, and practice reading skills and strategies. Modeling fluent reading is especially beneficial for struggling readers (Beers, 2003). The teacher will read aloud a selected text, often a short story. As the teacher reads, she pauses to model her thinking. She may also explicitly point out a skill or strategy she is using to understand the story, make a prediction, etc. Students are also asked to do the same, by stopping and recording it in their notebooks or sharing with their reading partner. Through the read aloud, students and teacher have a common text to discuss. Moreover, the use of a read aloud is an effective way to expose struggling readers to higher-level texts they may not be able to read on their own (Tompkins, 46). This allows all students to practice grade level skills and apply the upper levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy, which may not be possible when reading below grade level texts.

Students respond to their reading in their reader’s notebooks, along with recording skills and strategies. Both the Common Core reading and writing standards are addressed in the notebook, as students are required to respond to and write about their reading and cite textual evidence to support their answers. Notebooks are used for students to practice their skills, but also as a way for the teacher to assess the student. By using the skills and strategies taught in the mini-lesson, students demonstrate comprehension and analysis of texts through writing. Reader’s notebooks are not a place for text summary, but rather a place for students to demonstrate understanding of Common Core standards such as analyzing plot and theme, evaluating arguments, and explaining an author’s point of view. All writing is supported with specific textual evidence and may be expanded and revised in writing workshop for published responses to reading.

Writing Workshop
At VCMS, we understand that our students are filled with stories and we want to provide a platform that will serve as a healthy, creative outlet for students to express themselves. Writing workshop is a teaching model developed out of Teachers College, Columbia University. The ultimate purpose of writing workshop is to help students draft, share, edit, and publish their writing. All students participate in the writing workshop process to help improve their writing. It serves as a daily component in developing our students’ balanced literacy. The term balanced literacy refers to a curricular methodology that recognizes both whole language instruction and phonics instruction (Spiegel, 1998).

Writing workshop is a highly effective format for process writing instruction that incorporates authentic practices within a consistent structure. As students write within the workshop model, they are given ownership over their work, as they are offered an array of choices that may include topic, genre, ideas, organization, and tone (Atwell, 2002). Although students are given much creative freedom, their creative choices are always guided by the Common Core State Standards as students work with expository, narrative, and opinion writing as well as responding to literature.

The writing workshop model also helps teachers oversee and support each student’s writing process, while facilitating sharing and feedback in peer-to-peer dyads, small group settings, and student-teacher conferences. The unique structure and routines of writing workshop allows for a strategic means of differentiation (Fletcher, 1998). The workshop begins with 10-15 minutes of daily whole group instruction taught through a mini-lesson. During the mini-lesson, the teacher models the teaching point and demonstrates for students, step-by-step, what is expected of a productive and efficient writer. As Calkins (1994) points out, “The ritual of beginning every writing workshop with a whole-group gathering can bring form and unity to the workshop”. The remaining 40-45 minutes are dedicated to conferring with individual students or meeting in small groups to support developing writers.

At the heart of writing workshop is the writer's notebook, because students use this tool daily to generate ideas, explore thinking, and play with language. It is a safe space where writing can be reviewed without any judgment. Often when working through an idea or reflecting on their understanding, students need that space where it is okay to be wrong, or to write through confusion to understanding. For these reasons, the writer's notebook is an integral part of the writer's daily life (Lane, 1993).

**Conferencing, Intervention, and Enrichment**
Reading and writing workshop is naturally differentiated through student choice, reading level assessments, the writing process, and individual conferences. Throughout a unit, each student meets one-on-one with the teacher for a reading or writing conference. During writing conferences, students receive notes from the teacher and discuss how they can improve their writing. For struggling students in a narrative writing unit, this might mean a focus on organization or adding more sensory details, while for a more advanced student it may mean expanding their inner thinking or telling the story through a flashback. Writing conferences are geared specifically for the individual student’s needs at any level. In the same manner, during a reading conference a teacher may listen to a student read a portion of their book and will discuss skills appropriate for their level. For a struggling reader, the skill may be determining the conflict, while an advanced reader might be asked to analyze the effect of a secondary character on the overall conflict or analyze an underlying conflict. Small group instruction is also used when a few students need to learn the same skills. Groups are based on reader’s and writer’s notebooks, teacher observations, listening to students read aloud, reviewing student writing, and individual conferences.
For some students working well below grade level, individual reading and writing conferences are not enough. Based on teacher input and fluency probes conducted at the start of the year, some students receive additional support in an ELA support class. This class is kept small, to ensure more focus on each student. Students are given time to read independently, receive additional help on writing assignments, and remediate skills as needed. Reading fluency is vital to a student’s success as a reader and writer because it enables students to focus on the meaning of a text, not individual words (Blevins, 5). Students in ELA intervention practice reading aloud, review sight words, listen to fluent readers, and engage in other fluency building activities.

**English Language Development (Non-Core)**
VCMS serves a variety of students with a variety of cultural backgrounds. As part of the commitment VCMS makes to its students, our school ensures that all students are obtaining equal access to the curriculum. The goal at VCMS is to establish an environment that fosters an appreciation and understanding of other languages and cultures. Studies have shown that exposing students to languages other than English allows students to bridge connections between English and their native language (Genesee et. al., 2005). Jimenez et. al. (1996) write that successful EL readers and writers view reading and writing in English and the L1 as similar activities with language-specific differences. At the same time, they are able to deploy a variety of effective bilingual strategies, such as searching for L1–L2 cognates, judicious translation, or use of prior knowledge developed in the L1. This suggests that ELs have a unique bilingual reservoir of cross-language skills to draw on when engaged in L2 literacy tasks (Genesee et. al., 2005). To help develop English learners’ skills in speaking, reading and writing, VCMS honors and integrates students’ native language as an instructional tool and resource of all students. By allowing students to tap into their prior knowledge of linguistic skills, an idea wholly in line with the constructivist philosophy, students contribute to the culture and development of the school community and climate.

ELD instruction occurs during the ZAP period. This 30 minute daily session provides students the opportunity to practice reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English. By improving these skills, students become better able to pass the CELDT test and be re-classified as English proficient. VCMS’ high CELDT scores and reclassification rate (see section 2) speak to the success of our ELD program.

While specific ELD instruction is important, research demonstrates several weaknesses of relying only on separate ELD classes to teach English to non-native speakers. First, such classes make language the paramount feature for educational success, as opposed to considering actual content knowledge (Clegg, 1996). Moreover, classifying students into classes on the basis of being EL’s can lead to the misconception that all such students have the same needs, rather than recognizing that these students, like all students, require differentiation (Skehan, 1986). Finally, separating EL’s from the rest of the school almost invariably leads to a divide within the school, with language learners seen as “others” or “less than” by the mainstream population (Clegg, 1996).

Recognizing the importance of supporting students in the development of proficiency in English while in mainstream classes, VCMS hires highly qualified teacher with CLAD certification. Educators at VCMS have a full understanding of the EL population and work with a variety of strategies to develop English proficiency. In addition, VCMS provides professional development in Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) and Project GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design) in order to ensure teachers are equipped to successfully immerse students into English education.
In addition to SDAIE and Project GLAD, VCMS educators employ several strategies for English learners in order to build student proficiency. Teachers collaborate across grade levels and content areas to coordinate and plan content connections in order to reinforce English development in all subject matters. In addition, teachers come together to discuss student progress through “Kid Talk” meetings. “Kid Talk” meetings are designed for teachers to discuss concerns and progress demonstrated in an academic setting.

Students identified as English learners receive a rigorous and intellectually rich academic delivery. English learners do not receive remedial curriculum but instead take part in hands-on learning, project-based learning and oral interaction across content areas. Through these strategies and pedagogical approaches, VCMS has seen students strengthen their abilities in the development and acquisition of the English language. Student progress is apparent in reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing and thinking proficiently in English, allowing them to meet CCSS ELA standards.

**Mathematics (Core)**
The VCMS mathematics program utilizes cooperative learning groups, use of manipulatives, and exploratory learning strategies. In the classroom students use textbooks, teacher-created materials, and Khan Academy. In addition, the mathematics program makes extensive use of Thinking Maps, designed to support specific thinking skills and allow students to organize and synthesize complex mathematical concepts. Thinking Maps, defined as “A language of eight visual patterns each based on a fundamental thinking process (Hyerle and Yeager, p. 2)” have been shown to be highly effective in making more challenging mathematics concepts comprehensible for struggling students (Hyerle, 2004). In addition, Thinking Maps are used in the classroom to integrate students’ ideas and previous knowledge in order to learn a new concept making them a perfect fit for the constructivist philosophy of the school.

One of the most common forms of teaching mathematical concepts at VCMS is through problem-based learning. Problem-based learning, as used in the mathematics classroom, includes projects that are complex and based on challenging questions or problems. A hallmark of true PBL is that students are involved in design, problem-solving, decision making, or investigative activities and are given the opportunity to work relatively autonomously over extended periods of time (Jones, Rasmussen, & Moffitt, 1997). These projects culminate in realistic products or presentations.

Research clearly shows that connecting mathematics instruction to real life experiences is critical to students learning and retaining knowledge (Putnam, 1992). With this in mind, math projects at VCMS take into account student backgrounds and interests. For example, in 6th grade students’ research cookie recipes, then scale them to make enough servings for the class, to practice using fractions, as they multiply and divide amounts of each ingredient. In 7th grade, the relationship between positive and negative numbers on a number line is taught when students create a timeline, using zero as their year of birth. Students identify significant events that occurred before they were born, and represent these as negative integers on their timeline, while using positive integers to represent events that occurred after their birth. In 8th grade students ask a research question relating to their classmates, collect data from, and graph their findings for a class presentation. Through these strategies, math teachers connect math concepts to everyday life.

Throughout the year, math educators monitor students’ mastery of concepts and overall growth. Working collaboratively in departments and in cross-curricular teams, teachers integrate activities that employ technology such as tablet computers, Internet resources, and educational web-based activities that supplement current and future curricular units. Periodic probes are administered as
benchmarks in order to measure growth - the results of which are used to determine next steps in classroom instruction. Math Support classes provide additional support to improve math literacy and build on students math confidence through small group instruction.

A key part of our math program involves enrichment opportunities. Eighth grade students, upon the recommendation of their seventh grade teacher, have the opportunity to choose an Algebra elective. The goal of this course is to allow students to follow their desire to develop stronger math skills by offering a course that will explore the higher standards of Algebra. Within the regular math classroom, pretests are administered prior to each unit. The results are used to create focused, academic enrichments for students who demonstrate mastery. Academic enrichments provide an opportunity for students to build mastery in content beyond the normal curriculum.

**Social Studies (Core)**

In Social Studies at VCMS, students learn through a project-based and inquiry-based approach. As stated above, project-based learning leads to increased learning outcomes among all students and is consistent with a constructivist understanding of how students learn (Wilson, 1996). Project based learning helps students remember information by connecting it with a hands-on experience (Slavin, 32, 234-35).

Social studies at VCMS is not taught with a textbook. Rather, students learn by exploring a variety of secondary texts and primary source documents. The use of primary sources in middle school social studies has been shown to foster higher level thinking skills (Tally & Goldenberg, 2005). When interacting with text, emphasis is placed on analysis of events, cultures, and themes and their relationship with each other, and their lasting impact. Inquiry-based learning requires students to think like a historian by analyzing multiple sources of information to answer open-ended questions. Since there are often no right or wrong answers, students succeed only by showing they can build and defend a logical, evidence based argument like an historian.

This focus on interacting with text in a meaningful, collaborative way is present in all grade levels. In the sixth grade, students study ancient civilizations. In the ancient Egypt unit, students examine "burial sites," and determine what the lives of the dead may have looked like based on how they were buried. This serves as an introduction to social structure, daily life, and beliefs of ancient Egypt. After this, students mummify apples and chickens to better understand the mummification process. They make observations and measurements throughout the mummification process and write a report about the process at the end. Students learn about life and social structure in ancient Egypt simultaneously and, as a concluding assessment, write an "obituary" for the chickens based on their social status.

