

**Los Ositos/Bruin Community School**

**K-12 Belmont Pilot School Proposal**

**UCLA-Assisted School Proposal Team**

**August 31, 2007**

I.	Introduction.....	2
II.	Overview of the Pilot School.....	3
III.	School Vision.....	6
IV.	Key Characteristics .....	10
V.	Pilot School Governance Structure.....	15
VI.	Budget.....	17
VII.	Curriculum and Instruction.....	18
VIII.	Student Assessment and Graduation Requirements .....	28
IX.	Leadership and Staff Selection .....	30
X.	Elect-to-Work Agreement.....	31
XI.	Professional Development and Support.....	33
XII.	Student Support.....	35
XIII.	Family and Community Engagement .....	36
XIV.	A Safe and Secure Campus.....	37
XV.	Design Team and Planning Process.....	38
XVI.	References.....	40
XVII.	Appendices .....	42

## I. Introduction

In the spring of 2006, UCLA partnered with Local District 4 of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA), and the Belmont Education Collaborative (BEC)—a grassroots coalition of community-based organizations—to study the feasibility of creating this UCLA-assisted school. Supported by a grant from UCLA’s Center for Community Partnerships, a study group was formed with representatives from across UCLA (including the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, the College of Letters and Sciences, and the Community Based Learning Program) and the partner organizations from BEC (including the United Teachers Los Angeles, LAUSD Local District 4, Belmont High School, Alliance for a Better Community, and the Central American Resource Center (CARECEN)). The study group collected data on university-assisted schools nationwide and developed a feasibility study (attached), which encouraged and informed university-wide deliberation about extending the mission of UCLA’s University Elementary School to serve middle and high school students in an urban, public school context.

As detailed in the feasibility study, everyone involved in the development of this school to date has been enthusiastic about the promise of a UCLA-assisted K-12 school—a site that will draw on the resources of a vast campus community. UCLA’s involvement will range from providing tutors, guest lecturers, mentors, and board members to welcoming Los Ositos students, parents, and teachers to campus to participate in a variety of learning experiences. UCLA’s social capital will help Los Ositos raise the extramural funding it will need to be successful. In addition, researchers across campus will be able to contribute to the knowledge generated at Los Ositos about effective teaching and learning practices.

UCLA also has much to gain from helping to create and sustain Los Ositos. Low-income students of color are woefully underrepresented across the University of California (UC), exacerbated by the passage of Proposition 209. As a site for innovation in college-preparatory education that serves predominantly low-income Latino students, Los Ositos will help UCLA understand and advocate for the K-12 conditions required to ensure equitable access to UC. The university also has much to learn about its own pedagogy and will benefit from the campus-wide deliberations about teaching and learning that Los Ositos is sure to inspire.

In June 2007, the study group created a smaller “proposal team” to prepare this document in response to the Belmont Pilot School RFP. Unlike other groups submitting proposals to the Belmont Pilot Schools Steering Committee, UCLA’s proposal team is not officially a design team. Developing the university’s commitment to establishing a UCLA-assisted pilot school has required 18 months of collaborative study, meetings with key stakeholders, and the creation of a UC-wide network of university-assisted schools (see attached policy brief.) In addition, this commitment-building process was punctuated by the uncertainty associated with a change in campus leadership. On August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007, UCLA welcomed a new Chancellor, Gene Block, who on August 6<sup>th</sup> approved the submission of this proposal to the Belmont Pilot School Steering Committee. As he

outlines in the attached letter of support, Chancellor Block views Los Ositos as a promising opportunity for engaged scholarship within the Pico Union community. He has reviewed this proposal, along with the feasibility study, and agreed to help create an official and inclusive design team if the proposal is approved.

Given this unique situation, we ask the Steering Committee to review our proposal as provisional. To be sure, our study and proposal teams have a clear vision of the kind of school that we would like to create—a vision that stems from decades of experience and research in schools. However, because we lack crucial representation from parents, students, community members, teachers, and other UCLA departments we offer this vision as a tentative portrait of what our school will look like. Again, we are committed to certain broad principles related to teaching and learning—principles that are aligned with the pilot school initiative—but we will wait until we have a more representative design team to determine the specifics of our proposal. Any lack of detail or specificity in this proposal should be seen as a reflection of our desire to ensure the representation of parents, students, community members, and teachers during the design phase.

## **II. Overview of the Pilot School**

UCLA proposes establishing “Los Ositos/Bruin Community School”<sup>1</sup> in 2009 as a K-12 university-assisted start-up pilot school, initially housed in an existing school facility and moved in 2010 to the Ambassador Learning Complex, the only K-12 site within the Belmont Zone of Choice, or another suitable K-12 facility. As a school that serves 520 students from Kindergarten to graduation, Los Ositos will minimize the critical transitions between elementary, middle, and high school and establish stable and long-term relationships with students and families. In addition to its K-12 configuration, Los Ositos will be unique as a community-based, learner-centered, university-assisted school—a school where many different people come together, driven by the nation’s long legacy of common schooling, to create a bi-lingual, bi-literate and multi-cultural site of learning for the next generation. We expect students who graduate from Los Ositos to enter the adult world as confident and capable human beings, prepared to succeed in college, pursue meaningful careers, and participate in our democracy. The adults that support these students will know them well and ensure that each engages in scholarship that is challenging and relevant to their lives.

A typical day in the life of a Los Ositos student will be filled with numerous opportunities for authentic, engaging, and personalized learning. Alejandra, a seven year old in the first multi-age Den, and her brother Francisco, an eighteen year old in Los Ositos’ Senior Institute, will have different yet similar experiences.

### **Alejandra**

Alejandra will arrive at school in the morning and join her 19 classmates on the rug in the center of her classroom. The class will be engaged in a whole group activity, during

---

<sup>1</sup> This name is only provisional and refers to UCLA’s bruin mascot. We understand that “los ositos” may be viewed as too juvenile for a school that serves high school students and we expect to engage the UCLA and Pico Union communities in establishing a permanent name for the school.

which all 20 students will have opportunities to participate. Some of Alejandra's classmates will be dramatizing a story about the water cycle that the class has recently read together, while others will be volunteering to hold the oversized book, turn the pages, and point to the words as the entire class reads along. After this whole group activity, the teacher will instruct the class to begin Reading Workshop. Without hesitation, students will grab their individual book bins and begin pairing up with their partners to read. Knowing the students well, the teacher will have paired Alejandra, who excels in reading, with Jessica, a younger student who is struggling. As the students read to each other, the teacher will be making her way around the classroom to assess individual students. When she sits down with Alejandra, she will take notes on her reading behaviors to inform her subsequent instruction. Once Reading Workshop is finished, students will transition to Writing Workshop with a whole-group mini-lesson on specific writing conventions. Some students will then write in their interactive journals, others will write short stories, while still others will write letters to friends or family members. Alejandra will write a poem about the rain. While students are busy writing, the teacher will circulate and hold individual writing conferences with students who are ready to begin editing their work. Before transitioning to recess, the teacher will gather the class on the rug again for another read-aloud.

After recess, Alejandra and her classmates will join the teacher in adding to the ongoing graph of daily weather. After singing the "What's the weather like today?" song as a whole group, they will document today's weather on the graph and briefly discuss any patterns that they're beginning to notice. After this short introduction and a quick mini-lesson on graphing, Alejandra and her classmates will join the 20 students from the adjoining Den I class for a combined math activity. In pairs, students will interview other pairs of students to find out what their favorite kind of weather is. Students will record this information and compile it in the form of a graph. After lunch, Alejandra and her classmates will transition to science instruction. Like literacy and math, science will integrate various other content areas around the thematic unit. The teacher will provide a short mini-lesson on evaporation, before sending the students out onto the playground to begin their scientific research on weather conditions. Armed with a notepad and writing utensils, students will work in pairs to document current weather conditions. Undergraduate science students from UCLA will join these pairs of students as they discuss their observations with each other and then draw what they see in their notepads. The undergrads will encourage the students to attend to certain aspects of what they're observing as a way of connecting their observations to the science content standards. Science time will merge seamlessly with social studies as Alejandra's mother—a special visitor to the class that day—is invited to talk to the class about weather conditions here and in her native Mexico. She will emphasize the ways that people adapt to weather conditions in Mexico, comparing those adaptations to the ways that people adapt to the weather in the local community. This talk will serve as the introduction to a week-long activity that involves students in researching the impact of weather on the local community.

In the final hour of the school day, visiting artists from the local community and UCLA's Department of Art will co-teach a mini-lesson on painting before helping students with

their individual art projects related to the weather. This semester, the visiting artists are working with students in Den I each week to produce a school mural on the water cycle. Closing the art project that day, the teacher will reconvene the whole class to engage in interactive writing. As a whole group, students will collaborate to generate words and sentences that will be posted on the mural. Alejandra will leave class anxious to tell her brother Francisco about all the exciting and interesting things that she has done.

### **Francisco**

Meanwhile, Francisco will be engaged in a personalized learning experience of his own. After dropping Alejandra off at the entrance to Los Ositos in the morning, Francisco will make his way to a local music recording studio where he is currently serving as a student intern. Prior to choosing the recording studio as the site for his Senior Institute Internship, Francisco was exposed to numerous options. As part of the school's commitment to "real-world" intern-based learning, Los Ositos gave Francisco and his classmates the chance to participate in several informational interviews and "shadow days," at UCLA and in the community, during which they were able to explore possible internship opportunities and sites. Francisco's love of music and interest in sound engineering make the recording studio the ideal location for his senior year internship.

Francisco's day will be filled with hands-on experience and real-world problems associated with sound engineering and music recording. Two days a week, Francisco will work closely with his mentor, Javier, an experienced sound engineer at the recording studio. Today, his tasks will involve helping Javier with a somewhat difficult project. A Latin American musician who recently recorded an album at the studio has complained about the quality of the final mix. Javier has been asked to re-master the recording within 48 hours, so Francisco will go along for the ride. The pressure of meeting real-world deadlines will provide a tremendous learning experience for Francisco. He will help Javier reduce noise, maximize volume levels, and ensure a consistent balance of frequencies on the recording. When he returns to Los Ositos for the remaining three days of the school week, Francisco will share his experience as a guest lecturer in Division III's applied lab science course on physics and engineering and work closely with his Advisor to prepare his final exhibition project on the math and science involved in mastering audio recordings. He will also work closely with his Language Arts teacher and a few classmates to compose a formal letter of apology that Javier can present to the musician and his management team.

All of Francisco's teachers work together to help him master core competencies and habits of mind across the curriculum and apply these to the real-world issues that he is confronting through his internship. They have known Francisco and his family for many years, helping them craft an Individual Learning Plan that builds on Francisco's strengths and prepares him for the future of his choice. His learning over time is captured in a K-12 electronic portfolio of projects and achievements. After he attends to the sound studio deadline that week, Francisco must turn his attention to his Senior Community Project--recording and mastering a CD of the Los Ositos choir's winter concert performance at UCLA's Schoenberg Hall. Francisco also plans to include this project in a portfolio that he is preparing for a Bachelor of Science program in sound engineering at the University

of Michigan. When Francisco's day at the recording studio is done, he'll return to Los Ositos to pick up Alejandra and tell her about all that he's done.

