

**GARDENA HIGH SCHOOL**

**LAUSD School Improvement Proposal for Gardena High School, 2010-1011**

**Submitted by: Gardena High School**

**Part 1: Executive Summary**

**1.a Assurances**

Gardena High School is a public high school operating under the management, agreements, and regulations of the Los Angeles Unified School District. As such, Gardena High School provides all required assurances regarding:

- *Business Status:* Gardena High school is a Los Angeles Unified School District school, and as such, is a not-for-profit entity.
- *Student Enrollment:* The school has attendance boundaries set by the Los Angeles Unified School District, and will continue to welcome and enroll all students who live within those boundaries.
- *Student Composition:* The composition of students at Gardena High School will continue to reflect the overall population of our community, including the assets of race/ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, English Learners, Standard English Learners, students with disabilities, the gifted, and foster care and homeless students. We agree to maintain this composition.
- *Special Education:* We will continue to adhere to the conditions and requirements of the Modified Consent Decree and other court orders imposed upon the District pertaining to special education.
- *Fiscal Solvency:* Funding policies and procedures will continue to be governed by the Los Angeles Unified School District.

(See Appendix 1 for signed statements.)

**1.b Student Population**

Gardena High School is a comprehensive high school serving grades 9 through 12. The school has an enrollment of 3,161 students. Our student population is reflective of the ethnically rich diverse population of our community. Latino students comprise the largest segment of our population, at 59% with 16% English Learners; African American students comprise the second largest group with 33%. Asian and Filipino students represent 3% and 2% of our population respectively. American Indian, Pacific Islander and White students each comprise 1% of our population. While 62% of our population is economically disadvantaged, 6% of our students are gifted and 10% are special Education Students.

Our student population is somewhat fluid, with a 36% transiency rate. Our challenge is to make Gardena High School a community school with a stable student population. A major goal for

our school is to create a strong sense of belonging to our school community, building on the assets which race/gender, socio-economic status, English Learners, Standard English Learners, students with disabilities, gifted students, foster care students, and homeless students bring to our school.

### **1c. Vision, Mission, and Philosophy**

The guiding principle that drives the new Gardena High School is the belief that the Gardena community of stakeholders envisions a community school that provides for the intellectual, social, and emotional development of our students from early childhood through high school and beyond. Our school intends to deliver a quality standards-based instructional curriculum with high expectations for achievement, research-based instructional strategies that provide success for the full range of students served by the school including those at risk, clear connections among classroom learning, the community, and the real world, and a safe, welcoming environment in which to learn.

Our mission is to graduate students who are highly literate, self-disciplined, and well-balanced. Our graduates will be effective communicators, critical thinkers, risk-takers, and adaptable problem solvers who engage in self-directed, life-long learning, and who are empowered to achieve personal, educational, and career goals and become confident and productive members of our global society. Through specialized course offerings, authentic project-based learning opportunities, and real-world experiences, our students will not only be ready for college, but also be prepared to enter the work world.

The cornerstone of the Gardena High School philosophy is the belief that we need to address the needs of the whole child. We will take an individualized approach to support student learning through thorough examination of student performance data along with analysis of the social and emotional development of each student.

A typical day in the life of a Gardena High School student begins with him/her arriving on time to class prepared to work. Students will be greeted in each class by a caring adult who knows his/her needs, both academically and socially/emotionally. Classes will be held in a small community of no more than 500 learners, with classrooms in contiguous space, clearly identified with signage in a clean, stimulating, print-rich classroom. Instruction will be engaging, rigorous, thought-provoking, project-based, and culturally relevant. Students will be encouraged to work collaboratively to solve problems. Technology will be available to every student in each classroom. Students will be encouraged to reflect on their learning, set academic and personal goals, and discuss problems and solutions during the daily advisory period. In addition, students will be able to participate in social and academic activities, such as dances and award ceremonies specific to their small school as well as with the entire student body.

Students will have access to the services of their counselor, an administrator, Healthy Start, and their teachers by visiting the administrative office attached to each small school before and after school, and during nutrition and lunch.

In order to address these goals, we propose to reorganize our school, its governance, and its programs. Strong teacher collaboration, a wide array of school support services, a new governance organizational structure, support of parents and feeder schools along with the support of the city of Gardena, business and government leaders, local agencies, community groups, and Local District 8, will provide students the instructional program and services they need to reach their potential.

#### **1d. Educational Plan**

While Gardena High School is currently divided into small learning communities, we have chosen the Small School model to deliver our instructional program. This means that our students will belong to a personalized educational community of no more than 500 learners. We have planned for three small schools for the ninth grade, and four small schools for grades 10 through 12.

Ninth graders entering Gardena High School will be welcomed into one of three houses, each of which provides a supportive, nurturing environment in which to learn. Each house will provide a small setting where students can make connections with adults who know their names, their strengths and weaknesses, and their hopes for the future. Teachers, counselors, and administrators in each house will work to instill in each student a sense of purpose in his/her learning. Each house will create a culture in which students are respectful of themselves and of each other. Additionally, each house will help students explore educational and vocational opportunities in order to help them make informed decisions when selecting a small school for their remaining high school years.

Students in grades 10 through 12 will be able to select a small school based on interest in the uniquely themed course offerings and real-world experiences provided by each of four small schools. By providing interdisciplinary projects, internships, mentor-ships, and job-shadowing experiences, students will be able to make real-world connections to their schooling and be able to see "What's in it for me?" Each of these small schools will provide the same small, nurturing setting with connections to adults.