The seventh grade curriculum focuses on world history from Medieval through modern times. Here again, students use historical documents to think critically and reach their own conclusions. In the unit on the Roman empire, for example, students are asked to consider how the meeting between Attila the Hun and Pope Leo I affected Attila’s decision in 452 A.D. not to invade Rome. Students examine artistic renderings of the meeting by Rafael, along with written accounts by both Paul the Deacon and Prosper of Aquitaine. Using these documents, they determine what most likely happened at the meeting, and why Attila decided to turn back. The goal of this assignment is not only for the students to learn the historical content, but also to develop an understanding what makes a source reliable for historians, and the often incomplete nature of the historical record.

Eighth grade history covers U.S. history, and the relatively recent nature of the events provides
the greatest possible opportunity to integrate primary sources into the curriculum. Students examine documents including the constitution, *Common Sense*, the Supreme Court’s Dred Scott decision, *Letters from a Birmingham Jail*, and many more in order to determine how these documents affected the course of U.S. history. Eighth graders are also introduced to the complexities of history. The civil war, for example, is not taught simply as a story of slave states vs. free states. Rather, students are asked to consider the economics, agriculture, and social structure of life in the pre-war North and South to gain a more complete understanding of why this war was fought.

Although the California state social studies standards are not changing with the introduction of CCSS, VCMS social studies teachers are embracing the Common Core philosophy in the social studies curriculum. Students are required to demonstrate their mastery of content knowledge through higher order thinking skills. VCMS teachers follow the guidelines of the REACTS Taxonomy to determine the higher-order thinking skills students need to develop in the Common Core aligned classroom (Stripling & Pitts, 1988). This six level taxonomy ranges from lower order to higher order thinking skills in the following order: recalling, explaining, analyzing, challenging, transforming, synthesizing. Students still need to memorize essential facts. Being able to recall facts, however, can never be the end goal in and of itself (Stripling & Pitts, 1988). Memorizing information is simply the first step in developing the students’ abilities to use this information. They need to be able to think critically, question information, and render and defend their own judgments (not just those given to them). These are the essential skills of the historian and are therefore essential in the social studies classroom (Stanford History Education Group, 2014).

Inquiry based learning provides a powerful tool for VCMS students to develop these essential historical skills. In 7th and 8th grade history, VCMS frequently uses document lessons created by Stanford Education Group’s *Read Like a Historian* project. The Stanford Education Group explains that within these document assignments:

“Instead of memorizing historical facts, students evaluate the trustworthiness of multiple perspectives on historical issues. They learn to make historical claims backed by documentary evidence” (Stanford History Education Group).

These assignments meet the standards of Common Core teaching by requiring higher-order thinking, and not limiting student learning to memorizing historical facts.

The VCMS social studies classroom inherently provides opportunities to support struggling students, and challenges advanced students. Students often complete group projects and tasks, providing struggling students with peer assistance. Conversely, this supports advanced students by providing them opportunities for peer teaching and leadership (Slavin, 1988). VCMS social studies classes also have a teaching assistant in addition to the classroom teacher, maximizing the opportunities for individual assistance for struggling students. VCMS holds a ZAP (Zeros Aren’t Permitted) period four days a week where teachers have the opportunity to provide additional support.

Inquiry based learning supports the development of higher order thinking skills in both struggling and advanced students. The inquiry question is generally fairly straightforward (e.g. Why was George Whitefield so popular? or Were the Dark Ages “dark”?). Students are also presented with a variety of documents, varying in difficulty, to provide evidence for their response. The questions, and some of the documents, are simple enough to allow struggling students to understand what they are being asked for, and simple enough to allow them to provide an adequate response. At the same time, the inquiries are profound enough to allow advanced students to develop profound answers. Since there are no right or wrong answers, a response is
never done or perfect. VCMS social studies teachers enrich the education of all students by challenging them to defend their judgments to the degree appropriate for their ability level, and asking them to evaluate the arguments of their classmates.

VCMS social studies students will be evaluated for progress by completing frequent, graded assignments that measure both content knowledge and higher-order thinking skills. Students will be given unit tests that measure their knowledge of both of these areas equally. Students will be tested for progress in reading, writing, and higher order reasoning by constructing short answer and essay questions to open ended questions using textual evidence.

**Science (Core)**

In the science department students are taught using a hands-on, inquiry-based program. Research has shown that beginning a science lesson with a discrepant event increases engagement and interest (O’Brian, 2010). Discrepant events are brief (typically under five minutes) demonstrations that are counterintuitive. As such, they force the viewer to wrestle with the question of why the phenomenon happens, eventually leading to learning the science concept (O’Brian, 2010). For example, in 8th grade science, the unit on air pressure begins with the teacher placing a yardstick under several sheets of newspaper, such that the ruler sticks out over the edge of the table. A quick survey of students usually reveals a consensus if the teacher hits the exposed half of the yardstick, the paper will fly into the air. The teacher hits the yardstick and, to the surprise of most students, it snaps in half. Students are then put into groups to wrestle with why this happens. Eventually, the students deduce that air pressure was pushing down on the paper, and that the force of the pressure (which can be calculated, providing a math connection) was greater than the force of the teacher pushing on the yardstick.

The benefits of beginning a unit on air pressure in the manner described above, as opposed to simply reading about air pressure in a textbook, are twofold. First, students can see the results for themselves, rather than being told to simply believe what is written in a book. This is crucial when students hold misinformation in their minds (Gooding & Metz, 2011). Second, by forcing students to explain a discrepant event, students have a reason for seeking knowledge beyond just being told to by a teacher. This inquiry-driven approach has been shown to increase motivation (Donovan & Bransford, 2005).

Labs in the science classroom are essentially extended inquiries, of the same type described above. The students are posed with a question (or create their own) and set about experimenting to solve the answer. It is crucial that the experimental procedure be student-created to maximize student interest and buy-in (Gooding & Metz, 2008). The role of the teacher is not to tell the students the answer to the question, nor even to tell them how to find the answer. Rather it is to facilitate a student-driven process of knowledge-acquisition through inquiry. This approach to science education is the perfect compliment to an overall constructivist educational philosophy (Gooding & Metz, 2011).

The VCMS science department promotes the school’s focus on the CCSS by incorporating meaningful expository reading and writing in the curriculum. Students read about current science research, selected by the teacher to fit their reading level, and respond to in the context of their study of science process skills. Learning about the process of science in this matter allows students to become more science literate, able to think about critically and respond to issues of science they will encounter as adults (American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1993). Students in science are also frequently asked to write. Lab analyses and discussions of current events are regular features of the science program. Creative writing assignments include
RAFT writing. RAFT is a writing strategy that stands for role, audience, format, topic. Using this technique, students are first given a role. For example, in the seventh grade science class, students take on the role of a drop of blood or a piece of food. They are then told their target audience, which, in these instances, is a seventh grade student. They are given a format and topic on which to write. For example, they are told to write a personal narrative on the topic of their trip though the human body. This writing strategy has been shown to be especially effective with struggling and reluctant writers (Fisher & Ivey, 2011).

The student-centered nature of the science program makes differentiation very natural. As students are writing lab procedures or interacting with scientific text, they do so at their level of understanding. Moreover, hands-on science classes have been shown to be a great “equalizing” tool for students struggling in reading and writing, since these skills are not requisite to completing a lab assignment (Guthrie & Davis, 2003).

**Visual and Performing Arts (Embedded into Core Classes)**

At VCMS, the arts are embedded into the core curriculum. Being project-based, teachers have frequent opportunities to allow students to express their mastery of subject-matter artistically. One example of such a project is the 6th grade archeological dig. When learning about ancient man, students conduct an archeological dig of a simulated research site. As they dig, the students create a scaled model of their dig site, showing the location of artifacts found. Students quickly see the importance of creating an artistic representation, with proper color, scale, and perspective in order to use the representation to draw conclusions about the original site. In so doing, art is seen as not only something done for its own sake, but also as a crucial piece of their work as archaeologists and historians.

Research has demonstrated the importance of integrating the arts in language arts classes (Albers, 1997). To this end, students in language arts are frequently encouraged to represent what they are reading visually, or to incorporate art into their writing. This is especially beneficial to struggling readers and writers. Such students can often demonstrate comprehension of a high level text by drawing and explaining a picture about it, even as they are not yet able to formulate such thoughts in written form (Hibbing & Rankin-Erikson, 2003).

Science is another course where visual arts integration is commonly found at VCMS. Wiegand (1985) found that scientific and artistic inquiry naturally complement each other. Moreover, it has been shown that students retain more science content knowledge when the artistic merit of illustrations, sketches, and models done in class are a factor in their assessment (Jakobson & Wickman, 2008). To this end, students in science routinely sketch out cells, body systems, models of the Earth, atoms, and more. Such projects are not just art for arts sake; students see them as crucial tools to understand the content they are encountering.

Performing arts can also be effectively integrated into core curricular areas. Research suggests, for example, that the deliberate integration of performing arts and social studies instruction can enhance teaching and learning in both areas (Taylor, 2008). As such, debates, mock trials, and historical simulations are part of our social studies curriculum in all grades. Students enjoy the “acting out” what they are learning as opposed to simply reading about it.

In language arts, teachers use “reader’s theater” as one strategy for increasing oral fluency and comprehension. This strategy, in which “the oral interpretation of literature (is) presented by readers who bring forth the full expression of the literature through their oral reading,” (Kelleher, 1997, p.6) has been shown to increase fluency, comprehension, and literature appreciation in all
students, and especially those with special needs (Doherty & Coggeshall, 2008). In addition to the benefits for the students performing the reader’s theater, students are exposed to the novels other students are reading, providing struggling readers an opportunity to interact with text, even if only as an observer, which may be above their reading level.

**Health and Physical Education (Non-Core)**
Health education at VCMS is taught primarily in the 7th grade science and advisory classes. Integrating health as part of a seventh grade life science course is a natural fit. In seventh grade, students learn about their bodies and ways to keep themselves healthy, including such topics as healthy eating, exercise, and tobacco, alcohol, and drug avoidance. Each student in the seventh grade maintains a personal health log for a week, which includes foods eaten and exercise completed. Students bring their completed logs, and create a set of personal goals for a healthy lifestyle, personalizing their health instruction.

Teachers also use advisory classes as a platform to teach students about healthy lifestyles. Health in advisory is taught from multiple perspectives. First, physical health is discussed. Students discuss what to eat, the importance of exercise, and what their bodies need to remain healthy. In addition, social/ emotional health is also taught through the lens of responsibility. Students learn how a healthy lifestyle includes maintaining a well-balanced life between school, family, friends, personal interests, and planning for the future.

All students take physical education as part of their VCMS program. In accordance with state law, sixth graders have 110 minutes of P.E. each week, while students in the seventh and eighth grade have 220 minutes per week. The core of the physical education classes is centered on using various team sports to teach the students teamwork, a sense of fair play, and personal responsibility. Students have the opportunity to learn the skills needed to participate in specific team sports creating their own personal goals as well as developing the social skills necessary to participate within a team environment. Hellison (2003) outlines how students can learn though team sports to cope with everyday realities, take pride in themselves and their accomplishments, refrain from judging others too quickly, get along with peers and teammates, abandon their tough images, and control their tempers. All of these are goals of the VCMS P.E. program.

In the seventh grade, students prepare for the California fitness test (fitnessgram). In addition to the health benefits of passing this assessment, research indicates that students who do not meet the minimum requirements for the fitnessgram score lower in language arts and mathematics standardized tests, even when controlling for other factors (Roberts et. al., 2010). We therefore work with our 7th graders from the start of the year on the skills this assessment requires, including aerobic capacity, muscular strength, muscular endurance, and flexibility.

**World Languages (Core, 6th Grade, Non-Core, 7th and 8th Grade)**
Valley Charter Middle School offers Spanish as a core class for all 6th grade students and as an elective for seventh and eighth graders. While not initially looked to as an ideal setting for the constructivist model, foreign language has more recently been shown to be an excellent place to embrace this philosophy (Reagan, 2008). Moreover, Ringbom (2007) discusses the importance of connecting new material learned in a foreign language class with prior knowledge, a key facet of constructivism. As such, students within the Spanish class are actively engaged in learning experiences that, in addition to enhancing their knowledge of this second language, are integrated across curricular areas and are meaningful within the context of their present and future lives.
The sixth grade Spanish course is an introduction to the Spanish language. Students learn basic conversational Spanish that will help them engage in simple conversations with Spanish-speakers. Students use technology to create presentations, podcasts, and videos on topics such as their hobbies, family, and friends. In keeping with the national standards for foreign language education (ACTFL, 2014), students also learn to understand and appreciate the rich culture of the Spanish-speaking world. Students come to see this second language not as an isolated topic, but as a tool to engage with the global community, allowing exposure to cultures other than their own. The school-wide focus on the CCSS can be seen as students read and respond to nonfiction text regarding the culture, traditions, and history of Spanish-speaking countries.