### **III. School Vision**

Los Ositos is a community-based, learner-centered, university-assisted school—a school where many different people come together, driven by the nation's long legacy of common schooling, to create a place of learning for the next generation. We expect students who graduate from Los Ositos to enter the adult world as confident and capable human beings, prepared to succeed in college, pursue meaningful careers, and participate in our democracy. The adults that support these students will know them well and ensure that each engages in scholarship that is challenging and relevant to their lives.

Three philosophical cornerstones ground this vision:

#### **1. COMMUNITY-BASED: Schools should be community-based spaces that draw on and coordinate existing community resources and strengths in order to promote student learning and well-being.**

As a community-based school, Los Ositos will draw on the wealth and diversity of resources in the Pico Union community to promote learning and well-being for all students. To begin with, this will mean viewing the cultural and linguistic diversity of the community as a resource for teaching and learning. For this reason, Los Ositos will be a bi-lingual (Spanish and English), bi-literate, and multi-cultural school. Although the school will serve a predominantly Latino student population, we recognize that students will come from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. We also know that there is a high rate of turnover within this community, with many families traveling back and forth to Mexico, Central America, and other countries. As such, Los Ositos will be prepared to transition families in and out of the school in ways that support students' learning over time.

The school will institutionalize processes and structures for researching students' and families' *funds of knowledge* (Amanti, C., Gonzalez, G., & Moll, L., 2005) and incorporating them into the school's curriculum. Teachers, administrators, and all other school staff will be informed by an *additive* orientation that emphasizes recognizing and building on the knowledge and skills that students bring to the classroom. Furthermore, every effort will be made to explicitly communicate to students the value and worth of their families cultural and linguistic practices. Parents and other family members will regularly be invited to share their knowledge and expertise as they relate to topics of study at Los Ositos.

In addition to building on the community's cultural and linguistic diversity, Los Ositos will identify and draw on human and material resources in the community. Students at Los Ositos will learn about the various community-based organizations and service centers in their area. By interacting with representatives from these community-based organizations, students will develop an understanding of how these organizations meet

local needs. Beyond simply communicating to students that there are valuable resources in their community, Los Ositos will provide students with internships, field trips, and other opportunities to experience this community work firsthand. The school will also coordinate specific community resources and services to better meet the needs of its students and their families. In addition to relying on resources from UCLA, Los Ositos will also engage local organizations and service providers in partnerships at the school site. Possible partnerships might include coordinating counseling, dental, financial, immigration, legal, and medical services for students and families. One of the goals of these types of partnerships is for students and families to come to see Los Ositos as a place where the community is actively engaged in meeting its own needs. Ideally, students will learn to see themselves as active members of the community that can begin to give back in meaningful and powerful ways.

Despite persistent patterns of residential segregation throughout Los Angeles, and the long and noble struggle for integrated public schools, Los Ositos will enroll students from the local, predominantly Latino neighborhood of Pico Union, in accordance with the Belmont Zone of Choice admissions policies and procedures. To be sure, a tension exists between the goals of promoting racial/ethnic integration and establishing high-quality public schools in segregated communities. In light of the Supreme Court's recent rulings on voluntary desegregation, which acknowledge the importance of racial diversity in schools while limiting how school districts can achieve integration, the need to promote racial integration has never been greater. However, given the unique demographic context in LAUSD—where students of color represent over 90% of the district's total student enrollment—and the history of unequal schooling in the Pico Union community, the need to provide local students with a high-quality education is more urgent than the need to promote integration. Los Ositos will proudly participate in the larger Belmont Zone of Choice and Pilot School Network—community-based reforms intended to respect and build upon the strengths of Pico Union students and families.

**2. LEARNER-CENTERED: Schools should be learner-centered, focused on the experiences and relationships that enable individuals to construct knowledge and solve problems together.**

This statement captures our philosophy of education and is rooted in the latest research on learning. We believe that the current “factory model” of schooling impedes learning through rigid course sequences, time use patterns, huge student loads and other depersonalizing structures. Learning, at its core, is social and depends on the quality of experiences and relationships that are established at the school. As a small, personalized school, Los Ositos will privilege the needs of learners and always question whether school structures are supporting these needs or catering to the competing needs of institutions—to maintain the status quo, sort and stratify individuals, standardize and control behavior, and so on.

For example, Los Ositos will develop UC-approved alternatives to the A-G college prep course sequence—a structure that compartmentalizes learning into 15 courses to ensure faculty at the University of California that students have “attained a body of general

knowledge that will provide breadth and perspective to new, more advanced study.” (UC A-G Guide, <http://www.ucop.edu/a-gGuide/ag/a-g/welcome.html>) Although the A-G pattern of courses serves a valuable function statewide in pressing schools to ensure all their students meet the same high standard (e.g., LAUSD’s recent Board decision to make A-G the default high school curriculum), the pattern itself often becomes the end instead of the means—with students marching through a prescribed curriculum and series of tests that are more focused on the credentialing function of schools than the needs of learners. For this reason, Los Ositos will develop rigorous learner-centered alternatives to select A-G courses that will situate learning in more meaningful contexts (e.g., internships, projects, or service opportunities) and support this learning through relationships with teachers, students, and other members of the community.

As a learner-centered school, Los Ositos will be organized to support the learning of all of its members—teachers, staff, administrators, parents, community members as well as students. Again, this will mean questioning whether school structures serve the needs of these learners. For example, traditional school practices such as the six-period day will give way in order to provide flexible blocks of time for student learning and also facilitate teachers’ common planning time. The annual 20-minute parent conference will be replaced by more meaningful and sustained interactions that enable parents to learn and engage in the life of the school.

This educational philosophy is variously defined as progressivism, constructivism, or child-centered—labels that worry some people who think challenging the traditional structure of schooling means giving up rigorous learning. To this criticism, Los Ositos will carefully document the quality of student and adult learning, using multiple, performance-based measures at every level of schooling—assembled in electronic portfolios and structured by Individual Learning Plans. By graduation, these measures will include college-going rates along with an assessment of academic, work readiness and civic participation skills.

As a learner-centered school, Los Ositos will join the Coalition of Essential Schools—a national organization that has for more than 20 years led the movement to transform schooling to meet the needs of learners. Guided by the Coalition’s Ten Common Principles, Los Ositos will work to enact a widely shared set of beliefs about the purpose and practice of schooling:

1. Learning to use one's mind well
2. Less is more, depth over coverage
3. Goals apply to all students
4. Personalization
5. Student-as-worker, teacher-as-coach
6. Demonstration of mastery
7. A tone of decency and trust
8. Commitment to the entire school
9. Resources dedicated to teaching and learning
10. Democracy and equity

These common principles align with Los Ositos' vision and philosophy and will serve to situate the school in a larger and supportive national context.

**3. UNIVERSITY-ASSISTED: Public universities have a moral obligation to promote educational equity and excellence through *engaged scholarship* in K-12 public schools.**

As a university-assisted school, Los Ositos will embody UCLA's commitment to equity and excellence in education. Founded in the 1860s as a land grant institution, the University of California has more than 150 years of experience serving the state's public. Through its active involvement in public school partnerships, the university has strengthened the expertise of teachers and the academic achievement of students in communities throughout California. "Lab schools" such as UCLA's Corinne A. Seeds University Elementary School—founded in 1882 and named after a student of John Dewey's—have served as important sites of research, teaching, and service. Now, more than a century later, research universities across the nation are creating a new generation of K-12 schools. Seeking to redefine their commitment to public service, these campuses are developing novel ways of engaging with schools.

Within the University of California, university-assisted schools have been established by three campuses: San Diego, Berkeley, and Davis. Preuss School UCSD has consistently been ranked as one of the top public high schools in San Diego County. For three consecutive years, 100% of Preuss graduates have gone on to attend college (with most attending four-year universities). Berkeley established its school, the California College Preparatory Academy or CAL Prep in 2005 within the Oakland Unified School District and will graduate its first cohort in 2011. UC Davis is about to launch its school, West Sacramento Early College Preparatory, this fall within the Washington Unified School District. The "Los Ositos" team at UCLA has participated with these campuses in developing the UC-Network of University-Assisted Schools to further support such ventures throughout the state and nation.

These UC-assisted schools are part of a larger national trend. Building on the legacy of its historic Laboratory School—founded by John Dewey in 1896—the University of Chicago recently created a set of three charter schools to serve low-income students of color on Chicago's south side. The University of Pennsylvania's "Penn Alexander" K-8 public school is another example of a major research university's significant and long-term commitment to public school improvement through engaged scholarship. Stanford University has also established a charter school, East Palo Alto Academy, in an underserved community near its campus, and Arizona State University is in the process of creating a "University Public School Network." The national Early College High School Initiative has provided support to many of these university-assisted schools. Engaging a broad spectrum of universities and colleges, this Initiative has partnered with local districts in 23 states to create 125 small high schools to date that engage all students in rigorous college-prep coursework.

University-assisted schools are no longer simply a training ground for new teachers and educational methods. Instead, they are characterized by a focus on *engaged scholarship*, which combines an emphasis on research with a broader commitment to using universities' resources for the improvement of public education, particularly for students who have been historically underserved. In turn, the resources of LAUSD will help to shape education at the university level. For example, we hope to see pedagogy at the university influenced by the innovative models of teaching and learning developed at Los Ositos. Extending the legacy of UCLA's on-campus and independent University Elementary School, Los Ositos will be a vital off-campus site for teaching, service and research on a range of social, political, economic, and educational issues related to the renewal of urban communities. UCLA faculty, staff, and students will participate at Los Ositos in a variety of roles, including mentors, instructors, tutors, learners and researchers. Importantly, UCLA and Los Ositos will be partners, learning valuable lessons from one another through a common commitment to engaged scholarship.

#### **IV. Key Characteristics**

##### School Structures

Essential to a learner-centered school, Los Ositos will be organized to facilitate strong and trusting relationships among all members of the school community. As a K-12 school, Los Ositos will minimize the critical transitions from elementary to middle to high school—transitions that derail many students and promote dropping out (Alsbaugh, 1998; Howley, 2002; Seidman, et al., 1994; Wren, 2003). Los Ositos will be organized into a Lower School of three multi-aged “Dens” and an Upper School of three multi-aged “Divisions” in addition to a Senior Institute. Students will remain in a Den or Division for two years in order to establish relationships with a team of teachers as well as students of other ages.