There is compelling evidence that the small school model is successful with students in a similar context. Harbor Teacher Prep Academy and Middle College High School, both Local District 8 high schools with similar populations, have high student success rates, with 99% and 93% of their students passing the CAHSEE respectively. Harbor Teacher Preparation Academy students scored 98% proficient/advanced on the math CST and 88% proficient/advanced on the English/Language Arts CST, and maintains a 99% graduation rate. Middle College High School students scored 58% proficient/advanced on the Math CST and 68% proficient on the English/Language Arts CST. Their graduation rate is 96%.

Recognizing that the prescribed LAUSD curriculum has a proven successful track record with students similar to our student population, each of our small schools is committed to using the LAUSD curriculum maps, textbooks, and ancillary materials with fidelity.

Also recognizing that the prescribed LAUSD curriculum provides for much flexibility in its delivery, each small school has been able to weave its unique theme and focus into its personalized instructional plan for students.

**1e. Community Impact and Involvement**

The Gardena community had huge impact in the vision for this plan. The Public School Choice team sought community, parent and student input through several night meetings as well as through special focus group meetings held after school. Parent, student and community turnout increased at each meeting, with a total of 366 people attending the final community meeting. This involvement made very clear the wishes of parents, community members, students, teachers and administrators to make our school one which offers a world-class education and a wide array of services and activities for all students while remaining a community school.

The intent of making Gardena High School a community school is to bring back the idea that our school is the heart of the city and serves all children who live there.

We intend to be a resource which will serve the whole child, educationally, socially, and emotionally, from pre-school through high school and beyond. Our small schools will be academic centers for our students and our families while our Healthy Start program will be a center of local resources families can draw upon to help meet the educational, physical and mental health needs of our youth. We will offer a coordinated assistance program ranging from psychological and physiological services to parenting classes and after-school tutoring.

Gardena community involvement is an integral part of the educational plan for the new Gardena High School. Each small school has a theme that is connected to business and/or service industries. Business and community members will be active participants on the advisory boards of each of the small schools, helping to establish for students a connection between the real world and their classes. Business and community members will not only collaborate with teachers, parents and administrators to help identify skills that are necessary to succeed in the business world and in college, but will also provide field-based activities requiring active exploration of a chosen career.

Local businesses and industries will help enhance the career pathways offered by each small school in a number of ways. Business leaders will speak at Career Days and in classes to provide students outside access to adults with expertise and experience relevant to their chosen career pathway. Students will be given the opportunity to interview, observe and work alongside adults during visits to work sites. In addition, local businesses and community agencies will provide mentor-ships and internships for students during their junior and senior years.

**1f. Leadership/Governance**

On December 15 and December 16, 2009, a vote was held to determine if the Gardena High School faculty was interested in pursuing an alternate governance structure. Out of 130 certificated personnel, 76 voted. Forty-two voted for Affiliated Charter, 22 voted for Expanded

School-Based Management (ESBM), and 12 voted for Shared Decision-Making (SDM) and "other." This vote indicates the faculty's interest in other governance models, models which increase teachers' decision-making authority and responsibilities, and offer greater transparency of operational, financial and instructional decisions.

Gardena High School will continue with its current leadership and governance structure while exploring other models, including the Expanded School-Based Management (ESBM) and the Affiliated Charter School model. We currently operate under the governance of a School Site Council (SSC), and a Shared Decision-Making Council. All stakeholders, including students, parents, community members, teachers, classified staff, and administrators, are represented on both of these councils. In addition, Gardena High School maintains a Compensatory Education Advisory Council (CEAC), and an English Learner Advisory Council (ELAC), the state required advisory committees. These committees are used as a means for improving student performance and overall school conditions.

Distributed leadership is the foundation of our small schools plan. Each of our small schools will have an advisory board with representation from community businesses and service industries, parents, students, teachers, classified staff, and administrators. Each small school leadership team will consist of an administrator, a lead teacher, a dean, and a counselor, who share responsibility for creating a personalized learning environment for each student. In addition, all teachers share the responsibility for carrying out the vision of delivering an individualized, high rigor, data-driven instructional program, while attending to the educational, social, and emotional needs of the whole child.

### **1g. Fiscal Plan**

Gardena High School is in accordance with Education Code 64001. The Los Angeles Unified School District assures Gardena High School has developed a *Single Plan for Student Achievement* (SPSA.) The School Site Council developed the plan, and updated and reviewed it in June of 2009. The SPSA is aligned with the goals for improving student achievement, and addresses how funds will be used to improve academic performance. The evaluation and effectiveness of the instructional program is based on the analysis of verifiable student data, and annual updates reflect the appropriate modification to the program, and the realignment of funds to address identified student needs.

The Federal and State Education Programs plan writing unit, in conjunction with the Los Angeles County Office of Education, provides technical assistance to local districts to support in developing a compliant and appropriate SPSA based on district, state, and federal guidelines.

(Refer to Gardena High School's Single Plan for Student Achievement in the Appendix 2.)