The seventh and eighth grade Spanish elective builds on the foundations taught in sixth grade. Students continue to work in small groups on projects that relate the Spanish language to their lives. Students also become proficient in more complicated vocabulary and grammar as they have richer conversations in Spanish. Research has clearly shown the importance of Spanish education for Spanish-speaking students (see for example Pucci, 2010). For this reason, VCMS also offers Spanish for native speakers as an elective course. This class is designed to expose Spanish-speaking students to literature and documents in their native tongue, while polishing their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. With bilingualism considered a key factor job marketability (Lee, 2012), graduating students who are bilingual is key to ensuring our students are college and career ready.

**Electives and Other Courses (Non-core)**

Students in the sixth grade at VCMS select one elective, while students in seventh or eighth grade select two. Electives currently offered include forensic science, health, debate, journalism, yoga, leadership, and yearbook. The elective period is also a time when seventh and eighth graders can take Spanish, eighth graders can take algebra (in addition to their regular math class), and all students can be enrolled by their teachers in language arts and math support classes based on need as observed in school-wide benchmark, classroom assessments, and/or teacher observation.

**Advisory**

All VCMS students are enrolled in an advisory class. Studies show that students greatly benefit from a high quality advisory program, but that many teachers are hesitant about teaching advisory at the middle school level because of lack of preparation and resources (Ayres, 1994). In light of this, VCMS dedicates professional development time to planning an advisory program based on four determined areas of need:

1. Health (physical, social, and emotional)
2. Teambuilding
3. Community service/ social responsibility
4. College and career planning

Through well-designed lessons and activities, students gain competence in these “soft skills” of educational success.

**Council**

Council is a course modeled after the Ojai Foundation Council in Schools program (Ojai Foundation, 2014). In this program, students are able to listen to each other in an open forum while having an adult facilitator. Council is not designed to fix problems for students, but rather to open the lines of communication. A goal for council is for students to feel capable of addressing concerns and finding solutions for themselves, based on their social-emotional standing. During Council teachers are facilitators who encourage honesty, spontaneity, and listening and speaking from the heart by creating a safe space for students to “tell their stories.”
Students enrolled in Council gain a greater awareness of student commonalities and become more tightly connected to the school community.

References:


39


Lane, B. (1993) After the End: Teaching and Learning Creative Revision. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann


Technology

All teachers at Valley Charter Middle School use technology regularly to enhance and enrich their classroom instruction. In the sixth grade, students use laptop computers to conduct online research for projects in all subject areas, and write essays, keep blogs, and create projects using word processing and presentation software including Word, PowerPoint, and iMovie. Teachers occasionally show video clips as part of the curriculum. Audio books are used as a tool to help struggling readers access the curriculum. Teachers also use the Internet to integrate current events relating to topics being studied into the curriculum.

Seventh and eighth grade students also use the laptop computers to conduct research, write essays, and develop projects by making use of the Internet and appropriate software including iBooks, iMovie, Word, and PowerPoint. To aid in developing strong Internet research skills, all seventh and eighth grade students complete an Internet literacy unit, which focuses on evaluating the quality of web sites, search skills, and proper citation of sources. In math, students who are behind in skills or who are ready to move beyond the regular curriculum are able to work independently through Khan Academy, aiding in differentiation.

Teachers at all grade levels use the Internet on a regular basis to find high-quality lessons and resources, and use presentation software such as PowerPoint and Google Docs to present lessons to the class.

Students regularly 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.

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
Total Number of Student Days: 135 full length + 44 shortened days = 179 days
Total Number of Instructional Minutes (not including lunch or passing periods):
365 minutes X 135 full length days = 49,275
240 minutes X 44 shortened days = 10,560
TOTAL = 59,835 minutes

Sample Daily Schedules

VCMS operates on a rotating schedule, ensuring that students have their core classes at various times during the day. In addition, school is dismissed early every Thursday to allow teachers time to meet, plan, and engage in meaningful professional development.
<table>
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<th>Period A</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Period B</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Period C</th>
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<th>Period D</th>
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Schedule Explanations:

**Sixth Grade**
Periods A, B, C, D, and E refer to core classes. These classes are language arts, math, social studies, science, and Spanish. Sixth graders will take PE for two of the “enrichment” periods and will have an elective or support class for the other two. Electives offered include forensic science, health, journalism, debate, yoga, yearbook, and leadership.

**Seventh/ Eighth Grade**
Periods A, B, C, D, and E refer to core classes. These classes are language arts, math, social studies, science, and PE. Seventh and eighth graders will take either elective or academic support classes during the “enrichment” periods. Electives offered include forensic science, health, journalism, debate, yoga, yearbook, leadership, Spanish 1A, and Spanish 1B.

**All Students**
ZAP stands for “zeros aren’t permitted”. During this time, teachers will work with students on completing missing work and revising work on which a low score was earned. Students with no missing work will have the opportunity for enrichment classes during this time.

Advisory is a course designed to provide students with skills to succeed academically and socially/emotionally. It is also a class that will focus on team building skills and goal setting.

Council is a program designed to provide students an avenue to “tell their stories” and truly listen to those around them as a member of a caring community. During this weekly time, teacher facilitators will guide small groups of students towards becoming a more cohesive unit.

Community meetings are a chance for the whole school to come together have fun, celebrate successes and special events, and discuss school-wide challenges. Sometimes, meetings may be divided up by grade level. Students are encouraged to suggest meeting topics they feel need to be addressed.

Instructional Minutes: Regular Day = 310 – Shortened Day = 240

**Instructional Days and Minutes Calculator**
Per California Education Code § 47612.5, all students are to experience a minimum of 175 days of school and, more specifically, students in grades 6-8 to experience a minimum of 54,000 minutes. Students at VCMS receive 59,835 instructional minutes, substantially exceeding the minimum 54,000 minutes required for traditional and charter public schools under California Education Code § 47612.5. All VCMS students will have 135 regular days and 36 early dismissal days, for a total of 179 instructional days. At VCMS a regular day incorporates 365 instructional minutes and 44 early dismissal days (see Instructional Days and Minutes Calculator below).

Furthermore, VCMS will comply with the California Education Code Section 51210(g) physical education requirement of 200 minutes every ten school days for grade 6 and 400 minutes every ten school days for grades 7-8.

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**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Recruitment**

VCMS 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 VCMS.

Our teacher recruitment process utilizes 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 school website include:
Board Support Plan

The Board of Valley Charter Schools created this support plan for the 2014-15 school year to accelerate the growth of Valley Charter Middle School. The Support Plan is a direct result of the feedback the board received from the Charter School Division during the renewal process. This plan does not necessarily span the term of the charter petition and is used as an example of how the Board supports its school.

The board took immediate action to drive the development of the school. One of our primary approaches is to allot our principal the substantial time necessary to be a focused and impactful instructional leader, supporting both the educational program and our new teachers. To enable this, we have immediately allocated the following additional resources to our principal to achieve this goal:

1. Appoint a retired middle school principal/director to serve as mentor/coach;
2. Our Executive Director will spend the majority of his time at the middle school supporting and supervising our principal;
3. Hire a part-time Student Dean to handle low level discipline issues;
4. Hire a part-time Data Manager/Testing Coordinator;
5. Our Executive Director will oversee the Special Education program; and
6. Contract with Growing Educators to support balanced literacy, Reader’s/Writer’s Workshop, and differentiation of reading through strategic small group work in our Language Arts classes.
7. Increase budget for professional development opportunities and related resources/materials.

Based on the Charter School Division’s feedback, we have organized this support plan to focus on the following three areas:

I. New Principal Support
II. New Teacher Support
III. Instructional Program Support

I: New Principal Support

Goal: Provide the principal the substantial time necessary to be a focused and impactful instructional leader, supporting both the educational program and our new teachers.
Board Supports:
1. Our Executive Director will spend the majority of his time at the middle school supporting and supervising our principal.
2. Appoint a retired middle school principal/director to serve as mentor/coach.
3. Hire a part-time Student Dean to handle low-level discipline issues.
4. Hire a part-time Data Manager/Testing Coordinator to oversee compliance; and
5. Our Executive Director will oversee the Special Education program.

Actions:
- The Executive Director will use the site-developed Rubric for Leadership Assessment as a guide for the principal’s self-reflection, identifying supports, setting goals, monitoring progress towards goals, and mid-year/end of the year evaluations.
- The Executive Director will support the principal in identifying, articulating, and communicating instructional expectations with teachers and will help to design and coordinate professional development activities and opportunities accordingly.
- The Executive Director will assist the principal in setting up structures (scheduling, logistical considerations, conversation protocols) so that regular teacher observations can occur frequently. Formal observations will occur at least four times per year using the Common Core State Standards aligned Focus Areas for Teacher Observation. Informal observations with debriefs will occur weekly.
- The Executive Director and the principal will reflect on the effect of the principal’s feedback to teachers and will identify the specific feedback that results in a change of teacher practice.
- Learning Walks with the Principal, Executive Director, and/or the principal mentor will take place on a biweekly basis to reflect on what students are learning, learning strategies, student interaction, and student engagement in order to develop plans of action and identify areas where additional training is needed.
- The mentor/coach (a retired LAUSD middle school principal/director) will provide guidance in implementing the instructional program, working with new teachers, and assist in navigating, balancing, and prioritizing the myriad of responsibilities of a new principal.

II. New Teacher Support

Goals: Ensure the success and retention of promising teachers; increase the knowledge, skills, and abilities of new teachers through principal support, mentorship, and training; and foster a collegial learning community that supports new teachers.

Board Supports:
1. Contract with Growing Educators to support our new 7th/8th grade Language Arts teacher in the areas of balanced literacy, Reader’s/Writer’s Workshop, and differentiation of reading through strategic small group work.
2. Increase budget for professional development opportunities and related resources/materials.

Actions:
Weekly mini professional development and dialogue with the principal (in addition to Thursday afternoon’s professional development time) focusing on the following common new teacher challenges:

- Curricular expectations in a project-based environment
- Establishing routines and procedures
- Progress monitoring
- Classroom management in a project-based environment
- Working with a diverse student population
- Developing summative and formative assessments
- Engaging all students in learning
- Building classroom communities
- Differentiation in a PBL environment
- High-level and open ended questioning techniques to raise the level of rigor

Create curriculum teams that match beginning teachers with teacher leaders to assist in the development and revisions of yearlong, unit and lesson plans to ensure the instructional program is well articulated and instructional delivery is varied.

The Principal will review yearlong, unit and lesson plans to ensure alignment with the instructional program as outlined in the charter petition, classroom practice, and provide feedback accordingly.

Observations will occur at least four times per year using the Common Core State Standards aligned Focus Areas for Teacher Observation. Informal observations with debriefs will occur weekly.

Learning Walks with the Principal, Executive Director, and/or the principal mentor will take place on a biweekly basis to reflect on what students are learning, learning strategies, student interaction and student engagement in order to develop plans of action and ensure alignment with the instructional program as outlined in the charter petition.

### III. Instructional Program Support

**Board Supports:**

- Increase budget for professional development opportunities and related resources.
- Contract with Growing Educators to support balanced literacy, Reader’s/Writer’s Workshop, and differentiation of reading through strategic small group work in our Language Arts classes.
- Appoint a retired middle school principal/director to serve as mentor/coach.

**Focus Area #1: Implementing Project-based/Problem-based Learning**

**Goal:** Increase capacity amongst the teaching staff to facilitate high quality problem-based and project-based learning, as defined in the VCMS charter.

**Actions:**

- Continued development of yearlong plans that include Common Core Standards units of study, and major projects that integrate other curricular areas with an emphasis on writing across the curriculum.
  1. Create curriculum teams with lead teachers guiding the development of yearlong plans.
  2. Review yearlong plans with the principal and receive feedback for revisions.
3. Present semester plans to staff with feedback in the form of gallery walks and protocols.