The school calendar will follow the traditional LAUSD calendar, with the same breaks and holidays, but the school day will extend from 8am to 3pm for both students and teachers and include three weeks of professional development during the summer for teachers. Dens and Divisions will include 80 students and an interdisciplinary teaching team of four core teachers in order to facilitate an integrated, learner-centered environment. The Senior Institute will be co-taught by two core teachers who will mentor a group of 40 students through a series of culminating intern-based learning experiences, including a community-based Senior Project. A team of teachers in Wellness/Physical Education, Visual and Performing Arts, Special Education, and Information Technology will complement the core teams in order to enrich and extend learning for all students. To further support learning beyond the school, Los Ositos will have a UCLA & Community Liaison who facilitates internships and activities on the university campus and within the community. In addition, a principal will lead the school, based on a model of distributive leadership and supported by an administrative coordinator. The following table summarizes these key characteristics:

School Structure	Typical Age/Grade Range	# Students	# Adults	Adult Job Titles
Den I	5-7 / K-1	80	4	4 Elementary Teachers
Den II	7-9 / 2-3	80	4	4 Elementary Teachers
Den III	9-11 / 4-5	80	4	4 Elementary Teachers
Totals for Lower School	5-11 / K-5	240	12	
Division I	11-13 / 6-7	80	4	1 Math Teacher 1 Science Teacher 1 History/Social Science Teacher 1 English Teacher
Division II	13-15 / 8-9	80	4	1 Math Teacher 1 Science Teacher 1 History/Social Science Teacher 1 English Teacher
Division III	15-17 / 10-11	80	4	1 Math Teacher 1 Science Teacher 1 History/Social Science Teacher 1 English Teacher
Senior Institute	17-18 / 12	40	2	1 Math/Science Teacher 1 Humanities Teacher
Totals for Upper School	11-18 / 6-12	280	14	
School-wide	All ages	520	7	2 Wellness & Physical Education Teachers 2 Visual & Performing Arts Teachers 2 Special Education Teachers 1 Library/Technology Teacher 1 UCLA & Community Liaison 1 Principal 1 Administrative Coordinator
K-12 Totals		520	34	

#### Lower School Instructional Organization

The first three Dens will be organized as collaborative units of four teachers and 80 students. Most of the time, students will be grouped into classes of 20 students and one teacher, yet the Den structure is intended to promote alternative groupings as needed to meet the learning needs of students and encourage Den and school-wide collaboration. The Den Program has a 7 hour student day length that may be extended until 5pm to accommodate working parents. The time spent on daily integrated core academics is 4 hours. Students also participate in three two-week thematic enrichment units each year.

These units are teacher-developed—driven by their own passions—intensive learning experiences that include many Den-wide and school-wide activities. Den students may also elect to extend their school day by participating in two-hour after-school clubs sponsored by the university and/or community organizations. These clubs might include: choir, musical ensemble, sports teams, chess club, Girls & Boy Scouts, Ballet Folklorico, Double Dutch teams, book clubs, L.A.’s BEST, Champions, etc. Parents and community members will be recruited to create and lead after-school clubs.

*Lower School Calendar:*

Weeks 1 – 12	12 weeks	Regular Instructional Schedule
Weeks 13 – 14	2 weeks	School-wide Thematic Unit
Weeks 15 – 17	3 weeks	Winter Break
Weeks 18 – 29	12 weeks	Regular Schedule
Weeks 30 – 31	2 weeks	School-wide Thematic Unit
Weeks 32 – 33	2 weeks	Spring Break
Weeks 34 – 41	9 weeks	Regular Schedule
Weeks 42 - 43	2 weeks	School-wide Thematic Unit
Weeks 44 – 52	9 weeks	Summer Break for Students
Week 44	1 week	Professional Development for Staff
Weeks 45 - 50	6 weeks	Summer Break for Staff
Weeks 50 – 52	2 weeks	Professional Development for Staff

The Lower School regular daily instructional schedule will be as follows:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30 am	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
8:00am	Phys. Ed.				
9:00 am	Integrated Language Arts				
11:00 am	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
11:30 am	Integrated Curriculum I	Integrated Curriculum II	Integrated Curriculum I	Integrated Curriculum II	Integrated Curriculum II
12:30 pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:00 pm	Integrated Curriculum II	Integrated Curriculum II	Integrated Curriculum II	Integrated Curriculum II	Faculty Collaboration Time  * early dismissal for students
2:00 pm	Independent Reading	Independent Reading	Independent Reading	Independent Reading	
2:30 pm	Visual/Performing Arts	Visual/Performing Arts	Visual/Performing Arts	Visual/Performing Arts	
3-5:00 pm	After School Clubs				

The daily schedule during two-week thematic units will be determined by the content and instructional activities, but will typically replace the above schedule. Den teachers will meet once per week to share content knowledge and strategies, design curriculum and share instructional practices that support the school's interdisciplinary, multi-aged approach to teaching and learning. Den teachers will also be part of whole-school Content-based Teams to develop curriculum coherence within each content area from Den to Den, Division to Division.

#### Upper School Instructional Organization

The Upper School will be organized as three collaborative Divisions of four teachers and 80 students and a Senior Institute of two teachers and 40 students. In addition, the Upper School faculty will work closely with specialist teachers to integrate visual and performing arts, physical education and wellness, and special education into the core curriculum. The day will be structured by a block schedule<sup>2</sup> that permits maximal flexibility for teachers to plan and implement interdisciplinary courses as well as more traditional offerings. Each day will begin and end with an advisory period to encourage a sense of family and community, as described in Section XII. On Wednesdays, the school will run on an alternative schedule that supports additional flexibility to permit whole Division or school activities, field trips, and internships as well as independent academic time for teachers to work with smaller groups of students and for students to work independently. Students will be dismissed early on Wednesdays in order to give the entire Upper School faculty common planning time. After school, students will have access to a wide range of school activities to extend their school day until 5:00pm.

---

<sup>2</sup> This schedule was adapted from the Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School in Devon, Massachusetts; <http://www.ceschangelab.org/cs/clpub/view/ctr/896>, retrieved on 8/21/07.

*Upper School Daily Schedule (MST=Math, Science, Technology; LASS=Language Arts/Social Studies; A/W=Arts and Wellness)*

	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>
7:30	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
8:00-8:15	Advisory	Advisory	Whole School Gathering	Advisory	Advisory
8:15	Passing	Passing	Passing Time	Passing	Passing
8:20-9:35	<u>Block 1.1</u> MST A/W	<u>Block 2.1</u> LASS A/W	8:50-9:50 Flexible Time	<u>Block 3.1</u> LASS MST	<u>Block 1.1</u> MST A/W
9:40-10:15	<u>Block 1.2</u> MST A/W	<u>Block 2.2</u> LASS A/W	9:55-10:50 Flexible Time	<u>Block 3.2</u> LASS MST	<u>Block 1.2</u> MST A/W
10:15-10:25	All School Break	All School Break	10:50-11:00 All School Break	All School Break	All School Break
10:25-11:20	<u>Block 2.1</u> LASS A/W	<u>Block 3.1</u> LASS MST	11:00-11:55 Flexible Time	<u>Block 1.1</u> MST A/W	<u>Block 2.1</u> LASS A/W
11:25-12:20	<u>Block 2.2</u> LASS A/W	<u>Block 3.2</u> LASS MST	12:00-12:30 Lunch	<u>Block 1.2</u> MST A/W	<u>Block 2.2</u> LASS A/W
12:20	Lunch	Lunch	12:30-1:30 Advisory	Lunch	Lunch
12:50-1:45	<u>Block 3.1</u> LASS MST	<u>Block 1.1</u> MST A/W		<u>Block 2.1</u> LASS A/W	<u>Block 3.1</u> LASS MST
1:50-2:45	<u>Block 3.2</u> LASS MST	<u>Block 1.2</u> MST A/W		<u>Block 2.2</u> LASS A/W	<u>Block 3.2</u> LASS MST
2:45	Passing	Passing		Passing	Passing
2:50-3:00	Advisory	Advisory		Advisory	Advisory
3-5:00	After School Clubs, Productions, Athletics				

### Growth and Rollout

The school will open in 2009 with a total of 160 students, 80 in the first Den and 80 in Division I, and add 80 students a year until the school is fully enrolled in 2015. The rollout will proceed according to the following timetable:

	Lower School	Upper School	Total School Enrollment
2009-10 (temporary site)	Den I (80 students)	Division I (80 students)	160
2010-11 (move to Ambassador site)	Den I (80 students) Den II (40 students)	Division I (80 students) Division II (40 students)	240
2011-12	Den I (80 students) Den II (80 students)	Division I (80 students) Division II (80 students)	320
2012-13	Den I (80 students) Den II (80 students) Den III (40 students)	Division I (80 students) Division II (80 students) Division III (40 students)	400
2013-14	Den I (80 students) Den II (80 students) Den III (80 students)	Division I (80 students) Division II (80 students) Division III (80 students)	480
2014-15	Den I (80 students) Den II (80 students) Den III (80 students)	Division I (80 students) Division II (80 students) Division III (80 students) Senior Institute (40 students)	520

### **V. Pilot School Governance Structure**

As a Pilot School, Los Ositos will be able to govern itself—ensuring that those closest to students (teachers, leaders, and parents) have sufficient autonomy to determine the school’s daily operation, hiring, budget, and so on. Without this guarantee of local control, it is unlikely UCLA would be interested in establishing Los Ositos. Most university-assisted schools throughout the nation have chosen to become charter schools in order to secure professional autonomy. UCLA believes that pilot school autonomy has many advantages over charter school autonomy. First and foremost, Los Ositos will be embedded within a powerful network of like-minded educators and community activists working together to improve schools within a neighborhood Zone of Choice. Los Ositos will not stand alone, but instead alongside other innovative pilot schools and Small Learning Communities who share our commitment to common schools.

Los Ositos will be founded on a model of distributive leadership and several groups will contribute to the shared decision-making at Los Ositos:

1. Governing Board – The primary purpose of the governing board will be to maintain the mission of Los Ositos. The board will include the Principal, Lower and Upper School Instructional Leaders, several university representatives, community partners, business leaders, family representatives, and upper division students. The board will oversee school progress, hiring, Principal evaluation, the budget, school policies, and the election-to-work agreement. To avoid conflicts of interest at the school site, the chairperson of the Board will be selected from among the community and UCLA representatives. The governing board will meet monthly.
2. Leadership Team –The Leadership Team will collect and use data to inform and coordinate the operational and instructional decision-making at Los Ositos. Comprised of administrators, teachers, UCLA and community partners, parents and students, the Leadership Team will meet every two weeks to communicate about school issues, analyze data and make recommendations for program improvement.
3. Interdisciplinary Academic Teams – Interdisciplinary Academic Teams will meet weekly to share content knowledge and strategies, design curriculum and share instructional practices that support the school’s interdisciplinary, multi-aged approach to teaching and learning. The IATs will make recommendations to the Leadership Team for school-wide changes in curriculum and instruction based on their collaborative work. IATs will share their work at full faculty meetings and retreats to create a sense of community and improve schoolwide instruction.
4. Content-based Team – Content-based teams will meet weekly to develop curriculum coherence within content area from Den to Den, Division to Division. CBTs will research and identify best practices within the content area and support content area pedagogy schoolwide. The CBTs will make recommendations to the Leadership Team for school-wide changes in curriculum and instruction based on their collaborative work. CBTs will share their work at full faculty meetings and retreats to create a sense of community and improve schoolwide instruction.
5. Critical Friends Group – Made up of 4 – 6 teachers across Dens and Divisions, Critical Friends Groups will provide peer support through classroom walk-throughs, lesson study, and structured discussions about improving classroom practice.
6. Full Faculty – The full faculty will meet one per month and have two retreats per year to work together to support teaching and learning. Full faculty meetings will provide shared leadership and decision making groups to communicate their collaborative work with the full staff, and creates a space for the entire faculty to makes decisions on whole-school related issues.