## Part 2: Curriculum and Instruction

### *a. Curriculum Map and Summary*

Gardena High School teachers will implement rigorous lessons based on the state standards and utilize the Los Angeles Unified School District's Guidelines for Instruction. Instructional Guides and Concept Lessons in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and the Social Sciences will frame the work in these core subjects. The scope and sequence of each of these instructional tools (Appendix 3) is clearly delineated in the Guides. Each curricular department will meet to develop common syllabi and curricular maps for each course where they do not currently exist. In addition, all teachers will work together to develop common interdisciplinary thematic project-based units and assessments based on the themes of the Small Learning Communities (SLCs). The Gardena SLCs are: Ninth Grade Transition Academy, Architecture, Construction, Computer Engineering and Robotics (ACCER), Creative and Liberal Arts (CALs), Sports Medicine, Health and Public Service (SHAPS), Southern California International Business Academy (SCIBA), and the Foreign Language/International Studies Magnet. Common planning time by department, grade level, and SLCs will be implemented to provide teachers adequate time to collaborate to address student needs.

Research will be conducted to determine the most effective sequence for mathematics. The current sequence of Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2 will be changed to Algebra 1, Algebra 2, and Geometry if borne out by the research. We will also investigate the effectiveness of providing Integrated Coordinated Science (ICS) for all 9<sup>th</sup> grade students to provide a strong foundation to pass Biology and Chemistry.

Students' learning needs will be continually assessed to ensure appropriate program placement. Course offerings in each SLC will be reviewed to ensure that all students have equal access to core classes and the intervention support needed to ensure successful completion of A-G and CAHSEE requirements for graduation. English Learners (ELs) will be clustered in sheltered core classes within SLCs to assist students meeting reclassification criteria. Career/Technology Education (CTE) pathways are currently embedded into the core curriculum of each SLC to support college and career readiness upon graduation.

Teachers will use data to make instructional decisions to meet the unique needs of individual students. Both formative (e.g. Periodic Assessments and teacher/department-made exams) and summative assessments (e.g. CST and CAHSEE) will be utilized to place students in appropriate interventions and make instructional decisions on how to differentiate lessons to meet student needs. In order to assist teachers in modifying their instructional practice, professional development on appropriate differentiation strategies

will be held. The professional development on differentiation of instruction will be based on the research of:

Gregory, G. H., & Chapman, C. (2002). *Differentiated instructional strategies: One size doesn't fit all*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Jensen, E. (1998). *Teaching with the brain in mind*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Marzano, R. J., Pickering, D., & Pollock, J. E. (2001). *Classroom instruction that works: Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Tomlinson, C. A. (1995). *How to differentiate instruction in mixed ability classrooms*. Alexandria, CA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Tomlinson, C. A. (1999). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

The Los Angeles Unified School District has aligned the standards measured on the California Standards Test and its periodic assessments as a means to provide evidence of the effectiveness of the curriculum in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science. There is a comparability chart (See appendix) for each subject area and grade level that displays the alignment between District Periodic Assessments and California Standards Tests (CSTs). The comparability charts provide a graphic display of the relationship between Periodic Assessments and the California Standards Test; confirm and validate the importance of learning happening in District classrooms; and delineate the instructional sequence as outlined in the District Instructional Guides. The assessments measure “Assessment **OF** Learning, California Standards Tests,” and “Assessment **FOR** Learning, LAUSD Periodic Assessments.” The Periodic Assessments offer ongoing administration, descriptive feedback, progress monitoring, and inform teacher practice and professional development needs. The California Standards Tests (CSTs) and California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) offer summative feedback that audits student achievement, and provides data for program evaluation and accountability. The analysis by the District’s Program Evaluation and Research Branch showed strong correlations between Periodic Assessment performance and CST performance. The correlations are in English Language Arts Grades 6-10 and Algebra AB. The following is a sampling of the research that supports improving assessments as a tool to increase student learning:

The entire November issue of *Educational Leadership* (Vol. 63, No. 3) is devoted to classroom assessment to promote learning (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development).

Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B., & William D. (2004, September). Working inside the black box: Assessment for learning in the classroom. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 86(1), 9-21.

Chappuis, S., & Stiggins, R. (2002, September). Classroom assessment for learning. *Educational Leadership*, 40-43.

Marzano, R. (2003). *What works in schools: Translating research into action*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Symonds, K. (2003). *After the test: How schools are using data to close the achievement gap*. San Francisco: Bay Area School Reform Collaborative.

Stiggins, R. (2002, March). Assessment for learning: A vision for the future. *Education Week*, 30-32.

Stiggins, R. (2002, June). Assessment crisis: The absence of assessment for learning. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 83(10), 758-765.

Sturgeon, J. (2006, August). A new kind of testing. *District Administration*.

A fundamental tenet of the SLCs is that all students will have equal access to all aspects of Gardena High School's offerings. Using a passport system, students in each SLC will have access to instruction in music, dance, theatre, visual arts, and media arts. The library is a focal point of the campus for all students. It is our goal to increase the number of volumes available to students and increase the number of hours the library is open to Gardena students and teachers.

#### **b. Track Record of Proposed Curriculum**

Research bears out that when there is alignment of all educational factors (state standards, summative and formative assessments, resources and the quality and appropriateness of pedagogy), students have positive achievement gains. The District's Instructional Guides, model lessons, scope and sequence documents, and periodic assessments are based on state standards and summative assessments. Quantitative and qualitative data indicate increased student success when these factors are implemented with fidelity.