- **Professional Development Topics/Activities**
  1. How to create a PBL Unit
  2. PBL in the content areas
  3. Backwards design
  4. How to assess both the success and the value of a project
  5. Differentiation in a PBL environment
  6. Visit schools that are implementing PBL (High Tech High in San Diego) when VCMS is not in session (full day professional development or Spring Break)

- **Lesson Study** – Following the Lesson Study model, teachers will work in curricular and cross-curricular teams on two “study lessons” per semester that involves collaborative planning, teaching, observing, and critiquing lessons.

- **Learning Walks** with the Principal, Executive Director, and/or the principal mentor will take place on a biweekly basis to reflect on what students are learning, learning strategies, student interaction, and student engagement in order to develop plans of action and ensure alignment with project-based instruction.

**Focus Area #2: Effective Classroom Management in a Project-based Environment**

**Goal:** Increase capacity for effective classroom management that leads to the ability to implement a rigorous PBL curriculum

**Actions:**

- **Professional Development Topics/Activities:**
  - Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport - democratic classroom management system; teacher interaction with students; and response to student interaction.
  - Establishing a Culture for Learning - importance of the content; and expectations for learning and achievement.
  - Managing Classroom Procedures - management of instructional groups; management of transitions; management of materials and supplies; performance of non-instructional duties; and supervision of volunteers and paraprofessionals.
  - Managing Student Behavior - expectations; monitoring of student behavior; and response to student misbehavior.
  - Organizing Physical Space - safety and arrangement of furniture; and accessibility to learning and use of physical resources.

- The Principal will conduct teacher observations of classroom management techniques frequently. Formal observations will occur at least four times per year using the Common Core State Standards aligned *Focus Areas for Teacher Observation (see Attachment B)*. Informal observations with debriefs will occur weekly.

- **Learning Walks** with the Principal, Executive Director, and/or the principal mentor will take place on a biweekly basis to reflect on classroom management, student interaction, and student engagement in order to develop plans of action and ensure effective classroom management techniques.

**Focus Area #3: Articulation through Interdisciplinary Units and Vertical Teaming**

**Goal:** Increase collaboration amongst staff, both across content areas within a grade level and vertically within a content area.
Actions:
- Professional Development
  1. How to create a strong interdisciplinary unit
  2. Teacher as coach – facilitating active student learning
  3. Developing model lesson
  4. Using essential questions to guide learning across disciplines
  5. Developing cross-curricular assessment activities
- Effectively use common planning time to work with other teachers in their grade level linking skills, concepts and two or more subject areas (60 minutes per day and Thursday afternoons once a month).
- Create curriculum teams to assist in the development and revisions of yearlong, unit and lesson plans to ensure the instructional program is well articulated and instructional delivery is varied (see Appendices D and E).
- Unit/Lesson Study - Teachers work collaboratively in curricular and cross-curricular teams on two “study lessons” per semester that involves planning, teaching, observing, and critiquing lessons. Teachers collaboratively create lessons, staff provides feedback, teacher teaches lesson, and reflects with the staff

Focus Area #4: Use of Data Driven Instruction

Goal: Increase data-driven instruction as defined in the VCMS charter, providing an equitable and differentiated curriculum, through the thoughtful use of internal progress monitoring data, teacher observations, and thorough understanding of IEP’s, 504 plans, GATE testing results, and CELDT test data.

Actions:
- Plan for implementing AIMSWeb assessment – purpose of assessments, calendar for administering three probes, and training on administration.
- At least monthly, the principal will facilitate data conferences to engage teachers in conversations, reflection, and planning based on student achievement data.
- In order to support this process, the school will systematically collect and analyze student data on key demographic, behavioral, and proficiency indicators.
- The Resource Specialist will review IEP’s and 504 plans with staff (by grade level).
- The Principal and Data Manager will review of CELDT test results with staff (by grade level).
- The principal will conduct classroom observations to ensure classroom practice reflects the integration of student data and holds debrief conferences.

Ongoing Professional Development

VCMS provides extensive professional development (PD) for its staff. Prior to the first school day, the Charter School has a 10-day PD institute. Multiple pupil-free days during the school year are devoted to PD. Every Thursday is an early release day, with school ending two hours early to allow teachers time for PD.
As an example, the Professional Development Plan for the 2014-15 School year was as follows (Please note that topics covered were subject to change as needed):

Professional Development Goals:
1. Increase capacity amongst the teaching staff to facilitate high quality problem-based and project-based learning, as defined in the VCMS charter
2. Increase collaboration amongst staff, both cross-curricular within a grade level and vertically within a content area
3. Increase data-driven instruction as defined in the VCMS charter, providing an equitable and differentiated curriculum, through the thoughtful use of internal progress monitoring data, teacher observations, and thorough understanding of IEP’s, 504 plans, GATE testing results, and CELDT test data
4. Increase capacity for effective classroom management that leads to the ability to implement a rigorous PBL curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date and Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Goal(s) Addressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 12</td>
<td>Welcome and Icebreakers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30-9:30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 12</td>
<td>Nuts and Bolts (student supplies, checking out computers, signing in and out, etc.)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30-10:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 12</td>
<td>Reading and Discussion: “Project-Based Learning: Inspiring Middle School Students to Engage in Deep and Active Learning”</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00-12:00</td>
<td><a href="http://schools.nyc.gov/documents/teachandlearn/project_basedfinal.pdf">http://schools.nyc.gov/documents/teachandlearn/project_basedfinal.pdf</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 12</td>
<td>Discussion of master schedule/ electives and how this relates to our overall mission</td>
<td>1,2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00-1:30</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 12</td>
<td>Introduction to PBL unit planning and peer review process (see attached document)</td>
<td>1,2</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30-4:00</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 13</td>
<td>Plan for implementing AIMSWeb assessment – purpose of assessments, calendar for administering three probes, and training on administration</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00-10:00</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>August 13</td>
<td>Plan for New Student Welcome/ Back to School Picnic</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-11:00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 13</td>
<td>Review of progressive discipline plan, dress code, electronics policy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00-12:00</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 14</td>
<td>Time to work on year long plan and first PBL unit plan</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00-4:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 15</td>
<td>Time to work on year long plan and first PBL unit plan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00-4:00</td>
<td><strong>Both plans due to principal 8/15 at 4:00</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 18</td>
<td>Charter renewal document work session</td>
<td>1,2,3</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00-12:00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 18</td>
<td>Review of IEP’s and 504 plans by grade level</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30-4:00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 19</td>
<td>8:00-9:30</td>
<td>Peer review of PBL unit 1 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 19</td>
<td>9:30-10:00</td>
<td>Final preparations for New Student Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 20</td>
<td>8:00-4:00</td>
<td>Google Education Training: Google Docs, Google Forms, Google Education Apps Suite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 21</td>
<td>1:00-2:30</td>
<td>Peer review of PBL unit 1 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 21</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Compliance Trainings: mandated reporting, blood-born pathogens, emergency procedures, sexual harassment policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 22</td>
<td>8:00-9:30</td>
<td>Peer review of PBL unit 1 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 22</td>
<td>9:30-12:00</td>
<td>Advisory Planning – August – October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 28</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Vertical Planning by Subject Matter (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 28</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Discussion of the first three days: What has gone well, where are we seeing potential problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 4</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 6 and 8 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 4</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Work on PBL unit 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 11</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Cross-Curricular Planning by grade level (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 18</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 7 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 18</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Work on PBL unit 2 [Due to principal 9/19]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Vertical Planning by Subject Matter (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Review of AIMSWeb Probe 1 Data: What do the data show? What interventions and enrichments will be implemented?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 9</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 6 and 8 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 9</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Peer review of PBL unit 2 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 16</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Cross-Curricular Planning by grade level (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 16</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Peer review of PBL unit 2 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 23</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 7 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 23</td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning for student-led conferences: Dates and times, nature of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 31</td>
<td>8:00-9:30</td>
<td>Peer review of PBL unit 2 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 31</td>
<td>9:30-11:30</td>
<td>“FAT City: How Difficult Can this Be?” Discussion of strategies for special education students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 31</td>
<td>11:30-12:00</td>
<td>Progressive discipline plan update discussion: What is working? What is not? How can we improve our plan?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 31</td>
<td>1:00-4:00</td>
<td>Planning for advisory lessons – November – January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 13</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Vertical Planning by Subject Matter (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 13</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Mindfulness Training – Working with students to make positive choices even when angry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 20</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 6 and 8 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 20</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Work on PBL unit 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 4</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Cross-Curricular Planning by grade level (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 4</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Work on PBL unit 3 Due to Principal December 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 7 (see attached document)</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Peer review of PBL unit 3 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 18</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Vertical Planning by Subject Matter (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 18</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Peer review of PBL unit 3 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 8</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 6 and 8 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 8</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Peer review of PBL unit 3 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 15</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Cross-Curricular Planning by grade level (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 15</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Review of Semester One Grades: Trends, red flags, and patterns to continue</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 22</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 7 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 22</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Advisory Planning: February – April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 29</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Vertical Planning by Subject Matter (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 29</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Review of AIMSWeb Probe 2 Data: What do the data show? What interventions and enrichments will be implemented?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 5</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 6 and 8 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 12</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Cross-Curricular Planning by grade level (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 12</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Article Study: Managing Project-Based Learning <a href="http://bie.org/images/uploads/general/f6d0b4a5d9e37c0e0317acb7942d27b0.pdf">http://bie.org/images/uploads/general/f6d0b4a5d9e37c0e0317acb7942d27b0.pdf</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 13</td>
<td>8:00-4:00</td>
<td>Integrating Common Core Standards and Literacy in the PBL Classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 19</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 7 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 19</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Utilizing the practices of Mindfulness, discussed in advisory, in the content area classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 26</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Vertical Planning by Subject Matter (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 26</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Work on PBL unit 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 6 and 8 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Work on PBL unit 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td><strong>Due to principal by March 6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 12</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Cross-Curricular Planning by grade level (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 12</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Peer review of PBL unit 4 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 13</td>
<td>8:00-12:00</td>
<td>SDAIE Strategies in the PBL classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 13</td>
<td>1:00-4:00</td>
<td>Differentiation and intervention in the PBL classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 7 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Peer review of PBL unit 4 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 16</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Vertical Planning by Subject Matter (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 13</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Peer review of PBL unit 4 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 23</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 6 and 8 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 23</td>
<td></td>
<td>Advisory Planning: May-June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 30</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Cross-Curricular Planning by grade level (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 30</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>End of year planning: 8th grade grade check, discussion of promotion activities, action plan for students at risk of earning failing grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 7 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Work on PBL unit 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 14</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Vertical Planning by Subject Matter (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 14</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Work on PBL unit 5 Due to principal by May 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 6 and 8 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Peer review of PBL unit 5 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 22</td>
<td>8:00-11:00</td>
<td>Peer review of PBL unit 5 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 22</td>
<td>11:00-12:00</td>
<td>Finish discussion of end of year/ graduation details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 22</td>
<td>1:00-4:00</td>
<td>End of year gallery walk: Presentations of year plans (modified to reflect any changes that occurred during the year) and projects completed with peer feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 28</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Cross-Curricular Planning by grade level (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 28</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>Review of AIMSWeb Probe 3 Data: What do the data show? How will these data affect next year’s program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 4</td>
<td>1:30-2:30</td>
<td>Kid Talk Grade 7 (see attached document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 4</td>
<td>2:30-4:00</td>
<td>End of year staff appreciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 11</td>
<td>1:30-4:00</td>
<td>Vertical Planning by Subject Matter – begin to create a year plan for 2015-2016 (see attached document)</td>
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</tbody>
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VCMS PD during the 2015-2016 school year will focus on four goals:

1. Increasing the faculty’s understanding of problem-based learning and constructivism
2. Continuing the development of a robust advisory and council program
3. Increasing student opportunities to use technology to collaborate in the classroom
4. Using data, including results of benchmark assessments, to guide classroom instruction

PBL and constructivism are the hallmarks of the VCMS curriculum. It is crucial that all teachers on the VCMS faculty are experts in these areas. While the faculty has a strong base of knowledge
in this topics at the present time, new research is always being done, and as educators we must stay abreast of new developments and changes. Utilizing current research also enables teachers to explore how PBL is being linked to changing standards, including CCSS and the Next Generation Science Standards. PD linked to PBL and constructivism uses a “jigsaw” model. Teachers, in small groups, read and discuss different research articles pertaining to these topics and report back to the whole group.