7. Student Council – The Den Council and the Division Council will meet every week with an Advisor to develop and plan student activities.
8. Parent Council – In collaboration with the UCLA Parent Project, the Parent Council will create and implement parent leadership, parent involvement, and parent education at Los Ositos. The Parent Council will meet every other week.

## **VI. Budget**

Budgetary decisions at Los Ositos will be directly driven by the school's vision of teaching and learning. Pilot school autonomy over funding will ensure that per pupil state and district funds are spent on programs, resources, and services that are most likely to benefit students and families. Teachers and parents, along with other members of the governing board, will determine how resources are allocated to best meet students' needs. The school's budget will be monitored and reviewed by the governing board on a regular basis to ensure financial stability and student success. The governing board will submit regular budget reports as a way of informing parents, teachers, and other community members. While the exact details of the budget will need to be determined by the Design Team, the principles elaborated in our school vision will inform all budgetary decisions. Given that high-quality teaching is a priority for us, the bulk of our funding will be devoted to securing, supporting, and retaining highly competent adults who will promote student learning.

Needless to say, we will not be able to realize our vision of high-quality schooling if we rely solely on per pupil state funding. Despite the fact that California already spends roughly half its budget—about \$54 billion—on education, its system of school finance is widely considered both inadequate and flawed. In March 2007, Stanford University researchers (Loeb, Bryk, & Hanushek, 2007) released the results of the 18-month *Getting Down to Facts Project* on school finance and governance in California, bringing together scholars from 32 institutions, including UCLA, with diverse expertise and policy orientations. Among the many findings, researchers determined that California schools are woefully underfunded and inequitable. Per pupil funding is below the national average, which is reflected in low staff-to-student ratios (including fewer teachers and administrators per pupil). Also, in spite of a decades-old school finance equalization plan, there are substantial differences in spending across districts, with some districts outspending others by as much as \$3,000 per student. In addition, the state's finance system is highly centralized, complex, and irrational, as well as laden with confusing categorical programs and costly compliance work that constrain the local allocation of resources and thus prevent teachers and administrators from meeting students' immediate needs.

In terms of the impact of these funding problems on California's lagging student achievement gains, one study concluded that schools would require 53-71% more funding to meet No Child Left Behind goals for 2011-12, and another determined that schools would need about 40% more funding to meet the state goal of 800 on the Academic Performance Index (API). Overall, however, the researchers emphasize that

“asking the question, ‘how much money will it cost to achieve state goals for students?’ is meaningless without also asking ‘how can we develop a system that makes better use of whatever resources are available?’” (Loeb, Bryk, & Hanushek, 2007, p. 62). Central to developing such a system, they argue, is allowing more local control over resource allocation.

Los Ositos will respond to these recommendations by developing a funding model that is transparent, decentralized, and accountable. In order to address the issue of underfunding, Los Ositos will secure additional funds to lower class size and support the professional development and retention of highly qualified educators. Although a more thorough financial analysis of these needed additional funds will have to be conducted once the specific school design is developed, the supplementary funding of other university-assisted schools provides some guidelines.

<i>School</i>	<i>Supplementary funding sources and estimates</i>
UCSD/Preuss School	State budget and university each contribute \$500,000/year
UC Berkeley/Cal Prep	Estimated annual fundraising is between \$1,500-\$2,000/student
University of Chicago Charter Schools	University contributes between \$160,000-180,000 per year Additional fundraising through foundations
University of Pennsylvania/ Penn Alexander School	University contributes \$1,000/student Additional fundraising through foundations

Based on the experience of these schools, we estimate that a 520-student K-12 campus will require approximately \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 (roughly \$1,000-\$2,000 per student) in supplementary funds per year. As with all high-quality public schools in California, these funds will have to be raised from a variety of sources, including private donors, parents, foundations, and other government agencies.

## **VII. Curriculum and Instruction**

### **1. Instructional Philosophy and Graduation Expectations**

Los Ositos will prepare its graduates to succeed in college, pursue meaningful careers, and participate in our democracy. To reach this end, students will learn how to use their minds well by developing Habits of Mind that will serve them throughout life. Students will also gain mastery in Core Competencies or disciplines of knowledge in order to navigate the world ahead of them. Whenever possible, learning will extend beyond disciplinary conventions to focus on the social and cultural construction of knowledge. Below, we list the habits of mind we will expect Los Ositos graduates to internalize and the core competencies we will expect them to master. In Section VIII, we detail the performance standards and assessments associated with these graduation requirements.

### **Los Ositos Habits of Mind**

1. The Habit of *Perspective*: The ability to address questions from multiple viewpoints and to use a variety of ways to solve problems.

2. The Habit of *Evidence*: The ability to bring together relevant information, to judge the credibility of sources, to find out for oneself.
3. The Habit of *Connection*: The ability to look for patterns and ways that things fit together in order to utilize diverse material to form new solutions.
4. The Habit of *Convention*: The ability to acknowledge accepted standards in any area in order to be understood and to understand others.
5. The Habit of *Communication*: The ability to speak, listen, and write with confidence and compassion.
6. The Habit of *Service*: The ability to recognize the effects of one's actions upon others, coupled with the desire to make the community a better place for all.

### **Los Ositos Core Competencies**

1. *Literature and Language Arts*: Students will demonstrate mastery of literature and language in both English and Spanish.
2. *Social Studies*: Students will demonstrate mastery of sociological, philosophical and historical concepts.
3. *Mathematics*: Students will demonstrate mastery of mathematical concepts, calculations, and the history of the discipline.
4. *Science and Technology*: Students will demonstrate mastery of scientific and technological concepts, experiments, and the history of the disciplines.
5. *Arts*: Students will demonstrate mastery in one of the visual or performing arts.
6. *Physical Education and Wellness*: Students will demonstrate mastery over their own physical health and well being.

Los Ositos will ensure that students internalize these habits of mind and master these core competencies through an instructional program that is community-based, learner-centered, and university-assisted. The school will be a bilingual, biliterate, and multi-cultural learning environment where individual and collaborative inquiry are supported and encouraged, and where students can feel confident trying new ideas, negotiating with one another, stretching their thinking, and reflecting. Students will be active learners and engage in a variety of learning experiences including projects, internships, seminars, experiments, and so on. By posing questions, gathering information, analyzing data and going back to refine their questions for further research, students will develop important critical thinking skills. Moreover, learning at Los Ositos will extend beyond the classroom into both the community and the UCLA campus—both rich contexts for developing students' passions and competencies. These approaches, like all teaching methods used at Los Ositos, will be research-based and continually assessed and refined.

In what follows, we describe the Los Ositos curriculum in more depth, structured by the following five sections:

- Community-based Curriculum
- Meeting the Needs of All Learners
- School-wide Approach to Literacy and Numeracy
- Lower School Curriculum
- Upper School Curriculum

## 2. Community-based Curriculum

The Habits of Mind will guide Los Ositos' commitment to a culturally-relevant, community-based instructional program. Student perspectives, voices and heritages will be heard and represented throughout the curriculum in the forms of authentic cultural data, literature, music, art, artifacts, primary source materials, and cultural history. Students will study about history, literature, and the humanities from the perspectives of different groups of people and are challenged to address the conflicting interpretations, resulting in a more complex worldview. Together, teachers and students will generate and use culturally relevant representations, images, metaphors and examples to give meaning and depth to the curriculum. For example, a Division One social studies unit on the Constitution will demonstrate inclusiveness by addressing the rights of people of color, women, and others to vote. Students will examine the reasons for change and the ways the issue might look to different groups, take on the roles of people with different perspectives, and to address the ways all people are entitled to certain rights and responsibilities in a democracy. Within such a unit, there will be many opportunities for students to generate their own historical or contemporary examples of voting and representation issues.

In order for the students at Los Ositos to be engaged citizens, it is important that they have opportunities to connect what they learn in school with the world around them. For this reason, Los Ositos' curriculum will extend to learning opportunities beyond the school that capture the rich history and accomplishments of the Pico Union neighborhood and the city of Los Angeles. Through partnerships with community-based organizations, Lower School students like Alejandra will regularly visit sites such as CARECEN and Inner City Arts and these experiences will be woven into the core academic curriculum, not marginalized as special events but viewed as key components in students' mastery of content knowledge. In the Upper School, as detailed further below, students like Francisco will learn through internships in community-based organizations that will give them first-hand experience with and understanding of the cultural assets of their community.

The curriculum will also extend to a variety of learning opportunities on the UCLA campus. As detailed below, Upper School students will serve as interns on campus—in labs, programs or departments—to learn about a variety of careers and content areas first-hand. Students of all ages will also visit the campus to attend cultural events, take tours, watch sporting events and take part in the life of the campus—all experiences that will help establish students' college-going identity. In addition, UCLA faculty, staff, and students will engage with students at the school site, participating as instructors, coaches, researchers, tutors, and so on. Overall, the university community will play a significant role in the development of student learning at all ages.

## 3. Meeting the Needs of All Learners

As a learner-centered school, Los Ositos will take every measure to personalize the learning of each student—building on the strengths and responding to the needs of each individual. For all students, the Dens and Divisions will be places that they are known well by a common set of adults who will keep track of their progress and transition them

to the next level. As part of this process, teachers will ensure that each student has mastered a set of competencies (as outlined in the next section) before they move on to the next Den or Division. The curriculum throughout the K-12 years will spiral from Den to Den and Division to Division, developmentally introducing and reinforcing, core proficiencies and habits of mind. This approach to the curriculum makes the California Content Standards more personally meaningful, encourages persistence, and supports mastery. The academic content standards are taught in greater depth and complexity, requiring more abstract reasoning and critical thinking as students progress through the curriculum. Students acquire content knowledge through an integrated curriculum that draws upon the cultural, community, and family knowledge, experiences contributions and perspectives existing in the local community.

The instructional program will be organized to accommodate key transitions in the lives of students, with each Den and Division an age-appropriate dynamic learning community. The goals of the Den and Division programs are:

- to support the schoolwide ethic of high expectations
- to promote independent, critical thinking
- to help students become socially and emotionally well-grounded
- to foster respectful learning relationships among parents, students and teachers
- to provide a strong academic and instructional focus

The learning of each student will be guided by an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) that shapes and tracks their learning over time. Typically, students' ILPs will become increasingly differentiated as they progress through the Upper School and develop their passions and interests. For some students, however, the ILPs will require differentiation at the outset of their school careers in response to unique needs associated with English language proficiency, physical handicaps, social-emotional disorders, learning disabilities, giftedness, and so on. Although each student is a unique learner with special needs, students who face these additional challenges require additional structures for personalization in order to ensure their success in school.

*English Language Learners:* The student population at Los Ositos will be primarily Latino, including immigrant students from Mexico and Central America. Approximately half of these students will be English Language Learners. For this reason, Los Ositos will be a bilingual, biliterate, and multi-cultural school. The curriculum for all students will embody a language development approach that preserves and enhances the native language abilities of students, while building English and Spanish bi-literacy. This commitment to bi-literacy is detailed below.