Blank, R. K. (2002). Using surveys of enacted curriculum to advance evaluation of instruction in relation to standards. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 77(4), 86-120.

Schmidt, W. H., McKnight, C. C., Houang, R. T., Wang, H. C., Wiley, D. E., Cogan, L. S., et al. (2001). *Why schools matter: A cross-national comparison of curriculum and learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

The District is focused on raising the academic performance of all students, including underperforming students, to achieve academic standards using the research-based Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI<sup>2</sup>). RTI<sup>2</sup> integrates resources from general education, supplemental categorical programs, and special education through a comprehensive system of core instruction and interventions to benefit every student. The tiered approach is based upon research and the practice of providing high quality instruction or intervention matched to student needs so that the majority of students (80%) are successful in the core instructional program. Each of the three tiers identifies the instructional materials that must be used for the core, a means to monitor progress using interim measures, identification of interventions needed based on the measures, and finally, instructional support including coaching that provides resources to guide teaching and learning. Professional development will provide Gardena faculty the tools to implement the RTI<sup>2</sup> model. The following research will be foundational to this professional development:

Batsch, G., Elliott, J., Graden, J. L. Grimes, J., Kovaleski, J. F., Prasse, D., et al. (2008). *Response to intervention; Policy considerations and implementation*. Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc.

Buffum, A., Mattos, M., & Weber, C. (2009). *Pyramid Response to Intervention: RTI, professional learning communities, and how to respond when kids don't learn*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

c. **Addressing the Needs of All Students**

Gardena High School is committed to provide all students with a rigorous high school experience that will prepare them to be effective communicators, critical thinkers, problem solvers, and to be technologically literate. All students, including Students with Disabilities (SWDs), English Learners (ELs), Standard English Learners (SELs), and Gifted and Talented (GATE), receive instruction and services appropriate to their needs.

Approximately 10% of the Gardena High School population comprises Students with Disabilities (SWDs). These students are placed in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) based on their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). All SWDs have access to all SLCs. Within five years, a Learning Center will be in place in each SLC to provide appropriate support to SWDs and other students at risk of failure.

Approximately 16% of Gardena High students are identified as ELs, all of whom are in structured English immersion programs. Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) provides EL students access to core curriculum, while English Language

Development is supported through the *High Point* program. Saturday classes will be offered to students in ESL 1, 2, and 3 to remediate and enrich their studies.

Gardena High School will provide Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education (CRRE) to all students, with ELs and Standard English Learners (SELs) gaining the most benefit from this content and pedagogy. Professional development will be ongoing to provide teachers with the strategies and skills to meet the needs of these students. The four access strategies, Academic Language Development, Instructional Conversations, Graphic Organizers/Visual Patterns, and Cooperative Learning Structures, will be the focus of this professional development.

Gardena High School will implement Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtI<sup>2</sup>) for students at risk of failure. Universal screening mechanisms which include CST scores, periodic assessment data, in-class assessments and grades will be utilized to place students for maximum success. Effective Tier I instruction is the priority, differentiating instruction as needed in every classroom before moving students to more intensive support. Selected students participate in *Read 180* Levels 1 and 2, Essential Skills in English, English Language Skills, and/or after-school intervention for students unsuccessful in the 9<sup>th</sup>-or 10<sup>th</sup>-grade ELA CST. CAHSEE intervention classes are held during and after school and on Saturday. Peer tutoring (seniors) will be utilized in core classes within SLCs to support the learning for 9<sup>th</sup>-grade students, including ELs, SELs, SWDs, and GATE students. We will provide the following supports: Cognitive Tutor for during-the-day intervention for algebra; Accelerated Reader to support English; Vantage MyAccess to support writing; and Carnegie Math for additional mathematics support. English and mathematics support will be embedded in each SLC's offerings to provide additional during-the-day interventions.

**GARDENA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT ASSESMENT MATRIX 2010 - 2011**

<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>TYPE</b>	<b>GRADE LEVEL</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>RATIONALE</b>	<b>PROVIDER</b>
<b>CSTs</b> English/Language Arts Mathematics Science Social Science	Summative	9 - 11	Yearly	Measurement of California State Standards in core subject areas; NCLB compliance	California Department of Education
<b>CAHSEE</b>	Summative	10	Initially in 10th grade	Granting a high school diploma in California	California Department of Education
<b>CAPA</b>	Summative	9 - 12+	Yearly	Measurement of alternative curriculum mastery; NCLB compliance	California Department of Education
<b>CELDT</b>	Summative	9 - 12	Yearly	Measurement of English language skills for English Language Learners; NCLB compliance	California Department of Education
<b>LAUSD Periodic Assessments</b> English/Language Arts Mathematics Science Social Science	Formative	9 - 11	Quarterly	Assessment of standards mastery in core subject areas	Los Angeles Unified School District
<b>PSAT/NMSQT</b>	Summative	9 - 11	Yearly	Assessment of college readiness, Recruitment tool for AP classes	College Board
<b>SAT</b>	Summative	11 - 12	Several Times Choice of Applicant	Assessment of college readiness; needed for college admission	College Board
<b>ACT</b>	Summative	11 - 12	Several Times Choice of Applicant	Assessment of college readiness; needed for college admission	ACT
<b>Advanced Placement Exams</b>	Summative	10 - 12	Yearly	Assessment of mastery of college-level curriculum	College Board
<b>Course-Specific Unit Exams</b>	Formative	9 - 12	Bi-Weekly	Assessment of standards mastery	Gardena High School
<b>Course-Specific Benchmarks</b>	Formative	9 - 12	Quarterly	Assessment of standards mastery	Gardena High School
<b>Small Schools Project-Based Learning Activities</b>	Formative	9 - 12	Quarterly	Assessment of Standards mastery	Gardena High School
<b>Senior Project</b>	Summative	12	Yearly	Assessments of Standards/Skills mastery	Gardena High School
<b>Rtl<sup>2</sup> Assessments</b>	Formative	9 - 12	Bi-Weekly	Assessment of intervention progress	Gardena High School