As mentioned above, advisory and Council have the potential to greatly improve student success, but only if teachers feel confident about these programs, and feel they are being supported as they teach them. For this reason, teachers will work in dyads or triads to create advisory plans, which will be critically reviewed by the whole group before being implemented. For Council training, VCMS has developed a relationship with a Council trainer, which we intend to continue in the 2015-2016 school year. The trainer comes for several full day trainings, and visits some Council sessions to provide direct support to teachers.

The need to use technology in the classroom is clear. Not only does the Smarter Balanced test require the use of the computer, but the jobs to which our students aspire will almost certainly require technological literacy. While it is true that students frequently use technology, be it cell phones, tablet computers, or video game systems, using technology to learn is a different skill, and needs to be explicitly taught. Moreover, given VCMS’ focus on collaborative group work, it is important that students see how technology can facilitate such collaborative work. This year, VCMS faculty began working with Computer Using Educators (CUE) for training in collaboration via Google Docs, and by the end of next year, all teachers, with continuing support from CUE, will create at least one project requiring asynchronous collaboration using this, or a similar, program.

Decisions about instruction should be driven by student data. VCMS collects copious amounts of data – CELDT test scores, AIMSweb results, scores of in-class assessments, informal teacher observations, and more. It is expected that this data not exist in a vacuum. Each month, one after school PD session is devoted to a “data meeting.” At these meetings, a data set is presented. Teachers discuss, as a group, what the data are saying, and how this information should inform their instruction. Moreover, the success of projects and other assignments can often be quantitatively measured to determine whether or not they are worth continuing.

**MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS**

**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.

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
VCMS 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 VCMS'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. VCMS makes reasonable efforts to present the information in an understandable format and in a language parents can understand.

VCMS notifies parents of children identified for participation in an English Learner program no more than 30 days\(^3\) 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.

VCMS 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 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 VCMS 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 (CELDT) 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

\(^3\) 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.
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 C or above in English Language Arts on a progress report or report card, 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 VCMS 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.

VCMS 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.

VCMS teachers have also been trained in using “Thinking Maps,” which also allow some strategic use in creating a path towards literacy. All students are given a benchmark assessment in literacy, involving three timed tests, and then are placed in to tiered intervention groups. Students identified as needing the most amount of intervention--tier 1--are placed in to a consultancy period with a Language Arts teacher once to twice a week where only a handful of students (no more than 8) work closely with a teacher. Students are then reassessed every three weeks to determine if they are able to move in to a level 2 tier intervention program where teachers utilize assessment data to inform their daily instruction in their classes.

In addition to the above instructional and program strategies, VCMS also uses weekly “Kid Talk” meetings and Student Success Team (SST) meetings to check in on student progress. Kid Talk meetings take place with all of the core teachers of a particular grade, the principal, and the resources teacher. They take place weekly and provide an opportunity to talk about students who are struggling and/or needing to be pushed more. SST meetings take place when needed, include the student, parent, teachers, and resource teacher to help create plans to support students, including English Learners.

**Pedagogy**

Other major components of the VCMS 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, VCMS expects students to acquire English language skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and thinking and to proficiently meet grade level ELA standards.

Services and Supports
VCMS 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.

VCMS 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, VCMS 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 6-8. Teachers use these folders to collect student work samples, and check of mastery towards each ELD standard.

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

**Gifted and Talented Students and Students Achieving Above Grade Level**

The needs of our Gifted and Talented Students (GATE) and students achieving above grade level are addressed in an inclusive way, consistent with our individualized instruction 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.

VCMS 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 VCMS 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

Each year, VCMS will take proactive steps to identify students who are achieving below grade level. Methods for identification include, but are not limited to, classroom grades, teacher observations, and scores on national normed-referenced tests. Once every two weeks, teachers meet by grade level for “kid talks.” During these meetings, teachers will bring up for discussion students who are not making adequate progress in their classes, and/or who are performing below grade level. The purpose of these meetings is fourfold. First, the meetings are designed to determine if students who are below grade level are struggling in all curricular areas, or only in particular subjects. Second, the meetings are a chance for teachers to discuss what steps have already been taken to improve the students’ progress. Additionally, the meetings provide teachers the opportunity to determine, in consultation with the principal, what concrete intervention steps will be taken to enable the student to succeed. Finally, the meetings are the time when it is determined when teachers will next meet to discuss the extent to which the selected interventions are enabling the student to succeed.

Informal kid talk meetings are supplemented with data from classroom grades and internal assessments. VCMS utilizes assessment probes from AIMSWeb, which offer nationally normed standardized tests in the areas of language arts and mathematics. All students at VCMS take such a probe in language arts and mathematics three times a year as a benchmark assessment. If students score below the 50th percentile on such tests, or if they are not making adequate yearly progress to improve by at least one grade level every year, students are identified as at risk, and offered immediate, strategic academic intervention.

A variety of interventions are available for VCMS students who have been identified as being below grade level. VCMS employs teaching assistants in all classes. These individuals are trained to work with struggling students in a small group setting. Teaching assistants are able to focus their attention on re-teaching specific skills that were taught in class, since they are in the classroom during all instructional time. Additionally, VCMS utilizes a push-in special education
program. RSP teachers are present in the language arts and mathematics classes of students who have IEP’s, and are able to offer such students immediate intervention during class time.

Additional opportunities for intervention exist outside of the core content classes. VCMS offers English support and mathematics support classes at all grade levels. These classes are taken in place of elective classes. Students are selected for these classes if they are below grade level, and are not already receiving similar intervention based on their status as an English Learner or special education student. Support classes are designed to re-teach skills taught in class, as well as to teach foundational skills students may be lacking, which preclude them from experiencing success in their current classes. Classes meet for two 50-minute sessions per week and class sizes are limited to 18 students to ensure personalized attention.

Outside of the school day, additional opportunities for intervention exist. VCMS has a free afterschool program for three hours after school each day. As one component of this program, students are offered daily tutoring in all subject areas. By working closely with the school, tutors are able to target the needs of those students taking part in the program. While the school cannot mandate that all students below grade level participate in the after school program, we engage in active outreach to parents to encourage them to have their children participate.

VCMS engages in frequent monitoring of students who are below grade level. Informally, a portion of each kid talk meeting is devoted to following up on those students who have been previously identified as in need of support. At the meetings, teachers discuss how the previously agreed upon interventions are working. This allows teachers to determine if additional steps are needed. On a more formal basis, students who are below grade level receive progress monitoring probes every three weeks using the AIMSWeb bank of tests, to determine the extent to which interventions are helping students reach grade level proficiency.

**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. VCMS 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 many field trips during the school year to venues such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Fowler Museum, the Los Angeles Opera, the Los Angeles County Outdoor School, and NatureBridge. 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, math computation fluency. As with all students, teachers and staff analyze data/assessments and the instructional program is modified accordingly.

VCMS offers a whole day program: school schedule from 8:30 am – 3:10 pm, and we implement a before and after school program, as funding allows, to accommodate working families. The 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 (“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.

**A TYPICAL DAY**

Students walk through the gates at VCMS between 8:00 and 8:25, and begin their school day with a warm welcome from their principal. Upon entering the campus, some students seek teacher guidance regarding homework, upcoming projects or social issues students may be encountering. Other students may be having breakfast they brought from home in the courtyard, while others are utilizing the time before their first class for physical activities.
Promptly at 8:30, students arrive to their first class, which is different each day, due to the rotating schedule. Today, the student we are shadowing has language arts first. The student makes sure to be on time, ready to learn and fully prepared with her homework and school materials. Upon entering language arts, the student immediately looks at the board and sees that she will need her reader’s notebook, novel, and a pencil. Taking out these materials, she has time to copy down the day’s homework in her binder. Just after finishing writing, “read for 40 minutes and continue to work on writing in your writer’s notebook” her teacher begins the mini-lesson, which today covers determining the traits of a character based on the actions taken by other characters. At the conclusion of the lessons, students are told to go to their “reading spot,” and our student flops down in a comfortable chair and continues to read *Wonder* by R.J. Palacios. She chose this book because it is at her reading level, and because the idea of fitting in at school seemed interesting to her. As she reads, she notes in her reader’s notebook that the character Jack’s constant attempts to appease the character Julian makes her think that Julian is a bully. Realizing that this relates back to today’s mini-lesson, she makes a note to share it in her next reader’s conference.

The day continues for the student. The next class of the day is science, and after spending several days planning her lab to test the affect of increased temperature on the rate of photosynthesis in an elodea plant, it is finally time to set up the experiment. Along with her group, she places one plant in a working freezer and the other in an unplugged freezer. As she does this, her teacher stops by and asks why they are putting the second plant in an unplugged freezer rather than simply leaving it outside at room temperature. The group explains that having one plant in a freezer and one out in the open would create a second independent variable. The teacher is pleased and tells the group that she likes the fact that they not only used science vocabulary but also show an understanding of what the terms mean.

The next class in today’s rotating schedule is history. The class has been studying Attila the Hun and today will be using three documents in an attempt to determine what happened at the meeting between Attila the Hun and Pope Leo. As the student looks at the first document, a painting by the artist Rafael, she notes the date of the painting and the fanciful images present, all which, in her mind, cast doubt on the authenticity of this document. As she reviews the second document, an account from the meeting written by Paul the Deacon, her teacher stops by her desk to check on her work. She shares her thoughts with her teacher, who asks her if a document written far after the event is always less reliable. She concedes that it is not, and asks her group mates what they think of the first two documents.

During history class, her teacher informs the student that her math teacher has “ZAPed” her. This means that after history, she will need to report to her math class for the 30 minutes prior to lunch. This is no surprise; she asked her math teacher to ZAP her since she was very confused about a math project. Since math is not on her schedule today, she is glad to have the opportunity to speak with her math teacher during school time. When she arrives at math class, she finds that there are about a dozen other students who are there for ZAP, to go over the directions for the project and get started. Her math teacher reviews his expectations for the assignment. The students are to design a water park, including the dimensions of all structures, and create a scaled model of the project. The student was confused about how to create the scale, and listens carefully as her teacher explains how to set up the proportion to relate the actual size of the water park to her smaller model.

After ZAP is lunch, and the student picks up her lunch from some parent volunteers, finds a table in the courtyard, and chats with friends as she eats. All of her friends are planning on staying after
school today for the music enrichment class, and she is excited to know that she will have some
friends in the class.

After lunch, the student promptly arrives at her last core class of the day, P.E. Her class heads out
to the blacktop and begins some light stretching and warm-up activities. Her teacher then explains
that, in preparation for the California Fitness Test, they will be practicing running the mile today.
He reminds the students that their only goal should be to beat their last score. Motivated, the
student takes off on the run, and manages to improve her time by 20 seconds. Her teacher
congratulates her on the good work and reminds her to log today’s time in her fitness journal.

Upon completing P.E., the student is ready for her elective class. The student is in journalism, and
heads over to class. She has been working on an editorial about the VCMS electronics policy, and
is nearly ready to publish. She shares her editorial with a classmate for peer review. The peer
suggests that she include a few quotes from the principal about the reasons for the policy, and she
asks for permission to go to the office and interview the principal. Armed with quotes from her
interview, she pulls out a laptop computer and begins to type.

Since today is Monday, the day ends with a community meeting. The whole school gathers in the
courtyard. The leadership class begins the meeting by leading the school in a relay race and water
balloon toss. The principal then begins to speak about compliments and concerns brought up by
students over the past week. Several students are excited about the new girls basketball team. The
principal goes on to say that some students have expressed concerns over people pushing in line
at lunch, and reminds the school of the importance of treating all members of the school
community with respect.

The school day ends at 3:10, at which point the student says goodbye to some of her friends, and
then heads to the after school program. She will have an hour to work on homework before her
music class begins. It has been another successful day, full of learning, at VCMS.
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.

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><strong>SUBPRIORITY A – TEACHERS</strong></th>
<th><strong>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</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>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>
<td></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>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. VCMS 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>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Subpriority B – Instructional Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
<th>Method of Measurement</th>
<th>Measurable Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</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>
<td>100% of students have access to standards-aligned materials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Subpriority C – Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
<th>Method of Measurement</th>
<th>Measurable Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Custodial staff addresses health and safety issues, when they arise, within 24 hours, and resolved within 5 business days.</td>
<td>Monthly facilities walk-through; ongoing log of facility maintenance, repair issues, and discussion in weekly assemblies. Collect feedback on facilities through Annual student, parent, and faculty surveys and respond to concerns</td>
<td>Fewer than 2 safety related incidents occur, none of which pose a significant threat to student safety</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 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>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
<th>Method of Measurement</th>
<th>Measurable Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</td>
<td>All teachers are proficient at developing CCSS-aligned units of study anchored by performance tasks/ measures</td>
<td>Ongoing professional development on standards-based instruction (including CCSS, Next Generation Science Standards, and CA social studies) for</td>
<td>&gt;95% of student learning experiences demonstrate strong alignment to CCSS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
all teachers, with emphasis on how to make CCSS accessible to EL students for all teachers.