*Other Special Needs Students:* To support all of our K-12 students in meeting the demands of Los Ositos' challenging curriculum, we offer a strong social support system that values and promotes academic achievement. This support system extends beyond the school, to include a community of mentors and specialists, as detailed in Section XII.

#### 4. School-wide Approach to Literacy and Numeracy

*Bi-Literacy:* All students at Los Ositos will receive a challenging curriculum that bridges their cultural experiences with the California Reading/Language Arts and English-Language Arts content standards to facilitate high levels of learning in both English and Spanish. Developmentally appropriate critical bi-literacy practices will be integrated into this two-way dual language curriculum; high quality literature in both English and Spanish will be used as a tool to encourage readers and writers to reflect upon their social and cultural lives, and to actively analyze and critique the world around them. Literature themes will include those that focus on difference, marginalization and social action in a variety of communities across time and space. Literature sets might include novels, photo essays, picture books and informational texts that explore poverty, human rights, immigration, the environment, and civil rights. These themes will be integrated into other academic content areas and will provide the foundation for literacy as social action. Literacy development will be carefully scaffolded throughout the K-12 experience.

Because we recognize the contributions of many different approaches and perspectives to literacy learning, Los Ositos will provide a balanced approach that integrates skills development within a holistic, literature-based literacy program. This approach will be particularly effective for our English Language Learners because through it students will receive direct instruction and have opportunities to participate in authentic reading and writing activities. This approach is also consistent with efforts to close the achievement gap through the development of vocabulary knowledge in the primary grades. To enact this balanced approach, teachers will use a combination of instructional strategies including literature focus units, literature circles, reading and writing workshops, basal reading programs, and authentic student text to provide multiple opportunities for their students to develop reading and writing proficiency. Teachers—like Alejandra’s—will use modeled reading/writing, shared reading/writing, interactive reading/writing, guided reading/writing and independent reading/writing to support students as they move towards greater responsibility and mastery of reading/language arts content. When children leave their multi-age Den classes and enter Division One, they will be prepared for the challenges of more complex reading, writing, research, and thinking.

*Content-Area Literacy:* We recognize that content shapes learning strategies—that learning to read and write in the content areas requires adjusting strategies to structures. However, there are fundamental techniques and strategies that will provide the foundation for developing content-area literacy at Los Ositos. Teachers will use technology, content-area trade books and periodicals, textbooks and related literature to help students build vocabulary, background, advanced comprehension strategies, and critical thinking skills in both languages. To promote conceptual understanding in the content areas, teachers will use a variety of research-based techniques and strategies before reading, during reading, and after reading. Before reading, students will survey the selection, activate appropriate prior knowledge, make predictions, set goals, and decide how to read the material. To help our students learn and apply these strategies independently, teachers will use Directed Reading Activity (DRA), Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA), Reciprocal Teaching, Questioning the Author, anticipation guides, and structural overview techniques. During reading, readers construct meaning.

Teachers will employ chapter organization, text structure, study guide and think-aloud strategies to help students distinguish between important and unimportant details, organize information, summarize sections, generate questions, integrate new information with prior knowledge, make inferences, check predictions, seek clarification, and create images of scenes and events portrayed by the text. After reading, teachers will encourage students to reflect on what they read, continue to integrate new information with old information, evaluate and use new information, and seek additional information on the topic. In addition to using traditional post-reading strategies (summarizing, retelling) teachers will apply instructional procedures such as constructing analogies, creating graphic organizers, and applying and extending to deepen comprehension of content area text.

*Numeracy:* Like reading and writing, numeracy is an integral part of the entire curriculum. All students at Los Ositos will receive an academically rigorous, interdisciplinary mathematics curriculum that bridges experiences with the California Mathematics Content Framework and Standards and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) *Principles and Standards for School Mathematics*. The primary goal of the numeracy program is for all students to gain a broad repertoire of mathematic techniques and strategies needed to apply quantitative skills in subtle and sophisticated contexts. The contextual nature of the mathematics program at Los Ositos will emphasize active learning, conceptual understanding, real world applications and the use of technology. By developing our students' confidence and competence with numbers, supporting deep understanding of the number system, data collection and data representation, and promoting an inclination and ability to solve quantitative or spatial problems in a range of contexts, graduates will be able to use mathematics in socially useful ways. Throughout their K-12 experience, students will develop the disposition and the competence to confidently use mathematics to succeed in college, engage in meaningful careers, and participate in community and civic life.

We believe that if students become aware of the mathematics in their everyday world and understand its relationship to school mathematics, they will appreciate its relevance. Recognizing our students' cultural backgrounds, building on their existing knowledge (whether formal or informal), and giving students opportunities to construct their own meaning of mathematics using culturally aligned practices is integral to supporting their numerical literacy. Our students will come to school with a wide range of numerical abilities that evolved from social and cultural contexts. Teachers will leverage this informal knowledge to help students access the content standards in meaningful ways. For instance, a geometry unit might ask students to examine familiar textile patterns used by Native Americans and West Africans to learn geometric concepts such as perimeter, area, tessellation, pattern recognition, and symmetry. To develop their social studies and language arts fluency, students might explore the history of the Ashanti Kingdom of Ghana, the development of the slave trade along the Ivory Coast, the opening of the Santa Fe Trail, or the building of the railroad in the American West. Field trips to the UCLA Fowler Museum would further enhance the unit.

### 5. Lower School Curriculum

The Den program will feature a developmentally appropriate curriculum that encompasses the core subjects of language arts, social studies, mathematics, science, performing and visual arts, physical education and wellness. The integrated, project-based curriculum will encourage learning by doing. Children are active learners. They read, write stories, do research projects, compute and solve problems, do science labs, and create performances and artwork. At Los Ositos, children will engage in these activities in a bi-lingual, bi-literate, and multi-cultural learning environment. When children enter the first Den, they will be initially grouped by primary language in order to ease the transition to school and respond to developmental attachment issues. Students who are not proficient in either English or Spanish will receive extra support within one of these groups. Students in Den I will receive integrated language arts instruction in their primary language, and primary language support during the interdisciplinary curriculum blocks. At this level, students will be grouped in self-contained classrooms where the teacher switches languages based on instructional needs. In Den II, these groupings will be re-ordered to reflect a gradual movement to dual language immersion. Students at this stage will be grouped in both self-contained settings and team teaching situations to facilitate linguistically heterogeneous grouping as well as the thematic, interdisciplinary curriculum. By the end of Den III, all students who were enrolled at Los Ositos beginning in Den I will be proficient in both English and Spanish—establishing the foundation for critical bi-literacy in the Upper School.

The Den program will provide students with a balanced mathematics program that enables them to become proficient in basic computational and procedural skills, develop conceptual understanding, and become adept at problem solving. The NCTM Focal Points will guide our construction of the curriculum K-8. Three curriculum focal points identify and describe each grade level along with connections to guide integration of the focal points at that grade level and across grade levels, to form a comprehensive mathematics curriculum. To build students' strength in the use of mathematical processes, instruction in these content areas will incorporate the use of mathematics to solve problems; an application of logical reasoning to justify procedures and solutions; and an involvement in the design and analysis of multiple representations to learn, make connections among, and communicate about the ideas within and outside of mathematics. The purpose of identifying these grade-level curriculum focal points is to enable students to learn the content in the context of a focused and cohesive curriculum that implements problem solving, reasoning, and critical thinking.

Emphasis will be placed on the learning process rather than quick right answers. The mathematics activities and experiences in the Den program will be socially, emotionally, physically, and developmentally appropriate for the group, and encourage collaborative interactions. The teacher will determine the children's needs and provide appropriate classroom activities by observing them at work solving meaningful problems with concrete manipulatives. The Den program will be organized around whole and small group instruction and math workstations. Whole and small group sessions will be structured to introduce and review mathematical concepts including number sense; algebra and functions; measurement and geometry; statistics, data analysis, and probability; and mathematical reasoning. Each day, students will work independently and

collaboratively at work stations. The open-ended activities at each station will enable children to apply and extend the concepts that were introduced in the whole class and small group sessions.

## 6. Upper School Curriculum

*College-Preparatory:* The Upper School instructional program will feature a college preparatory curriculum that prepares its graduates to succeed in college, pursue meaningful careers, and participate in our democracy. In addition to an integrated, thematic middle school curriculum in Division I, a unique feature of Los Ositos' Upper School program will be a series of innovative UC-certified alternatives to the standard A-G course sequence. The University of California has an extensive support system in place that encourages school-level innovation in developing college-prep courses that are interdisciplinary, project-based, career-focused, and internship-based. As detailed on the UC Office of the President website (<http://www.ucop.edu/doorways/>), this support system includes three types of innovations:

1. Curriculum Integration Pilot Project: to develop model courses that integrate academic and career-technical course content;
2. Academically rigorous project-based courses that focus on the core subject areas expected for University eligibility;
3. The instructional conditions under which a non-classroom-based, independent study program/school would be eligible to establish and maintain a UC-certified "a-g" course list.

This support for innovation comes at a critical time for LAUSD, as it prepares in 2008 to make A-G the default curriculum for all of its schools. Critics of LAUSD's A-G resolution argue that it ignores the issue of career preparation in favor of an overly academic curriculum that many students find irrelevant to their lives and future. In response, Los Ositos will provide an ideal context for developing rigorous and relevant curricular innovations to reconcile the distinct norms and values that have historically defined college-prep and career-focused or vocational education (Quartz & Washor, 2007).

For example, alongside his internship at the sound studio, Francisco will enroll in a Los Ositos' applied lab science course on physics and engineering. In this course, he will use data and experience from the sound studio to explore the concepts of frequency, wavelength, wave velocity, harmonics, resonance, and specifically how each of these relate to sound waves in music. He will also relate these concepts to power and energy translation in waves and a broader spectrum of scientific and mathematical concepts. Other students in this course will use their internships as the "real world" lab context of their learning in physics and engineering. In addition to trade-related internships, Los Ositos students will also be placed in UCLA laboratories, giving them first-hand experience of scientific research. Students who are not engaged in internships that support such rigorous scientific learning will participate in projects co-constructed with the instructor. As with all course-based learning at Los Ositos, students will be supported to master core competencies in contexts that matter to them as well as society.

*Learning Through Internships:* A major thrust of the Upper School curriculum will be learning through internships. In Division I, students will be supported through their Advisory (as detailed in Section XII) to explore a variety of work-related contexts. This exploration will include field trips, interviews, research, and shadowing opportunities. In Division II, 13-15 year old students will be prepared to choose two or three work contexts for closer study and more active participation. These work contexts will extend from Pico Union to the city to the UCLA campus and even include the school itself, where older students will be mentored as teaching assistants in the Lower School. The goal of internships at this age is for students to further explore their interests and passions so that by Division III they are ready to commit as interns, working several hours a week in their placements. It is in Division III that Los Ositos' coursework will be most closely aligned to the individual interests and passions of students exploring work in "real world" contexts. The Senior Institute will extend this concept even further, as these young adults forgo formal course work to engage in a year-long culminating project that exhibits their core competencies and is tied to an internship of their choosing. For this reason, the two Senior Institute teachers will spend much of their time engaged with the 40 seniors "in the field" and scaffolding their learning as they prepare for graduation.