***d. Accelerated Learning***

The Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) population comprises approximately 6% of the Gardena student body. Using GATE funds, the students receive resources and enrichment opportunities. Students participate in field trips, Advanced Placement (AP) testing, conferences and workshops. Gardena High School offers Honors and fifteen (15) AP classes for students identified as GATE and other interested students. We will continue to enroll students in the Los Angeles Unified School District's LAVA (Los Angeles Virtual Academy) program, which allows students to take advanced core and enrichment courses online, thereby accelerating their instructional program. We will seek to increase the number of students in our GATE population by continuing to assess students with alternative as well as traditional methods. In addition, we will increase the number of students in our AP classes by using the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) as an early indicator of success for our 9th- and 10th-grade students. This strategy will assist in the identification of our under-represented students (e.g. African American students).

***e. Instructional Strategies***

The new Gardena High School will provide a rigorous, standards-based curriculum utilizing researched and proven effective pedagogy to engage and raise all students to mastery of essential skills and content knowledge. Each small school will work to ensure the following:

- Completion by all students of the University of California/CSU, A - G requirements for graduation with equal access to classes that are aligned with the State content and performance standards, including Advanced Placement and honors classes as well as intervention opportunities.
- Implementation of pacing plans, designed lessons, and assessments to support student learning by each small school and department.
- Creation of a personalized learning experience for each student through teacher collaboration time.
- Implementation of project-based learning, interdisciplinary projects, and service learning projects as a way of engaging students in a vigorous, real-world learning experiences.
- Implementation of AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) strategies across the curricula.
- Alignment of Advanced Placement curriculum with the AP test content.
- Implementation of vertical teaming with honors and AP teachers within departments and SLCs.

All students will benefit from instruction that is differentiated to meet their unique needs, and culturally relevant and responsive. Specific curricular strategies will include the use of graphic organizers/ visual patterns, cooperative learning structures, instructional conversations, and academic language development. These four access strategies used in conjunction with project-based learning will promote student engagement and success.

Barron, B. J. S., Schwartz, D. L., Vye, N. J., Moore, A., Petrosino, A., Zech, L., et al. (1998). Doing with understanding: Lessons from research on problem- and project-based learning. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 7, 271-311.

Diehl, W., Grobe, T., Lopez, H., & Cabral, C. (1999). *Project-based learning: A strategy for teaching and learning*. Boston: Center for Youth Development and Education, Corporation for Business, Work, and Learning.

Ellis, E. (2004). Q & A: What's the big deal with graphic organizers? Available from [www.graphicorganizers.com](http://www.graphicorganizers.com).

Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, & practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Goldenberg, C. (1991). *Instructional conversations and their classroom application*. (Educational Practice Report 2). Santa Cruz, CA: The National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning.

Hill, J. D., & Flynn, K. M. (2006). *Classroom instruction that works with English language learners*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Hyerle, E., Alper, L., & Curtis, S. (Eds). (2004). *Student successes with thinking maps: School-based research, results, and models for achievement using visual tools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Kagan, S. (1995). *Cooperative learning*. Melbourne, Australia: Hawker Brownlow Education.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Richard-Amato, P. A., & Snow, M. A. (2005). *Academic success for English language learners: Strategies for K-12 mainstream teachers*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.

Scarcella, R. (2003). *Accelerative academic English: A focus on English language learners*. Los Angeles: Regents of the University of California.

Zwiers, J. (2008). *Building academic language: Essential practices for content classrooms*. San Francisco: Josey Bass Wiley.

## **Part 3: School Culture and Climate**

### **3a. Description of Culture**

We will provide a school culture which promotes a safe, welcoming learning environment in a small school setting of no more than 500 each, where students are treated with respect for their intellect and for their talents, are free to explore ways to develop their interests, and are able to explore pathways to careers and higher education.

The Green House is a transition academy for all 9th graders. Students will be divided into three houses so as not to exceed the 500-student limit. Teachers will create a culture in which students expect to succeed in all of their classes with a sense of accomplishment and a distinct understanding of what they have learned and how it is valuable to them and the purpose they have set.

Teachers will promote academic rigor and positive productive life-skills. Preparing 9th- grade students for high expectations and demands of 10th, 11th and 12th grade as well as the challenges they will face beyond these, are key objectives.

Architecture, Construction, Computer Science, Engineering and Robotics (ACCER) teachers embrace a common vision that will create a cohesive environment that supports student achievement. All ACCER students will have equal opportunity to work with one or more teachers for multiple years in a caring and supportive relationship. ACCER plans to implement the following to ensure such relationships:

1. Advisory Teachers
2. Mentoring Sessions
3. Dropout Prevention Classes

Students will meet twice a semester to review grades, goals, and discuss options. Parents will be encouraged to help keep students on track and be made aware of their students' goals. Counseling will be for all students regardless of level of achievement.