- Creation of CCSS-aligned writing rubrics for use across the curriculum

### SUBPRIORITY B – EL STUDENTS & ACADEMIC CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</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 EL students for all teachers. - Creation of CCSS-aligned writing rubrics for use across the curriculum.</td>
<td>Unit reviews and lesson tuning protocols</td>
<td>100% of EL students taught CCSS-aligned content by teachers with EL certification in core content areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SUBPRIORITY C – EL STUDENTS & ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</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. - Set individual student targets. - Unit reviews and lesson tuning protocols.</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>
</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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBPRIORITY A – Achieving/Maintaining Parental Involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1. The Parent/Faculty Council will remain active, meeting monthly, and will give input in key decision-making processes. | Maintain weekly EBlasts and quarterly newsletters  
- Maintain monthly parent council meetings and work to diversify membership  
- Maintain a Parent Education and Engagement Committee to develop quarterly parent education and outreach | Monthly Parent/Faculty Council meeting attendance and minutes | Regularly attending members of Parent council will be representative of student demographics |
| 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 |

**SUBPRIORITY B – Promoting Parent Participation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents will complete the suggested number of volunteer hours.</td>
<td>- Quarterly volunteer logs analysis</td>
<td>Volunteer logs analysis</td>
<td>80% of parents will complete the suggested number of volunteer hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STATE PRIORITY #4—STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**
Pupil achievement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

H. California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) statewide assessment
I. The Academic Performance Index (API)
J. Percentage of pupils who have successfully completed courses that satisfy UC/CSU entrance requirements, or career technical education
K. 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)
L. EL reclassification rate
M. Percentage of pupils who have passed an AP exam with a score of 3 or higher
N. 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| CA Measurement of Academic Progress and Performance (CMAPP) on statewide assessment (as available) Annually, the percent of VCMS 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. | -Implement CAASPP assessments annually and analyze data by subgroup 
-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 below proficient | 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. | Student performance for all subgroups will meet or exceed growth targets. 80% of all students will score proficient/ advanced on the CMAPP |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUBPRIORITY A – CAASPP: ELA/LITERACY AND MATHEMATICS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBPRIORITY B – API</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

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.

Student performance for all subgroups will meet or exceed growth targets. 80% of all students will score proficient/advanced on the CMAPP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subpriority C – UC/CSU Course Requirements (or CTE) - Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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) Annually, 90% of students progress at least one level on the CELDT and ELPAC annually</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subpriority D – EL Proficiency Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All student will progress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
toward RFEP each year. 100% of students will be RFEP by culmination.

| Analysis system to capture all RFEP requirements and track student progress toward meeting requirements | Annual assessments | Be RFEP by culmination |

**Subpriority F – AP Exam Passage Rate - Not Applicable**

**Subpriority 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.

**Subpriority A – Student Attendance Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
<th>Method of Measurement</th>
<th>Measurable Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| VCMS students will have an average 97% attendance rate. All statistically significant subgroups will demonstrate proportional rates of absenteeism. | - 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 | Monthly attendance reporting disaggregated by subgroup. | 97% attendance rate. All subgroups demonstrate proportional rates of absenteeism |

**Subpriority B – Student Absenteeism Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
<th>Method of Measurement</th>
<th>Measurable Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VCMS will have a chronic absenteeism rate of less than 5%.</td>
<td>- Monthly analysis of Student Information System attendance data by subgroup</td>
<td>Monthly attendance reporting disaggregated by subgroup.</td>
<td>&lt;5% chronic absenteeism. All subgroups demonstrate proportional rates of absenteeism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Calls to parents of chronic absentees (or SARB Board reporting as needed)
- Quarterly Student Information System and CALPADS analysis

**SUBPRIORITY C – MIDDLE SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VCMS will have a dropout rate of less than 1%.</td>
<td>Quarterly Student Information System and CALPADS reports analysis</td>
<td>Monthly enrollment reporting and CALPADS data on student re-enrollment, disaggregated by subgroup.</td>
<td>&lt;1% Middle school dropout rate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUBPRIORITY D – HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES - NOT APPLICABLE**

**SUBPRIORITY 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**

**SUBPRIORITY A – PUPIL SUSPENSION RATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<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>
<td>Quarterly disaggregated Student Information System and CALPADS suspension data.</td>
<td>Pupil suspension rates remain &lt;5%. Suspension rates are proportional across sub-groups.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Subpriority B – Pupil Expulsion Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</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 disproportionately 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>

### Subpriority C – Other School Safety and School Connectedness Measures (Surveys)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</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))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
<th>Method of Measurement</th>
<th>Measurable Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All VCMS 6th graders 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. All VCMS 7th and 8th graders will participate in a broad course of study that includes all of the above as well foreign language.</td>
<td>-Annually evaluate the effectiveness of class assignments and impact on kids</td>
<td>Class offering reviewed by principal</td>
<td>100% of 6th grade students will be enrolled in classes that include language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, visual/performing arts, health and physical education. 100% of 7th and 8th grade students will additionally be enrolled in foreign language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### State Priority #8—Other Student Outcomes
Pupil outcomes, if available, in the subject areas described above in #7, as applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBPRIORITY A – ENGLISH</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</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>SUBPRIORITY B – MATHEMATICS</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</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 mathematics. | - Formative, ongoing math fluency assessments  
-Progress report analysis | CA Measurement of Academic Progress and Performance  
Progress reports  
Report cards  
Math Fluency and other formative assessments | All students will demonstrate at least one year’s growth as measured by math fluency assessments |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBPRIORITY C – SOCIAL SCIENCES</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 75% of VCMS 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. | - Project rubric analysis  
-Progress report analysis | Project rubrics  
Progress reports  
Report cards | 75% of students will score proficient or advanced in the area of social science |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBPRIORITY D – SCIENCE</th>
<th>GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY</th>
<th>ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL</th>
<th>METHOD OF MEASUREMENT</th>
<th>MEASURABLE OUTCOMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 75% of VCMS students will score proficient (rubric score of 3) or advanced (rubric | - Project rubric analysis  
Progress reports | Project rubrics  
Progress reports | 75% of students will score proficient or advanced in the area of |
### Subpriority E – Visual and Performing Arts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
<th>Method of Measurement</th>
<th>Measurable Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75% of VCMS 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>
<td>Project rubrics</td>
<td>75% of students will score proficient or advanced in the area of visual and performing arts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Subpriority F – Physical Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
<th>Method of Measurement</th>
<th>Measurable Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90% of all 7th 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 7th grade students will achieve Healthy Fitness Zone as measured by FitnessGram</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Subpriority G – Health (Grades 1-6 only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
<th>Method of Measurement</th>
<th>Measurable Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75% of VCMS 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>
<td>Project rubrics</td>
<td>75% of students will score proficient or advanced in the area of science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Subpriority H – Foreign Languages (Grades 7-12 only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</th>
<th>Actions to Achieve Goal</th>
<th>Method of Measurement</th>
<th>Measurable Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75% of 7th and 8th grade VCMS 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 Spanish.</td>
<td>Project rubric analysis</td>
<td>Project rubrics</td>
<td>75% of students will score proficient or advanced in the area of foreign language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Subpriority I – Applied Arts (Grades 7-12 only) - Not Applicable
MEASURING PUPIL PROGRESS TOWARD OUTCOMES: FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

VCMS believes in using multiple assessment measures to gauge student progress. Within the class, teachers frequently conduct informal checks for understanding while teaching. These include things like indicating their response to a question on a whiteboard, giving a thumbs up or thumbs down to indicate their understanding, or engaging in a think-pair-share. Since students spend much of their classroom time working as a cooperative group, teachers are able to circulate around the classroom, checking on the progress of each group while offering feedback.

Teachers also give more formal assessments of student progress. As a formative assessment, each language arts and mathematics teacher conducts a fluency probe using AIMSweb three times per year. These assessments are used to guide instruction and determine the need for intervention. Teachers also give more formal assessments of student progress. As a school focused on problem-based learning, much of the formal assessments in class are based on projects. When teachers assign projects, grades are given not only for the finished project itself, but also for interim steps. This is based on the idea that our role as middle school educators is not only to teach content, but also to teach students how to plan and prepare for a major assignment. Since these assessments are a constant part of the curriculum, they can be given with great frequency, and can immediately inform instruction.

Projects look different from class to class, but in all cases students are asked to work collaboratively, think creatively and critically, and use higher order thinking skills to solve an authentic problem or answer a question. In math, for example, students go to the grocery store, and study unit rate by comparing the cost per ounce of two differently-sized packages of the same product. After determining the best value, the students determine how much money they could save per year if they selected the size that was the better buy.

Language arts projects often involve the writing of essays. These are ongoing assessments, with revision a consistent part of the writing process. Students write a draft, submit it, and then get feedback from the teacher. They then use this feedback to create a revised essay. Students continue to revise, reflecting the real process that writers go through. A benefit of this type of assessment is that it can easily be differentiated for each student. Since the writing conferences held between the student and teacher are individual meetings, the teacher is able to target skills at that student’s ability level. Reading assessments are also common in the language arts classroom, be they for fluency, comprehension, or higher order thinking skills.

In science, one popular project is the cell analogy project. In this assignment, students learn about the parts of a cell, and then create an analogy between the parts of the cell and the parts of another system. For example, students might say that a cell is like a Medieval city, with the cell membrane similar to the city wall, the peroxisome similar to the brave knights, etc. Students are assessed on the logic of their comparisons, the creativity of their ideas, and the artistic merit of the model they make of the system to which they analogized the cell. Labs are also frequent assessment tools in science. Depending on the lab, students might be assessed on the logic of their procedure, the accuracy of data analysis (graphs, charts, responses, to questions, etc.) and/or their concluding paragraph.
Projects in the social studies class are geared around major topics in the curriculum. For example, in the ancient Egypt unit, students examine “burial sites,” and determine what the lives of the dead may have looked like based on how they were buried. This serves as an introduction to social structure, daily life, and beliefs of ancient Egypt. After this, students mummify apples and chickens to better understand the mummification process. They make observations and measurements throughout the mummification process and write a report about the process at the end. Students will be learning about life and social structure in ancient Egypt simultaneously and, as a concluding assessment, will write an "obituary" for the chickens based on their social status.

Spanish projects focus on either the use of the Spanish language in everyday life or the culture of Spanish-speaking nations. For example, in the project “vamos a comer” (lets go eat) students will create a restaurant they might find in a Spanish-speaking nation. They will create a restaurant menu using the food unit vocabulary. After this, they will create a skit of a customer having a meal in the restaurant. They will present their Spanish skit to class. To learn more about Spanish culture, Students will create and decorate a shoebox altar for Dia de los Muertos. They will learn and explore how other cultures demonstrate respect their deceased loved ones.

In physical education, assessment is based not only on athletic ability, but also on the other goals of the course – playing fairly, understanding the rules of the game, taking responsibility for actions on and off the field, and always trying to the best of their ability. Seventh graders are also assessed on their progress towards reaching passing levels for the Fitnessgram.

In addition to projects, VCMS teachers do give traditional paper and pencil tests, where students answer completion, short answer, and essay questions. While we do not dispute that such tests have value, it is the belief of our school that we learn more from assessing creative, collaborative projects. For this reason, projects are a greater factor in the overall grade than more traditional assessments.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING**

A core tenet of VCMS is using data to drive and guide instruction. The school collects data regularly throughout the year. Within the classroom, teachers collect data every time they give an assessment, whether it is an informal check for understanding, a project, or more traditional paper/pen test. Based on these results, teachers determine who in their class has gaps in understanding, and who has mastered the concept. They can use this information to differentiate their instruction. For students found to be struggling, teachers can re-teach a concept during independent work time, ZAP, and/or in a support class. For those ready to move forward, the teacher can offer in-class or out of class enrichment opportunities.