Supporting student learning through internships is time-intensive and will require the support of many adults beyond the school. UCLA is poised to contribute the human and social capital required by such a curriculum. In addition to hosting Los Ositos' interns on campus, there are many existing university programs that might support individual students in their field-based learning. For example, the UCLA Community Internship Program offers third- and fourth-year UCLA undergraduates the opportunity to participate in specialized, paid internships at non-profit organizations in the Los Angeles communities. Internship topics range from environmental and social justice issues, youth and family services, to issues of homelessness and poverty, economic and community development. Los Ositos students might team up with these undergraduate interns, building on the university's established relationship with several non-profit organizations.

Los Ositos will support the variety of field-based mentors who take on student interns and help direct their learning. The UCLA and Community Liaison will organize a variety of learning experiences for mentors so that they understand the school's effort to integrate field-based and academic learning. The Liaison will also develop a curriculum to guide the Intern-based Learning Program in ways that ensure student learning is front and center. This curriculum will be based on five cross-discipline skills that have been identified as essential for success in the 21st-century workplace:

1. Learn-on-demand. The ability to construct and apply new knowledge from work activities.
2. Expert thinking. The ability to generate solutions that are not rules-based using technical knowledge.
3. Complex communication. The ability to adapt communication skills to multiple situations and cultures.
4. Interdisciplinary design. The ability to integrate content from multiple disciplines, including both the arts and sciences.

5. Mobility. The ability to transition across projects, firms, disciplines, and work/learning experiences. (Levy and Murnane, 2004)

It is no accident that these workplace skills map onto the Los Ositos Habits of Mind. They are skills that prepare students for the changing world they are about to enter as adults.

*Project-based Learning:* In Division III and the Senior Institute, students' internships will provide an important context for most course-based learning. In Divisions I and II, coursework will be focused more on school-developed projects that are tied to real-world contexts. Whenever possible, students will be supported to make connections across disciplines by engaging in project-based learning. For example, a Division I project might focus on the theme of globalization by engaging students in an interdisciplinary project where students collect data by checking the labels on their clothes, shoes, backpacks to see what country the items were made in. They would tabulate, figure the percentage and graph these countries and then locate and mark them on a large world map. Using data from websites and almanacs, they would find the annual wages of people making common items in each country. They would then compare those annual wages and convert them to hourly, daily, weekly and monthly rates. These data would then be used to create charts and analysis to grapple with a range of questions; for example: What additional data is necessary to determine how difficult it would be to live on certain wages in a country? How could you find that data? Why do companies move their operations to countries where the wages are low? When companies move jobs to lower-wage countries, what are the consequences for the workers and communities where the companies were originally located? What movements exist to improve the wages and working conditions of people working under these conditions? As this example illustrates, Los Ositos students will master core competencies across the disciplines through projects that foreground the relevance and meaning of what they are learning.

*Wellness and the Arts:* In addition to mastering core competencies in language arts, social studies, math, science and technology, Los Ositos students will be expected to master one of the visual or performing arts as well as their own physical well-being. These areas will not be framed as electives, but rather as an integral part of students' learning. In keeping with the school's spiral curriculum, Los Ositos students will be encouraged to assume more and more responsibility for their learning in these areas as they progress through the Upper School. In Division I, students will participate in the same broad range of physical and artistic learning experiences. In Division II, they will be encouraged to focus further on areas in physical education and the arts to develop their understanding and expertise. In Division III and the Senior Institute, students will be expected to specialize in these fields. The Wellness core competency will require that students develop knowledge of their own physical systems and learn ways to ensure their own health through fitness and diet. The Arts core competency will require that they master one of the visual or performing arts.

## **VIII. Student Assessment and Graduation Requirements**

Student assessment at Los Ositos will be rigorous, personalized, and based on multiple measures. When students graduate from Los Ositos, they will have demonstrated mastery of six Habits of Mind and Core Competencies, as described in the previous section, and be prepared to succeed in college, pursue a meaningful career, and participate in our democracy. These graduation requirements will be clearly communicated throughout the Dens and Divisions and the broader community. As the school becomes established, students' public exhibitions and demonstrations of mastery will be the best tool for communicating to others what it means to be educated and successful at Los Ositos.

The school's assessment system will be developed in partnership with UCLA's National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST), which for 40 years has been at the forefront of efforts to improve the quality of education and learning in America. Located within UCLA's Graduate School of Education & Information Studies, CRESST has long contributed to the development of scientifically based evaluation and testing techniques, vigorously encouraged the development, validation and use of sound data for improved accountability and decision making, and aggressively explored technological applications to improve assessment and evaluation practice. Building on this experience, CRESST will help Los Ositos create a student data system that includes but extends beyond ISIS to permit the collection, analysis and interpretation of various types of data to guide educational decisions at the school and classroom level for improved student achievement.

In addition to the California Standards Test and the High School Exit Exam, Los Ositos students will engage in a range of authentic, performance based assessments that are tied to and integrated with their learning. These assessments will be primarily qualitative in nature (e.g., projects, essays, performance videos, etc.) and therefore the school will require innovative electronic portfolios to manage and use data over time. Los Ositos will develop e-portfolios for each student, building on the experience of CRESST's Quality School Portfolio—a web-based decision support tool to assist educators in collecting, analyzing and making sense of data. In addition to generating useful reports, gradebooks, and school-wide analyses, Los Ositos' e-portfolios will organize student work and provide a K-12 longitudinal history of each student's growth and development.

Students' Individual Learning Plans (ILP) will be key to this electronic assessment system. These ILPs will track student's progress in mastering the six Core Competencies and Habits of Mind using multiple measures that make the most sense for individual students throughout their school career. Each student's e-portfolio will contain both teacher-selected and student-selected work which demonstrates how he/she has grown as a learner. Although student work products will be increasingly differentiated as they progress through school, all student work at Los Ositos will be assessed using a series of common rubrics developed by interdisciplinary academic teams and guided by the six Habits of Mind and Core Competencies. These rubrics will determine if student work meets expectations, approaches expectations, or does not meet expectations. In the case of the last two outcomes, students will work with their Advisors, as explained in Section

XII, to develop a strategy within the ILP for addressing learning needs and ensuring expectations are met. In addition, twice a year, all students will either participate in or lead (depending on age) a family conference in which they present their work to date, discuss their strengths and challenges, speak about their future goals, and plan the strategies they will use to achieve them.

Although student learning will be continually assessed and tracked, the transition to a new Den or Division presents an ideal juncture to take stock of individual student's learning as they transition to the next stage. At each of these six transitions, students will participate in a "gateway" assessment that will determine their readiness for more advanced work. If students are not ready, they will remain in a Den or Division for an additional year. Den and Division Gateways will be comprised of a students' work over two years, as assessed collectively by the Teaching Team and Advisor in accordance with a common rubric as explained above. These Den and Division Gateways will be opportunities to celebrate students' achievements in age-appropriate community-based contexts. For example the transition from Den I to Den II might be marked by an assembly of the two Divisions, parents, and community members where student work is displayed and participants are engaged in understanding what it means to master a set of skills and habits to become proficient readers in both Spanish and English. In contrast, Division III Gateways will focus on individuals in the context of an oral defense and presentation of their growth and accomplishments to date.

Students will actively participate in constructing and monitoring their ILPs, assuming increased responsibility as they age and progress through school. For example, Francisco met with his Division II Advisor when he was 13 to discuss his interest in music and sound engineering. Together, they created a set of learning goals based on this interest, including establishing an internship experience at a sound studio. Part of Francisco's Division II Gateway involved demonstrating the work he had done at the studio and how it related to the school's six Core Competencies and Habits of Mind. This process helped Francisco work with his Division III Advisor and teachers to set up opportunities such as the A-G approved applied lab science course to further explore his interest and expertise in sound engineering while developing his core academic competencies. Francisco's school experience culminated at Los Ositos with a Senior Project that brought together all his interests and accomplishments in a public setting—demonstrating to school and UCLA faculty, community leaders, parents and students the power of his work and his readiness to move onto college, a meaningful career, and civic participation.

The ILPs and corresponding e-portfolios will also function as important tools to gain students access to college and careers. Unlike standardized test scores, authentic multiple measures of a student's proficiency across all six Core Competencies and Habits of Mind—assembled in an e-portfolio and demonstrated in public settings—has immediate face value and establishes the student as an accomplished and capable young adult. Adapted, the e-portfolio will serve as a resume detailing internship experiences and accomplishments for future job placement.

## IX. Leadership and Staff Selection

Los Ositos will recruit and work hard to retain a stable, diverse, and high-quality teaching faculty from UCLA's Teacher Education Program and other highly-ranked institutions that prepare teachers to work in culturally diverse schools. All teacher candidates must demonstrate strong content and pedagogical knowledge and see themselves as culturally responsive educators who share the following educational beliefs, values and expectations; Los Ositos teachers will:

1. Hold high academic and personal expectations for each child.
2. Provide for each child equitable access to the necessary learning resources and sufficient opportunities to learn.
3. Ensure that learning outcomes are meaningful, relevant, useful, and important to each child.
4. Nurture learning-support communities for each child, such as families, peers, homework hotlines, and community centers.
5. Facilitate the maximum growth of each learner by making informed academic adaptations that match and build upon the learner's prior knowledge, experiences, skills, and beliefs.
6. Build positive and supportive school and classroom learning environments that are grounded in mutual and genuine respect for cultural diversity;
7. Promote classroom climates built on social justice, democracy, and equity.
8. Promote individual empowerment, self-efficacy, positive self-regard, and a belief in societal reform.
9. Value diversity as well as human commonalities.
10. Believe that it is their role and responsibility to provide effective and empowering instruction for each child. (Irvine & Armento, 2001)

To support Los Ositos' commitment to bilingualism and bi-literacy, all Lower School teachers and Upper School Language Arts and Social Studies teachers will be bilingual and bi-literate in English and Spanish and educated to support the school's dual language program. Every effort will also be made to recruit bilingual and bi-literate math, science, physical education, special education, and arts teachers.

As the school develops and teachers achieve mastery in Den, Division, and/or content area, research on the careers of highly qualified urban educators (Quartz *et al.*, forthcoming) suggests that teachers will leave the classroom in search of a greater impact. In order to encourage teacher retention, Los Ositos will pioneer Individual Learning Plans for faculty that will enable them to map out their own learning and career goals, supported by peers and the Principal. In addition, the school will establish over time flexible staffing patterns that will allow teachers to take on multiple professional roles (e.g., mentor, curriculum developer, community organizer, grant writer) for part of their day or week, while keeping them firmly rooted in the classroom. Teachers at Los Ositos will also be given opportunities to engage in some form of leadership at the school site, as detailed in Section V, and multiple opportunities to engage in their own professional development and growth, as detailed in Section XI. A school-wide goal will be to help teachers create and travel satisfying and differentiated career pathways that keep them connected to the school site—not on their way up into higher status jobs available at other levels of the educational system.