Faculty and staff will guide parents to become involved in their students' education. Parental involvement will reinforce support for students' needs. Students will also have the opportunity to extend education past the traditional instructional day. Opportunities will include but not be limited to: tutoring programs, dual enrollment college courses, internships, and after-school programs.

Arts, Media and Entertainment (AME) will reinforce the concept that education in and through the arts is a stimulant for enhanced learning and achievement. Learning via the arts can

improve academic performance, energize teachers, and transform educational environments through a differentiated curriculum.

The philosophy of critical thinking and habits of mind will be cultivated within and beyond the classroom. Students will be guided towards reasoned thinking, self-reliance, and an outlook that promotes the common good.

Personalization is a primary goal for AME. One-on-one connections will contribute to the dynamic school and social life in which students and staff will thrive.

Gardena High School Foreign Language/International Studies Magnet and the Southern California International Business Academy (SCIBA) are each designed as a school-within-a-school program. By establishing a partnership within the next five years, both programs will serve grades 9-12 with the common thread of international studies across all disciplines. The main emphasis of the Magnet program will continue to be foreign language, and in SCIBA, the emphasis will continue to be business. Languages and business will be interwoven in order for the students to be college-prepared and career-ready. Both programs will prepare the students for roles in the global economy by providing in-depth academic opportunities to explore the world of language, international studies, economics and business. Students will also continue to learn, appreciate and understand ethnic and cultural similarities and differences. The established sense of community of each program will remain, and each will maintain its own identity while sharing a partnership. An integral part of the partnership will be the camaraderie between the students and the teachers of both programs.

Sports Medicine, Health and Public Service (SHAPS) is focused on providing a strong foundation and preparation for entering public service and health-related fields of study. Students will meet A - G requirements while working in environments that emphasize sharing, caring, and learning. SHAPS welcomes students regardless of gender, cultural background or previous academic standing. Instruction and learning will take place in an environment that encourages multicultural viewpoints and allows for inclusion of knowledge that is relevant to all students. Instruction will be culturally relevant, incorporating and integrating diverse ways of knowing understanding, and representing information.

(See Appendix 4 for complete descriptions of small schools.)

The expectation is that each student in each small school will put forth his/her best effort to achieve, and that each adult will put forth equal effort to support our students' work. All students will graduate, and all students will be prepared to enter the work world and/or continue their education in college.

The school's culture will foster the following for all students on two levels:

## 1. Academic:

- The mastery of core content in all subject areas
- The completion of UC/CSU, A - G requirements in accordance with LAUSD requirement policy
- Academic enrichment through career pathway design, preparing students for school-to-work
- Passing the CAHSEE the first time
- Increased proficiency on state tests
- Proficiency in reading and writing at grade level
- Application of mathematical logic and scientific reasoning to prepare for solving problems and technological issues in the future
- The mastery of study skills necessary for college-level work

## 2. Social/Emotional

- A safe, respectful campus
- Self-discipline
- Autonomy, self-motivation, direction, and self-advocacy
- Personal and academic goal-setting for each school year, for college, for career, and beyond
- Collaborative work and team-building skills
- Reflection on their own learning through the use of student-led conferences
- Leadership skills and self-confidence

Adults in each small school will take responsibility for teaching and supporting these qualities; students will take responsibility for learning and maintaining these qualities. Each small school will institute an advisory program, scheduled during the school day, which will provide students with shared time with a caring adult who will act as a mentor and as an advocate for their students' academic and personal development. Parents will also be a part of our support system and will help make their children accountable for their learning.

In order to help create a culture of learning and high expectations, each small school will hold informational and motivational assemblies at the beginning of each semester to discuss with students the importance of individual and collective effort when faced with the array of tests they must take each year. Each student will know his scores on the CSTs, the CAHSEE, the PSAT and the SAT, and will know on which areas he/she excelled, and on which areas he/she needs to improve. Students will also understand their progress on mastery of core content skills. Students who need extra support in these areas will be afforded intervention opportunities both during the school day and before and after school.

While improved student achievement is our ultimate goal, celebrations for academic success will become part of the cultural norm. Each small school will provide incentives to motivate students who participate and who achieve Basic, Proficient, and Advanced performance bands on the California Standards Tests, and 350 and above on the CAHSEE. Celebrations for improved attendance and improved grades and behavior will also become part of our school

culture. Award assemblies, contests, student recognition nights, student-led conferences, and a yearly "G-Fest", a celebratory festival for students who participate in all mandated tests, will also become part of our culture. Incentives will be implemented both school-wide and by small school through the Data and Testing Committee and small school leadership, with the support of the school's Leadership class and administration.

### **3b. College and Career Readiness**

Gardena High School has a comprehensive plan to prepare all students to be college-prepared and career ready. College and career preparedness begins in pre-school. Gardena High School will work with our family of schools, their students and their parents, to begin creating a college-going culture early on.

Our "College-Bound Dreams" project, supported by the local district, holds meetings twice a year with parents of students from pre-school through grade 12. These meetings not only provide valuable information to parents about how to instill the goal of going to college in their children, but also help students and parents create a college portfolio beginning in the 5th grade. Elementary and middle school students and their parents are invited to workshops at our school held throughout the year which cover a wide range of topics, including graduation and A - G requirements, financial aid, asset-building, college and career research, writing application letters, and choosing extra-curricular activities. Students stay with this program through grade 12. The program culminates in our awarding several scholarships.