VCMS also makes use of standardized tests as a data source. The school uses AIMSweb to monitor reading fluency and mathematics computation. Students scoring below the 50th percentile are targeted for intervention, as discussed in Element 1, Section 29. This year, the school will, for the first time, receive the results of the Smarter Balanced assessment. These scores will be used to determine the degree to which our efforts to integrate the CCSS have been successful. Where there are gaps, we will re-visit instruction to ensure it is Common Core aligned. CELDT tests provide a final data source based on standardized test data. These scores, along with the rate at which we re-classify EL students, provides the school an objective measure of the quality of our EL program. During our monthly data meetings, the teaching staff is able to critically examine data and make plans to improve instruction.
Our school shares data with stakeholders in a number of ways. Parents can view their child’s grade at any time using our online gradebook. During student-led conferences, held twice a year, students share with their parents the results of the work they have done in class. Additionally, the results of standardized testing (both state mandated and internal) are shared at public board meetings, where we also discuss the LCAP, a formalized representation of our data-based goals for the upcoming years.

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

Students receive letter grades (A, B, C, D, or F) in all classes. Grades are based on a combination of homework, class work, projects, and tests. Grades are available for parents and students to view at any time, using our online gradebook. VCMS believes in giving students every opportunity to do their best work, so teachers encourage students to re-do assignments with low scores, and to turn in all work, even if it is late.

Progress reports given to parents during student-led conferences twice a year, and report cards are mailed home twice a year, providing four opportunities for parents to see a hard copy of their child’s grades. More frequent grade reports are mailed or sent home upon parent request or for struggling students.

In order to participate in the eighth grade graduation ceremony, a student may have no more than four F’s in core classes during his or her eighth grade year. For students who anticipate getting more than four F’s, enrichment projects are available to make up one F. No more than one F can be made up.

If a student is not making adequate academic progress and becomes a candidate for retention, the school will notify the parent in writing and will also contact the 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
VCMS 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 Elementary School (“VCES”).

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 VCMS. 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 VCMS 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.

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 midterm 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 VCMS 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 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.

**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 Charter 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 VCMS
campus by organizing cleanup days, greening up outdoor spaces and providing necessary
repairs.

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

- **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, Sprint Event, Grant Writing,
Jogathon, and Merchandising.
• **Hospitality Committee** - The Hospitality Committee supports many of the events that take place at VCMS, 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 VCMS. 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.

• **Outreach Committee** - The Outreach Committee’s main goal is to create a highly diverse student population at VCMS. 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 VCMS to talk on various parent education/child development topics that reflect and support the values and philosophy of the school.

• **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 Charter 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 by finding appropriate and achievable volunteer opportunities. Parent support and volunteerism is valued. Volunteerism is neither a condition of enrollment nor of continued enrollment. 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 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 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*

* 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(I). 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

VCMS 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 school, every person hired by VCMS 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 VCMS include:

- Executive Director
- VCMS 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 VCMS 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 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 VCMS.

**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 Charter School
- Diagnose the gaps between where the Charter 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 Charter 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 VCMS has suitable school site(s)
- Oversee Charter 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

VCMS Principal
The Principal of VCMS is the educational and instructional leader of the Charter 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 VCMS teachers to be both learners and mentors;
• Lead the design and implementation of the Charter School’s programs for Special Education, EL, and GATE students;
• Hire and retain high quality faculty and staff;
• Promote the Charter School mission and philosophy throughout the Charter School community;
• Day to day site management with a commitment to ensuring the health and safety of students, faculty and staff.

Charter 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;

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

### Teaching Staff
All VCMS 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 VCMS, and made available to LAUSD upon request. The Charter School principal holds the responsibility to monitor credentials and highly qualified staff.

The VCMS 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 Charter School or at their current place of work.

### Classroom Teacher
*The ideal middle school teaching candidate has the following qualifications:*
- 2+ years experience teaching the relevant grades
- Maintains a valid and current California teaching credential appropriate to their assignment.
- 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 VCMS mission and the goals of the VCMS 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 VCMS mission and the goals of the VCMS 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 VCMS Principal works with each classroom teacher in order to select a teacher’s aide. The VCMS 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 middle grade children and has experience working with middle 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.
• Supervises students during recess and lunch.
• 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.

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 Charter 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 Charter 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:
  o Implementing the charter and maintaining adherence to its guiding principles and requirements
  o Overall successful Charter School academic program and achievement of educational goals
  o 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
  o Creating a shared vision
  o Supervising instruction
  o Investing in teacher quality
  o Promoting a culture of learning and positive behavior
  o Engaging families and community
  o Overseeing systems and operations

Teachers will be evaluated by the principal based on:
• Effectiveness of teaching strategies
  o Engaging and supporting all students in learning
  o Creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning
  o Understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning
  o Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for all students
  o Assessing student learning
  o 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 Charter School site in consultation with its insurance carriers and risk management experts. The policies are maintained at the Charter 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.

Diabetes
The Charter School will provide an information sheet regarding type 2 diabetes to the parent or guardian of incoming 7th grade students, pursuant to Education Code Section 49452.7. The information sheet shall include, but shall not be limited to, all of the following:
3. A recommendation that students displaying or possibly suffering from risk factors or warning signs associated with type 2 diabetes should be screened for type 2 diabetes.
5. A description of the different types of diabetes screening tests available.

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.

VCMS 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. VCMS maintains an accurate accounting of ethnic and racial balance of students enrolled in the school and outreach event calendars and flyers to reflect the efforts the school has made to achieve racial and ethnic balance. Currently, VCMS maintains a Racial and Ethnic Balance of a 60:40 ratio.

**Mixed SES Philosophy**

Founded by a group of parents who wanted a “diverse, neighborhood school” for their community, VCMS 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 VCMS 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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4 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 Diane 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
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.\(^7\)

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

VCMS intends to expand upon the outreach model of building official partnerships and organizing informal events that has been implemented by VCMS 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 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

4) 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.

5) 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 Charter School’s mission, programs, services
- 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 Charter 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 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)
Local Park Outreach

**November:**
School Tours (Every Tuesday from 8:45am/9:15am)
Local Park Outreach
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 6:30pm - with Spanish translation)

**January:**
School Tours (Every Tuesday from 8:45am/9:15am)
Local Park Outreach
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 currently enrolled students and a small number of students who are children of the 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. 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)*
- Residents of the District (preference)

*Children of faculty and children of founding parents 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 on the Charter School’s website. Public notice for the date and time of the public random drawing will also be posted on the VCMS website once the application deadline has passed. 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 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 VCMS web site 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 list of names will be kept on file at the Charter School in the event of the need for an audit.

VCMS’ intent to enroll form will be accessible through VCMS’ website. If a family does not have access to Internet, VCMS office manager and/or clerk 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 VCMS will be available online or at the Valley Charter Middle School site by the first of October each year. The lottery application will remain available until the end of the first week of February (tentative).

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

3) VCMS 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 mailed out to families by mid-March. Families will be given three business days after the receipt of the acceptance letters to respond in writing or via phone 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 Audit

“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:

- P1, first week of January
- P2, first week of April
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 - Pupil Suspension and Expulsion

“*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 grounds; b) while going to or coming from school; c) during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; d) during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

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 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) 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.
   m) 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.
   n) 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 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.

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 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 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.

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 students 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 fire arm 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 muffler or 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, an 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 official 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 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 at the hearing 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 written notice shall include the following: student’s name, the reinstatement eligibility review date; the type of educational placement during the period of expulsion, and notice of appeal rights/procedures.

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 VCMS 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.

VCMS certificated employees will participate in the State Teachers’ Retirement System ("STRS") and Valley Charter School will coordinate such participation. VCMS, 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 VCMS 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 VCMS 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.

7. 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.

8. 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 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**
  - (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:**
  - (i) **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
  - (ii) **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 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).
Valley Charter Middle School (hereinafter “VCMS” or “Charter School”) shall:

- Be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. EC 47605(d)(1)

- Not charge tuition. EC 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. EC 47605(d)(1)

- Admit all pupils who wish to attend the school. EC 47605(d)(2)(A)

- 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 who currently attend the charter school and pupils who reside in the District. EC 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. EC 47605(d)(3)

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

- Consult, on a regular basis, with the charter school’s parents, legal guardians, and teachers regarding the school’s educational programs. EC 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 the DRL provisions contained within the body of the charter and the DRL contained in the addendum, the 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 contact 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>9229 Haskell Ave. North Hills, CA 91343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• This location is in LAUSD Board District:</td>
<td>Board District 6</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>6th – 8th Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The number of students in the first year of the renewal term will be:</td>
<td>Approximately 192 Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The grade level(s) of the students in the first year of the renewal term will be:</td>
<td>6th – 8th 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:</td>
<td>384 Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Enrollment capacity is defined as all students who are enrolled in Charter School regardless of student residency)</td>
<td></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>8:30 am – 3:10 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 AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN**

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 submit a Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) to the Charter Schools Division and the Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools on or before July 1, 2014. In accordance with California Education Code §§ 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 Education Code § 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii), using the Local Control and Accountability Plan template to be adopted by the State Board of Education. Charter School shall submit its annual update to the Charter
Schools Division on or before July 1 of each applicable year, beginning in 2015. Charter School shall comply with all requirements of Education Code § 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.” § 47606.5(e).

**ACADEMIC CALENDAR AND SCHEDULES**

Charter School shall offer, at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction set forth in California Education Code § 47612.5, and the number of school days required by Cal. Admin. Code, tit. 5, § 11960.

**TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN**

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

**ENGLISH LEARNERS**

VCMS 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), VCMS 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 instructional 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

VCMS shall provide to the CSD an annual report of its EL program assessment. Upon request, VCMS shall provide a copy of its current EL Master Plan to the CSD.
VCMS shall administer the CELDT annually in accordance with federal and state requirements.

VCMS 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**  
All LAUSD-authorized charter schools must adhere to all terms and conditions of the *Chanda Smith* Modified Consent Decree ("MCD") and any other court orders and/or consent decrees imposed upon the LAUSD as they pertain to special education. 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, VCMS will execute a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") by and between LAUSD and VCMS 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 Education 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 have 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 will not have a 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.

**Compliance with Child Find Activities: Conversion and Public School Choice (PSC) Schools**

District-authorized conversion and PSC charter schools must conduct Child Find activities for students residing in their pre-charter and/or PSC attendance areas (including private school students), so that students who have or are suspected of having a disability and needing special education and related services are appropriately identified and, if necessary, referred for evaluation in accordance with state and federal law. Conversion and PSC charter schools must distribute the District’s brochure, “Are You Puzzled by Your Child’s Special Needs,” prominently display the Parent Resource Network poster, and use other District materials to address the search and serve requirement of the law (e.g., “The IEP and You”).

**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 required format and are 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.
• STAR – Preliminary and Final. (Including Charter Schools)

The usual file including District ID.

• Norm day – 2013

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 – 2013 (Including Charter Schools)

• All Students enrolled December 1, 2013.

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 2012-13 (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 from non-SIS schools (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 (ISIS) which is now referred to as My Integrated Student Information System (MiSiS). MiSiS is a suite of applications which is designed to capture all District student data.

**Element 2 – Measurable Pupil Outcomes and**

**Element 3 – Method by which Pupil Progress Toward Outcomes will be**

**Measured**

**Measurable Goals of the Educational Program**


Charter School shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations related to AB 97 (Local Control Funding Formula), 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**

**GENERAL PROVISIONS**

As an independent charter school, VCMS, 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.

VCMS shall comply with the Brown Act and the Public Records Act.

All employees and representatives of Charter School, including members of the [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 Charter School amends its bylaws, it 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.

The District reserves the right to appoint a single representative to the Charter School governing board pursuant to Education 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 which 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 VCMS 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 Cal. Admin. Code, tit. 5, §§ 4600 et seq.


Charter School shall extend its uniform complaint procedure to complaints pursuant to the local control funding formula. (Cal. Educ. Code section 52075).

LEGAL AND POLICY COMPLIANCE

VCMS shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, and District policy as it relates to charter schools.

RESPONDING TO INQUIRIES

VCMS, 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. VCMS, 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.
If an allegation or other evidence of waste, fraud, abuse, or other material violation of law related to Charter School’s operations 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**

VCMS shall notify the Charter Schools Division in writing of any citations or notices of workplace hazards, investigations by outside regulatory or investigative agencies, lawsuits, or other formal complaints, within one week of receipt of such notices by VCMS. Charter School shall also notify the CSD in writing of any internal investigations within one week of commencing investigation.