To support this retention strategy, Los Ositos will develop a peer review and assessment system based on teachers' ILPs. In addition, the school will carefully craft a performance-pay system that rewards highly-qualified and successful educators who choose to stay in the classroom and at the school site. These systems will be fair, strategic and developed in close collaboration with UTLA—building on the growing national movement to professionalize teaching and support teacher leadership (e.g., Center for Teaching Quality, 2007).

Los Ositos' principal will have a strong record of exemplary teaching and leadership skills. He or she will be responsible for supporting and engaging teachers as leaders and professionals, guided by an ILP that keeps track of his or her progress. A model of distributive leadership will permeate the school and set a tone for shared commitment to and responsibility for student learning. The principal will also work closely with the community, Board, and other governing bodies, as detailed in Section V.

#### **X. Elect-to-Work Agreement**

As part of the pilot school agreement, Los Ositos will set its own work conditions for UTLA, AALA, or SEIU personnel and describe the internal appeals process that will be in place for personnel who have concerns. This Work Election Agreement is clearly provisional at this point and will require the input of all stakeholders.

## **Los Ositos/Bruin Community School WORK ELECTION AGREEMENT 2009-2010**

#### **Vision Statement**

Los Ositos is a community-based, learner-centered, university-assisted school—a school where many different people come together, driven by the nation's long legacy of common schooling, to create a place of learning for the next generation. We expect students who graduate from Los Ositos to enter the adult world as confident and capable human beings, prepared to succeed in college, pursue meaningful careers, and participate in our democracy. The adults that support these students will know them well and ensure that each engages in scholarship that is challenging and relevant to their lives.

#### **Preamble**

Los Ositos/Bruin Community School is a K-12 Pilot School within the Belmont Zone of Choice in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) that by union contract with United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) has been granted increased autonomy and flexibility to be a laboratory of educational innovation. This includes the right to set the “school day” and “school year” for both faculty and students and to make other alterations in the traditional teaching and learning conditions. As a Pilot School, Los Ositos primary decision-making body will be its Governing Board, replacing the roles of the School Site Council and the Local School Leadership Council. The Governing Board will comprise non-paid members that include administrators, teachers, parents, students,

and community members who will approve the annual Work Election Agreement (WEA), budget, policies while maintaining the vision of the school. Grievances will be handled according to the Belmont Pilot Schools Agreement Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Teachers at Los Ositos undertake a number of special responsibilities. Teachers will subscribe to the vision and mission of the school and participate in the development of a collaborative, professional community. As part of the school's collaborative, professional community, all teachers, in addition to their teaching responsibilities, will engage in communication, collaboration, and partnerships that further the vision and mission of the school as described below.

### **The School Day**

For the 2009-2010 school year, the school day for students starts at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. The school day for students starts at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday. The school day for teachers will be as follows:

Monday 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Tuesday 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Wednesday 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. with 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. for professional development

Thursday 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Friday 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

### **The School Year**

The school year for students will consist of 180 days of instruction. Teachers will work 193 days according to the following schedule:

- The first and last days of school for students will be the same day as the first day of school at other traditional schools in LAUSD.
- All teachers will work ten professional development days during the summer prior to the first day of school
- The schedule of the summer professional development days will be determined in the spring based on teachers' schedules.
- All teachers will report for work on designated pupil free day.
- As part of Los Ositos' collaborative, professional community, and in order to increase parental involvement, all teachers will be expected to participate in four 2-hour evening events for parents and families.

### **Salary, Benefits, Seniority, and Membership in Bargaining Unit**

Los Ositos teachers will continue to accrue seniority within the district as they would if working elsewhere in the LAUSD. Anyone hired as a Los Ositos teacher will receive the wages and benefits established in the LAUSD-UTLA Collective Bargaining Agreement. Teachers will also be bound by the terms outlined in the Los Ositos Work Election Agreement. Teachers will continue to be members of the UTLA bargaining unit.

### **Compensation for Additional Hours**

Los Ositos teachers will receive compensation for additional hours worked above and beyond those required hours in the LAUSD-UTLA Collective Bargaining Agreement.

**Voluntary Transfer**

You may voluntarily transfer yourself from Los Ositos at the end of the school year. When voluntarily terminating your service at Los Ositos, you are asked to inform the principal verbally and in writing by the end of spring recess of your final year of service at Los Ositos.

**Release of Staff**

According to the autonomies set forth in the MOU, the principal may release staff who are unable to support and implement the vision and the mission of Los Ositos. The release of a teacher by the principal from Los Ositos will be carried out in accordance with procedures outlined in Section III of the MOU for Belmont Pilot Schools.

**Responsibilities**

Your job-specific responsibilities are detailed in the teacher job description.

**Substitute Coverage**

In the event of an teacher's absence, the first step will be to collaborate to appropriately redistribute students among the faculty. If this is not logistically possible, a substitute will be requested per the LAUSD-UTLA Collective Bargaining Agreement.

**Dispute Resolution**

The dispute resolution process for Los Ositos faculty will operate in accordance with the guidelines outlined in Section IX of the MOU.

**Performance Evaluation**

Los Ositos has a peer review process to support and evaluate teachers. This process is based on peer observations, instructional coaching, and curriculum review. This process is intended to respect the professionalism of teachers, support their growth, and encourage honest and open dialogue throughout the school.

BY SIGNING THIS DOCUMENT, I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND ALL THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ELECTION AGREEMENT AND THAT I AGREE TO ALL ITS TERMS.

Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**XI. Professional Development and Support**

A professional culture of learning and collaboration will permeate Los Ositos. Just as students' learning will be guided by an Individual Learning Plan, so too will teachers' learning. Based on a set of principled ideas about teacher learning—engaging teachers in what we call “generative growth.” (Franke, Carpenter, Levi, & Fennema, 2000)—Los Ositos faculty will be supported to map out their own learning goals along with strategies for achieving these goals. The scope and timeline for teachers' ILPs will vary, but in

general every two to three years faculty will be supported to engage in a project that helps “untangle some of the complexity that occurs in the profession, raise teachers’ voices in discussions of educational reform, and ultimately transform assumptions about the teaching profession itself” (Dana & Yendol-Silva, 2003). For example, a Den II teacher may want to further develop his knowledge and understanding of the Pico Union community and the family histories of students in the school in order to enrich his teaching of the Grade 2 California Content Standards in History and Social Science. This learning goal might be achieved in a variety of ways; for example, home visits, archival research, volunteering at a local community organization, travel, and so on. In consultation with his Den colleagues and the Principal, he will develop a learning plan with work products (e.g., curriculum, research article, community project) and later share these products with the entire faculty at one of their monthly meetings. He may also choose to present his project at professional conferences and within the Belmont Pilot School Network.

Teachers will be supported to keep track of their ILPs and work products in an e-portfolio, which will serve as a powerful tool for helping them track their own professional growth and achievements. In turn, the school-wide emphasis on facilitating and tracking teacher learning and work products will help facilitate faculty participation in a number of professional communities; for example, the Teacher Leaders Network—an online community that cultivates leadership, promotes deep professional conversation, forges new thinking about teaching and learning, and encourages entrepreneurial action among the nation’s best teachers. ([www.teacherleaders.org](http://www.teacherleaders.org))

In addition to ILPs, Los Ositos faculty will develop each year a plan for school-wide learning and development. Led by the Principal, this annual School Learning Plan (SLP) will set clear goals and expectations for the school as a professional learning community—serving as and fulfilling the state-mandated Single Plan for Student Achievement. During the last two weeks of August, faculty will meet to prepare for the upcoming year and develop their SLP and detailed expectations for participation throughout the year. These expectations will be teacher developed and therefore will likely overlap with and complement teachers’ own ILPs. The Leadership Team, comprised of administrators, teachers, university and community partners, parents and students, will be responsible for keeping track of the SLP throughout the school year, collecting and using data to inform and coordinate the operational and instructional decision-making at Los Ositos. Each teacher will also have two hours twice per week to work in content-area or interdisciplinary teams and/or meet with critical friends. Teachers will have one hour, three days per week to work on their curriculum and ILPs. At the end of each school year, the entire faculty will convene for one week to debrief and reflect on the past year’ challenges and successes. At that time, the SLP will be assessed and a set of recommendations developed for the following year’s planning.

Given UCLA’s long history of working alongside teachers in classrooms in order to help strengthen professional practice, Los Ositos faculty will have access to a variety of professional development resources. For example, UCLA’s Center X is the home of five California Subject Matter Projects (CSMPs) that sponsor content-based and pedagogy-

focused institutes that support the content standards as well as the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. Additional learning opportunities are available across UCLA departments; for example, the Department of Psychology’s School Mental Health Project provides extensive resources for improving teaching and learning supports by addressing the rhythms of a year. In addition, UCLA’s Institute for Democracy, Education and Access links educators and activists to high-quality research on significant educational policy and practice issues. As Los Ositos faculty develop their Individual and School-wide Learning Plans, UCLA will serve as a vital learning resource.

## **XII. Student Support**

Faculty and staff at Los Ositos will be qualified to provide all students with personalized academic support. The main structure for personalization will be the Advisory program. Designed to give each student a meaningful, personalized connection with the school, the Advisory program will facilitate both academic and personal growth, and provide an opportunity for students and teachers to create a strong sense of community. The Advisory program will create a “home” for every student at the school—a place where each student is known well and their progress is supported. For parents, Los Ositos Advisors will be point persons—caring educators they can go to for support and to share insight about their students. Advisors will establish relationships with the student and his or her family, serving as an advocate within and outside the school.

In the Lower School, students will be paired with one Advisor for the entire six years. These Lower School Advisors will meet with students three to four times a year, in small groups and individually, to get to know each other, meet students’ parents, attend student conferences, and track students’ progress on their Individualized Learning Plans. At the end of Den III, Advisors will work with Division I teachers and Advisors to ease the transition to the Upper School. In keeping with the spiral curriculum, these advisory relationships will deepen at the Upper School level where students will be formally grouped in Advisories, led by an adult, either a teacher, other staff member, or qualified UCLA personnel. Students will stay in the same Advisory for two years. In the Senior Institute, student learning will be guided by the two Senior Institute teachers, but the Advisor role will formally transfer over to the field-based mentor who is guiding a student’s internship. For their Gateway graduation exhibition, a student will assemble their Lower School Advisor, Advisors from Dens I, II, and III, and their field-based mentor to collectively assess and celebrate their growth and achievements.

The Upper School schedule is structured to accommodate a short daily Advisory “check in” and “check out” to begin and end the school day with the same, family-like group. Once a week, the learning experience will be extended and deepened in an hour-long Advisory period where students explore a number of issues ranging from organization and study skills to peer pressure and relationships. These periods will be guided by an Advisory curriculum, similar to the one established by the Wildwood Secondary School, and supported by a team of counseling and health specialists from UCLA. For example, the schools of Medicine, Nursing, and Public Health at UCLA could provide invaluable resources to Los Ositos in the form of undergraduate and graduate student interns,

volunteer programs, assistance with special grants, etc. In addition, the School of Public Affairs's Department of Social Welfare could provide undergraduate and graduate student interns to support the school's social work needs. In addition, Los Ositos' UCLA and Community Liaison will help link students and families with a range of health and social services.