To specifically ensure our students will be college-prepared and career-ready, we have established multiple pathways within each small school. This sequence of courses provides students a rigorous curriculum and wide academic background, specialized electives and interdisciplinary theme-based lessons. Internships and mentorships with the community will ensure that students can access career, vocational, and post-secondary options. (See Appendix 5.)

Individualized Graduation Plans (IGP) will be designed for each small school to reflect the needs of each learner. Counselors of each small school will meet with their students and their parents regularly to review grades, test scores, progress towards completion of graduation, and college entrance requirements in order to revise the IGP.

Our promotion policy is in alignment with the LAUSD standards-based promotion policy, described in BUL-601.

Use of the College and Career Center and planning guides will allow students and families the opportunity to have access to information while developing education plans. This high degree of personalization and emphasis on courses and electives within each small school will be monitored by its leadership (principal, assistant principal, lead teacher, head counselor). Each small school will take responsibility for each student, so no one will be allowed to "slip through the cracks."

### **3c. School Calendar/Schedule**

Gardena High School's schedule will meet the required 65,300 instructional minutes required by the Educational Code and by Los Angeles Unified School District policy. The administration and the Shared Decision-Making Council (SDM) will ensure appropriate implementation of the bell schedule (See Attachment 6). Gardena High School is exploring innovative schedules to maximize the school's instructional minutes to design intervention opportunities during the school day when students are a captive audience. A modified bell schedule will facilitate personalization, especially if teachers and students can be engaged for extended periods of time. Extended periods of time greatly enhance the opportunity for teachers to interact with their students during the school day. In addition, modified bell schedules may decrease the number of students each teacher sees daily. Diminishing teacher-student ratios increases the opportunities for relationships to be developed and fostered. In addition, school-wide discipline and management vastly improve because transition time decreases, and students are situated in neighboring classrooms because of contiguous space. The instructional staff now has greater time flexibilities to plan lengthier projects, labs, and interactive activities with longer blocks of time.

The new design, if voted upon and approved by the faculty per the union contract, will allow the seamless embedding of intervention courses, thus ensuring students will be able to meet and exceed the individualized Graduation Plan (IGP) and post-secondary options. Therefore, Gardena High School will program guided intervention courses for all grades and across small schools to address academic and credit recovery needs. Each small school will identify the required intervention courses based on student data and diagnosed needs and determine the most appropriate curriculum to address the areas of growth.

The school is interested in a model that will support all programmatic and student needs, and vertical and horizontal articulation across the curriculum. Moreover, the intent of the modified bell schedule is to increase and maximize time on task for students, and create opportunities for increased teacher collaboration during the school day.

The modification of the bell schedule also provides on-target students the ability to accelerate their secondary studies. College-bound students have the opportunity to enroll in neighboring community colleges at the beginning or in the second semester of their senior year.

The intent of a modified bell schedule is to support teacher collaboration, increase the number of professional development sessions during the school year, and build required interventions for students into the regular school day.

In addition, the school wants to explore adjusting the school calendar so that the school year begins sometime in August and ends sometime between late May to early June. Starting in August would enable us to finish our fall semester (including finals) before winter break. It would also align the school with the testing calendar throughout the year.

The school calendar and bell schedule maximize the time students spend learning. We are continuing to investigate alternative bell schedules and calendars for the 2010 - 2011 school year to best accommodate our students' needs.

### **3d. Extracurricular and Athletic programs**

School-sponsored activities such as clubs, sports, and service organizations are tied to the school-wide vision of success for all students. Student participation will reflect the diversity of the student population.

The Associated Student Body (ASB) which is represented by the student government program, plays a vital role providing opportunities for all students to participate in activities that promote dignity, respect, high realistic goals, personal responsibility, and service to the community. The wide variety of clubs on campus provide students with the opportunity to explore areas of interest and provide service to the school community (See Appendix 7). Small schools will take on the task of promoting friendly competition between schools, including pep rallies, athletic games, academic competitions, projects, and celebrations.

Gardena High School will continue to promote "Panther Rituals" that bond our students and staff as a whole. These would include "Days of Dialogue", Multi-Cultural Show, Cinco de Mayo assembly, Coffee with the Principal, and our "Pride Program," which includes Student and Teacher of the Month, Senior Class Programs - Gardena's Got Talent, the Annual Fashion Show, and National Day of Service (where senior students provide community service to Gardena High School and the City of Gardena).

The performing arts have become an important part of Gardena High School. The drama department produces a fall and a spring musical, a fall and spring Music Concert. Beginning, intermediate, and performance level dance classes are offered, in addition to Play Production, Stage Crew, and an advanced technical theater program is part of the Visual and Performing Arts Department.

Our sports programs pride themselves not only on the development of athletic skills, but also on the development of character in our students. A strong sense of school pride and spirit can be seen in the high degree of participation in the program. In keeping with our mission of making academics a priority at our school, the athletic program will begin after school to allow more academic and elective course time during the school day.