**TRANSFER OF STUDENT RECORDS**

When a student transfers for any reason from Charter School to any other school, Charter School shall transfer 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.

**Element 5 – Employee Qualifications**

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

VCMS 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 identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, 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.

**NCLB AND CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS**

VCMS 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 meet the requirements for employment set forth in California Education 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. Charter School shall maintain current copies of all teacher credentials and make them readily available for inspection.

**Element 6 – Health and Safety Procedures**

**Health, Safety and Emergency Plan**

VCMS shall have a comprehensive site-specific Health, Safety and Emergency Plan, including the acquisition and maintenance of adequate onsite emergency supplies, in place prior to beginning operation of the charter school. VCMS shall ensure that staff receives annual training on Charter School’s health, safety, and emergency procedures, and shall maintain a calendar for, and conduct, emergency response drills for students and staff. Charter School shall periodically review, and 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)**

VCMS, including its employees and officers, shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) at all times.

**Criminal Background Checks and Fingerprinting**

Charter School shall require all employees of Charter School, all volunteers who will be performing services that are not under the direct supervision of a Charter School employee, and any onsite independent contractors or vendors having unsupervised contact with students, to submit to criminal background checks and fingerprinting in accordance with state law. Charter School shall maintain on file and available for inspection evidence that Charter School has performed criminal background checks and cleared for employment all employees prior to employment, and documentation that independent contractors and vendors have conducted required criminal background checks for their employees prior to any unsupervised 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.

**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

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.

Element 7 – Means to Achieve Racial and Ethnic Balance

**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. \( \text{Ratio represents the percentage of Predominantly Hispanic Black Asian Other (PHBAO) compared to Other White (OW)} \). 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 its goals. 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 Instruction Improvement Grant (TIIG) for its Court-ordered Integration Program. The District retains sole discretion over the allocation of TIIG funding, where available, and cannot guarantee the availability of this funding.

**NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND-PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE (NCLB-PSC) TRAVELING STUDENTS**

The District and VCMS are committed to providing all students with quality educational alternatives in compliance with all federal and state laws, including students who are enrolled in schools of the District identified by the California Department of Education as in need of Program Improvement. No Child Left Behind-Public School Choice (“NCLB-PSC”) placement with charter schools is an alternative strongly encouraged by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (“NCLB”). VCMS agrees to discuss with the District the possibility of accepting for enrollment District
students participating in the District’s NCLB-PSC program. The parties agree to memorialize separately any agreed-to number of NCLB-PSC placements of District students at the charter school.

As required under NCLB, all NCLB-PSC students attending VCMS shall have the right to continue attending VCMS until the highest grade level of the charter. However, the obligation of the District to provide transportation for a NCLB-PSC student to VCMS shall end in the event the NCLB-PSC student’s resident District school exits Program Improvement status.

VCMS shall ensure that all of its NCLB-PSC students are treated in the same manner as other students attending Charter School. NCLB-PSC students are and will be eligible for all applicable instructional and extra-curricular activities at Charter School. VCMS shall make reasonable efforts to invite and encourage the participation of the parents of NCLB-PSC students in the activities and meetings at Charter School.

Determination of student eligibility for this NCLB-PSC option, including the grade level of eligibility, will be made solely by the District, based on the District’s NCLB-PSC process, guidelines, policies and the requirements of NCLB. In the event demand for places at VCMS under the NCLB-PSC program increases in subsequent years, VCMS agrees to discuss with the District the possibility of increasing the number of NCLB-PSC places available at Charter School.

**FEDERAL PROGRAM COMPLIANCE**

As a recipient of federal funds, including federal Title I, Part A funds, VCMS has agreed to meet all of the programmatic, fiscal and other regulatory requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) and other applicable federal grant programs. VCMS understands that it is a local educational agency (LEA) for purposes of federal compliance and reporting purposes. VCMS 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 parents at the beginning of each school year of their “right to know” the professional qualifications of their child’s classroom teacher including a timely notice to each individual parent 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

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

Element 8 – Admission Requirements

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 annual audit shall be conducted in compliance with the California Education Code 47605(b)(5)(l) 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**
**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 be responsible for the appropriate interim placement of students during and pending the completion of the 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, including a District representative, 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 Education Code sections 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

[NOTE: No District Required Language is being provided for inclusion in this element.]

Element 12 – Public School Attendance Alternatives

Pupils who choose not to attend VCMS may choose to attend other public schools in their district of residence or pursue an inter-district transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of the District.

Element 13 – Rights of District Employees

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 staff and governing board members of VCMS agree to resolve any claim, controversy or dispute arising out of or relating to the Charter agreement between the District and VCMS, 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 VCMS 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 shall be addressed as follows:
To Charter School: VCMS
       c/o School Director

To Director of Charter Schools: Charter Schools Division
       Los Angeles Unified School District
       333 South Beaudry Avenue, 20th Floor
       Los Angeles, California 90017

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 5:00 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.

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.

162
**Element 15 – Exclusive Public School Employer**

VCMS 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**

**REVOCATION OF THE CHARTER**

The District may revoke the Charter if VCMS 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 School Act of 1992. The District may revoke the charter of VCMS if the District finds, through a showing of substantial evidence, that Charter School did any of the following:

- VCMS committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the Charter.

- VCMS failed to meet or pursue any of the pupil outcomes identified in the Charter.

- VCMS failed to meet generally accepted accounting principles, or engaged in fiscal mismanagement.

- VCMS violated any provision of law.

Prior to revocation, and in accordance with Cal. Educ. Code section 47607(d) and state regulations, the LAUSD Board of Education will notify VCMS in writing of the specific violation, and give VCMS 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 Education Code section 47607.3.
**Closure Action**

The decision to close VCMS, either by the governing board of VCMS 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 VCMS votes to close Charter School; or the Charter lapses.

**Closure Procedures**

The procedures for charter school closure set forth below are guided by California Education Code sections 47604.32, 47605, and 47607 as well as California Code of Regulations, Title 5 (5 CCR), 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 VCMS, 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 VCMS or the LAUSD Board of Education, the governing board of VCMS shall immediately designate a person or persons responsible for conducting all closure procedures and activities, and determine how VCMS 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 CSD, if the Closing Action is an act of VCMS. Note: If the Closure Action is a revocation or nonrenewal by the LAUSD Board of Education, the charter school may omit this step.

10. Parents, guardians, and/or caretakers of all students currently enrolled in VCMS within 72 hours of the Closure Action. VCMS shall simultaneously provide a copy of the written parent notification to the CSD.

11. Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE). VCMS 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. VCMS 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, VCMS shall notify the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS), Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), 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). VCMS 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. VCMS 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. VCMS 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 and, legal guardians 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, and 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**

VCMS shall adhere to the following requirements regarding the transfer and maintenance of school and student records:

9. 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 shall occur within seven (7) calendar days of the effective date of closure.

10. 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.
11. Charter School shall prepare and provide an electronic master list of all students to the Charter Schools Division. 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 should also 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.

12. VCMS 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.

13. Charter School must update all student records in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) prior to closing.

14. 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.

15. Charter School shall ensure that all records are boxed and clearly labeled by classification of documents and the required duration of storage.

**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.

VCMS 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.

VCMS 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 VCMS will be the responsibility of VCMS and not LAUSD. VCMS understands and acknowledges that VCMS will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of VCMS. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source. VCMS 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 VCMS participates, and other categorical funds will be returned to the source of funds.

VCMS 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. The return of any donated materials and property according to any conditions set when the donations were accepted.

6. The return of any grant and restricted categorical funds to their source according to the terms of the grant or state and federal law.

7. The submission of final expenditure reports for any entitlement grants and the filing of Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as appropriate.

Net assets of the charter school may be transferred to the authorizing entity. 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.

VCMS shall retain sufficient staff, as deemed appropriate by the VCMS governing board to complete all necessary tasks and procedures required to close the school and transfer records in accordance with these closure procedures.

VCMS'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 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:

f. File all final federal, state, and local employer payroll tax returns and issue final W-2s and Form 1099s by the statutory deadlines.

g. File a Federal Notice of Discontinuance with the Department of Treasury (Treasury Form 63).

h. Make final federal tax payments (employee taxes, etc.)

i. File its final withholding tax return (Treasury Form 165).

j. 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 VCMS's right to operate as a charter school or cause VCMS to cease operation. VCMS and the District agree 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 shall have 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 LAUSD facilities as of the date of the submittal of this charter petition or takes occupancy of LAUSD facilities prior to the approval of this charter petition, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by LAUSD for the use of the LAUSD 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 LAUSD facilities, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by LAUSD for the use of LAUSD facilities prior to occupancy and commencing use.

Charter School agrees that occupancy and use of LAUSD facilities shall be in compliance with applicable laws and LAUSD policies for the operation and maintenance of LAUSD facilities and furnishings and equipment. All LAUSD facilities (i.e., schools) will remain subject to those laws applicable to public schools which LAUSD observes.

In the event of an emergency, all LAUSD 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 LAUSD facilities with other LAUSD user groups, Charter School agrees it will participate in and observe all LAUSD safety policies (e.g., emergency chain of information, participate in safety drills).

The use agreements provided by LAUSD for LAUSD 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 LAUSD 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. LAUSD shall have the right to inspect LAUSD facilities upon reasonable notice to Charter School.
• **Furnishings and Equipment:** LAUSD 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 LAUSD facilities by any person or entity other than Charter School shall be administered by LAUSD. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement in the use agreement.

• **Minimum Payments or Charges to be Paid to LAUSD Arising From the Facilities:**
  (iii) **Pro Rata Share:** LAUSD shall collect and Charter School shall pay a Pro Rata Share for facilities costs as provided in the Charter School 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 LAUSD agrees to allow Charter School to perform any of the operation and maintenance services, LAUSD shall have the right to inspect the LAUSD 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 LAUSD facilities with another user, LAUSD shall provide the operations and maintenance services for the LAUSD 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 LAUSD facilities, LAUSD shall allow Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, to provide some operations and maintenance services for the LAUSD facilities in accordance with applicable laws and LAUSD’s policies on operations and maintenance services for facilities and F&E. NOTWITHSTANDING THE FOREGOING, LAUSD shall provide all services for regulatory inspections which as the owner of the real property 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 those 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**

**Facility Status:** The charter petitioner must demonstrate control of a facility such as a commitment from the landlord, to ensure that the property is actually available to the charter developer, and that the facility is usable with or without conditions (such as a conditional code permit.) The charter school facility shall comply 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 the charter school is to be located, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Applicable codes and ADA requirements shall also apply to the construction, reconstruction, alteration of or addition to the proposed charter school facility. Charter School shall implement any corrective actions, orders to comply, or notices issued by the authorized building and safety agency. Charter School cannot exempt itself from applicable building and zoning codes, ordinances, and ADA requirements. Charter schools are required to adhere to the program accessibility requirements of Federal law (Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504).

**Occupancy of the Site:** The charter petitioner or developer shall provide the District with a final Certificate of Occupancy issued by the applicable permitting agency, allowing the petitioner to use and occupy the site. Charter School may not open without providing a copy of the Certificate of Occupancy for the designated use of the facility. If Charter School moves or expands to another facility during the term of this charter, Charter School shall provide a Certificate of Occupancy to the District for each facility before the school is scheduled to open or operate in the facility or facilities. 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.

**Pest Management:** Charter School shall comply with the Healthy Schools Act, California Education Code Section 17608, which details pest management requirements for schools. Developers may find additional information at: [www.laschools.org/employee/mo/ipm](http://www.laschools.org/employee/mo/ipm).

**Asbestos Management:** Charter School shall comply with the asbestos requirement as cited in the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), 40CFR 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 the Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles 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:

“The insurance afforded by this policy shall not be suspended, cancelled, reduced in coverage or limits or non-renewed except after thirty (30) days prior written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, has been given to the District.”

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 Education 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**
VCMS 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. EC 47612(b)

**Local Control and Accountability Plan**
In accordance with California Education Code §§ 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 EC § 47606.5(a). These expenditures shall be “classified using the California School Accounting Manual pursuant to Section 41010.” EC § 47606.5(b)