Los Ositos is committed to providing *inclusive* settings for all students with special needs. In other words, students with special needs will be taught alongside regular education students in the same classrooms. Every effort will be made provide these students with the *least restrictive environments* in which to learn. Moreover, students with special needs will not be segregated from other students. All faculty and staff will be responsible for working with and supporting these students. Los Ositos will foster an atmosphere of acceptance and respect by encouraging all students, faculty, and staff to view students with special needs as equal members of the school community.

### **XIII. Family and Community Engagement**

Family and community engagement will be an essential component of Los Ositos Community School. Los Ositos will support parents to be active partners in their children's education by providing them with numerous opportunities to become involved at the school site. In addition to offering parents the opportunity to volunteer at the school (assisting in classrooms and/or with other tasks on campus), Los Ositos will provide coordinated support for adult education (citizenship classes, ESL, etc.), parent workshops (on early literacy and numeracy, homework support, parenting, etc.), and parent-teacher collaboration. Teachers at Los Ositos will be encouraged to view parents as partners and to involve them in their curricular and instructional programs as much as possible. Building on the successes of the UCLA Parent Project, Los Ositos will bring parents of diverse ethnic backgrounds together to share their expertise and to experience interactive California Framework presentations by the UCLA Subject Matter Projects.

Los Ositos will be a place where families feel truly welcome. As described in the previous section, all families will have a point person in their students' Advisor. Parents will also have opportunities to question principals, visit classrooms, and explore assessment practices and standards. In addition, parents will be actively involved in designing school policies and programs. As members of the design team, parents will collaborate with other team members to determine what and how their children will be taught. This process will involve careful and deliberate dialogue, as all members of the design team respectfully acknowledge and learn from each other's various areas of expertise. Parent representatives will also serve as members of Los Ositos' governing board. Their engagement and participation on the governing board will be grounded in meaningful access to relevant information about school policies and practices. Care will be taken to ensure that parent representation on the board is determined in a democratic fashion. As active members in the design and governance of the school, both parents and community members would play an integral role at Los Ositos.

In addition to fostering parental engagement, Los Ositos will also make a coordinated effort to expose its students to the wealth of resources that exist in the surrounding community. As described above, by challenging the typical A-G course scope and sequence, Los Ositos will be able to build on the cultural resources of families, the community, UCLA, and the city of Los Angeles by creating innovative interdisciplinary courses and internship-based learning experiences that have proven effective at engaging young people in rigorous learning. Community-based learning experiences might include using the resources of UCLA's Fowler Museum to teach students about the adobe architecture of West Africa or another one of their many cultural exhibits. Also, Los Ositos will build on UCLA's existing relationships with local community-based organizations to develop partnerships that will strengthen student learning. By partnering with local community-based organizations, Los Ositos will be able to provide students with rich and meaningful learning experiences that expose them to their community's diverse array of resources. Such learning experiences might include taking students to the Central American Resource Center (CARECEN) in Pico Union—an organization founded by a group of Salvadoran refugees whose mission was to secure legal status for the thousands of Central Americans fleeing the torture and brutality of civil war. As partners with CARECEN, Los Ositos students might participate in one of several education programs, including *Nueva Generación*, a Multiethnic Youth Leadership Collaborative, or an after-school literacy initiative with local poets and writers to produce youth publications. While the details of such partnerships have yet to be determined, what is certain is that Los Ositos students will benefit from UCLA's connections to local community groups. Such connections will enable Los Ositos to successfully put into practice its vision of learning that extends beyond the walls of the school.

#### **XIV. A Safe and Secure Campus**

Administrators, faculty, staff, and students at Los Ositos will ensure a safe and secure campus in multiple ways. To begin with, we will establish and maintain positive relationships and interactions with the larger school campus on which our school will be located. In large part, safety will be ensured by our numbers. With a total enrollment of only 520 students, we will all know each other and develop relationships of trust. These relationships will form the basis of a safe and secure learning environment for all students. This environment will be further personalized through the Dens, Divisions, and Advisory program that will enable adults to know individual students well.

In many public schools, especially those in inner-city areas, concerns about safety are often rooted in stereotypical notions about young people of color. The tendency is to expect the worse from many Latino and African-American young people who reside in the inner-city. At Los Ositos, we will expect the best from our students while preparing them to engage respectfully with people from different backgrounds. Character education, diversity appreciation, and conflict resolution will be integrated into the normal curriculum at all grade levels. Beginning in Kindergarten, students at Los Ositos will be taught to respect each other and to take responsibility for ensuring a safe, secure, and respectful learning environment.

We also expect the school campus to be an important resource for the surrounding community and we will work with the larger school campus to ensure that the facility may be used after school hours and on weekends. Extended use of the facility will help promote essential community services such as childcare, medical services, meeting space, library resources and so on. As a community school, Los Ositos will embrace such opportunities to establish a well-used, cared-for, and safe campus.

## **XV. Design Team and Planning Process**

The team that developed this proposal was led by **Karen Hunter Quartz** who also chaired the UCLA-assisted School Study Group. Dr. Quartz plays a unique role in the Belmont Pilot School Initiative, having participated in the initiative's development for the past four years as a researcher and founding member of both BEC and the Los Angeles Small Schools Collective. This experience grounds the proposal team's vision in the history and intent of the initiative. In addition Dr. Quartz brings 15 years of research experience on large scale school reform to the team and is currently Director of Research at UCLA's Center X. She also serves as UCLA's representative to the UC-Network of University-Assisted Schools. Other members of the proposal team included Jody Priselac, Annamarie Francois, Ramon Martinez, and Kyndall Brown. **Jody Priselac** was a math teacher for 18 years in Los Angeles schools and is currently Executive Director of UCLA's Center X which houses UCLA's Teacher Education Program, Principal Leadership Institute, and a variety of professional development projects. In this role, Dr. Priselac has had extensive experience working with LAUSD teachers and administrators to help support and strengthen teaching practice. **Annamarie Francois** spent fourteen years as an elementary school teacher and administrator in the Los Angeles Unified School District, where she actively participated in site-level reform initiatives and helped design, operate, and evaluate the school-wide charter and instructional program at Vaughn Next Century Learning Center, the first charter school in the Los Angeles Unified School District to receive both California Distinguished School and National Blue Ribbon School awards. Dr. Francois is currently a Faculty Advisor with the UCLA Center X Teacher Education Program (TEP). **Ramon Martinez** was a first grade teacher in the Pico Union community and also taught abroad, in Eastern Europe. Currently, Mr. Martinez is an advanced doctoral student in UCLA's Urban Schooling Division where he studies the development of critical bi-literacy in elementary schools. Mr. Martinez has also supervised novice teachers as part of UCLA's Teacher Education Program and served as an instructor for the UCLA Migrant Student Leadership Institute. **Kyndall Brown** was a middle and high school math teacher for 13 years and is currently the Director of the UCLA Mathematics Project. Mr. Brown has 14 years of professional development experience in urban schools throughout Los Angeles. Overall, the proposal team represents a diverse, accomplished and committed group of urban educators.

If this proposal is approved, Chancellor Block will work immediately to create an inclusive and diverse design team for Los Ositos that will include representatives from UCLA, LAUSD, United Teachers Los Angeles, and the Pico Union community. We will continue our work with representatives from local community-based organizations

(CBOs) and educational organizations that form BEC to devise an effective plan for recruiting parents and other community members to the design team. Evidence of this commitment is detailed in the letter of support from Veronica Olmos McDonnell, Executive Director of Central City Neighborhood Partners, which helps convene BEC. Because parent representation and participation is crucial to the design of Los Ositos and because UCLA is committed to developing a community school, this effort will be given high priority. Finally, we will also conduct outreach to recruit interested teachers and students, as their voices will also be instrumental in shaping our school.

As part of our two-year school design process, the team will visit and learn from the nation's best schools, with a particular focus on schools that share our commitment to social justice and the Ten Common Principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES). Locally, we expect to learn from the K-12 Wildwood School, the only CES mentor school in Los Angeles, as well as the accomplished practice of longstanding LAUSD small learning communities such as Humanitas and community-based learning programs such as Inner City Arts. Throughout the state and nation, we will learn from other university-assisted schools such as UCSD's Preuss School, Berkeley's Cal Prep, and the University of Chicago's Charter Schools. We also expect to learn a great deal from small, progressive schools throughout the nation, including the Big Picture Schools, Urban Academy, High Tech High School, Francis W. Parker Essential Charter School, and many others.

## XVI. References

- Amanti, C., Gonzalez, G., & Moll, L. (2005). *Funds of knowledge: theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms*. Mahwah, NY: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Alspaugh, J.W. (1998). Achievement loss associated with the transition to middle school and high school. *Journal of Educational Research*, 92(1), 20-25.
- Center for Teaching Quality (2007). *Performance-pay for teachers: Designing a system that students deserve*. Hillsborough, NC.
- Fichman-Dana, N. & Yendol-Silva, D. (2003). *The reflective educator's guide to classroom research: Learning to teach and teaching to learn through practitioner inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Franke, M. L., Carpenter, T.P., Levi, L., Fennema, E. (2000). Capturing teachers' generative growth: A follow-up study of professional development in mathematics. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38, 653-689.
- Irvine, J. & Armento, B. (2001). *Culturally responsive teaching: lesson planning for elementary and middle grades*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Levy, F., & Murnane, R. (2004). *The new division of labor: How computers are creating the next job market*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Loeb, S., Bryk, A., & Hanushek, E. (2007). *Getting down to facts: School finance and governance in California*. Stanford University Institute for Research on Education Policy and Practice, <http://irepp.stanford.edu/documents/GDF/GDF-Overview-Paper.pdf>, retrieved 8/28/07.
- Quartz, K.H., Thomas, A., Anderson, L., Masyn, K., Lyons, K.B., Olsen, B. (in press). Careers in motion: A longitudinal retention study of role changing patterns among urban educators. *Teachers College Record* 110(6).
- Quartz, K.H. and Washor, E. (2007) "Small schools as multiple pathways to college, career, and civic participation: Can they balance the individual and collective aims of schooling?" Paper prepared for J. Oakes and M. Saunders, eds., *Multiple Perspectives on Multiple Pathways*. Los Angeles, UCLA Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access, 2007.

Howley, C.B. (2002). Grade-span configurations. *School Administrator*, 59(3), 24-29.

Seidman, E., Allen, L., Aber, J.L., Mitchell, C., and Feinman, J. (1994). The impact of school transitions in early adolescence on the self-system and perceived social context of poor urban youth. *Child Development*, 65(2), 507-522.

Wren, S.D. (2003). The effect of grade-span configuration and school-to-school transition on student achievement. U.S. Department of Educational Resources Information Center. ED 479 332.

**XVII. Appendices**

1. UCLA-Assisted School Study Group Feasibility Study, June 2007
2. University-Assisted Schools: From Laboratory Schools to Engaged Scholarship, July 2007
3. Letters of Support
  - a. Gene Block, UCLA Chancellor
  - b. Aimee Dorr, Dean, UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies
  - c. Veronica Olmos McDonnell, Executive Director, Central City Neighborhood Partners