### **3e. Student Discipline**

Gardena High School actively promotes a learning environment that is safe, secure, clean, and orderly, which is in alignment with the Los Angeles Unified School District's Foundation Policy (Bulletin 3638.0). The goal of the policy is to create a culture of discipline that provides for school-wide positive behavior supports and proactive strategies designed to prevent and/or reduce behavior problems. According to the policy bulletin, "The successful implementation of this policy is everyone's responsibility. Every student, parent, caregiver, teacher, administrator,

school-support person, school staff, Local District staff, Central Office staff, visitor, and community member engaged in educational activities has a role."

Gardena High School will have a discipline committee comprised of each of the previously mentioned stakeholders to accomplish our goals. We agree that behavior is instruction, not operations. Conversations regarding specific strategies at the teacher classroom intervention level will be discussed and agreed upon during small schools collaborative time. We intend to continue the implementation of our Safe and Civil School plan, which teaches proper behavior and self-discipline and which builds upon the LAUSD Discipline Policy.

In addition, Gardena High School will participate in a LAUSD program beginning January 2010, piloting a new on-line method for student discipline referrals.

In order to support the idea of shared responsibility for creating a culture of discipline and respect, we will have parents sign a contract indicating that they have received a Los Angeles Unified School District Parent/Student Handbook and have read with their children and understand the expectations for behavior outlined in the handbook. Students agree to follow school rules and obey the law while on campus.

### **3f. Health Mandates**

In addition to academics, meeting the needs of the whole child is a priority of our school. Therefore, having a strong school attendance policy that is understood by all stakeholders and implemented with consistency is a top priority. Gardena High School will develop a "culture of daily attendance" through teaching and supporting the ten core attendance concepts for all our students:

1. Clear Expectations of Positive Attendance (Goal 96%)
2. Compulsory Attendance Laws
3. Benefits of Good Attendance
4. Knowledge of School Calendar and Schedules
5. Morning Routine
6. Evening Routine
7. Plans for Coming to School (support people)
8. Creating Back-Up systems (other support in addition to regular daily plan)
9. Self-Care best practices for staying healthy (sleep, breakfast, mental health)
10. Consequences of Poor Attendance

We will focus on the implementation and valid use of District multidisciplinary programs such as SARB (Student Attendance Review Board), SST (Student Study Team), and COST (Coordination of Services Team). We will work with families and the community at large to ensure that students have access to District available health, nutritional and medical resources. In addition, we will use the resources of our Local District PSA (Pupil Services and Attendance) coordinator and our school PSA Counselor to ensure attendance every day, and especially during critical testing periods.

### **3g. Nutritional Needs**

We will ensure that all students have access to the vast resources of our Healthy Start Program to meet their physical and mental health needs. Gardena High School's 21st Century and Healthy Start Grants are supported by the Los Angeles Unified School District's *Beyond the Bell* Branch. The goal of Healthy Start is to increase academic achievement by improving attendance through providing students and their families access to medical, mental health, and social services. This supports Gardena High School's vision and mission of addressing the needs of the whole child. Healthy Start coordinates, with the assistance of community-based organizations, resources and services that support students in their efforts to remain in school despite obstacles that make school attendance difficult. Students are given the opportunity to benefit from resources that will help them deal with the psychological and physiological issues that affect their education:

1. **Health Clinic:** Free services include immunizations, sports physicals, sexually-transmitted disease testing, birth control, psychological services, and general medical care. There are over 3,000 office visits a year.
2. **Psychological Services:** Seven therapists are available to offer services such as individual and group counseling. Currently, more than 25 students are being served.
3. **Pregnancy Case Management:** Classes for prospective and parenting teen mothers and fathers are available through the South Bay Center for Counseling and the First-Five Grant. Case management and after-birth care, such as nutrition awareness, was provided to 25 female and 35 male students this year.
4. **Medical Healthy Families:** This program provides a bilingual certified applicant assistant once a week to assist families with insurance issues.
5. **Drug Impact:** Drug education is facilitated by a certified drug counselor from the Asian American Drug Addiction Prevention Program. Individual counseling is also available. Currently, 75 students participate in this program.
6. **High School Task Force:** A group of 25 students work with GDAAP (Gardena Drug and Alcohol Abuse Program) to provide extensive outreach on campus supporting a sober living style. Activities include Red Ribbon Week, Red Ribbon Presentation to the City Council, Drug -Free Week, and Alabazza ( a community evening of music).

A School-Community Policing Grant provides additional services to students whose education could otherwise be negatively impacted as a result of challenging circumstances and events. For many students, these programs offer a safe haven that will enable them to continue their development as students and young adults, and prevent them from engaging in negative behaviors. Following are services:

1. **Anger-Management:** This is a 10-week course in adolescent anger-management, facilitated by the Asian-American Drug Addiction Prevention Program. Students are referred by the Deans' Office, counselors, parents, health staff, and clinic doctors. Certification is given to those who complete the program. Currently 100 students are enrolled in the program.

2. **Juvenile-Impact Program:** Students found to be at-risk participate in a Saturday boot-camp program consisting of physical training and course work to improve self-esteem and build positive attitudes about school and life. Classes are taught by police officers from the Los Angeles Police Department and the Los Angeles School Police Department. Approximately 160 students participate in four sessions per year.
3. **Women's Leadership Project:** Female students participate in lunchtime meetings on women's issues. Coordinated by the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission. Twenty students currently participate in this program.

Every small school will continue to provide 504 Plan support for every identified student, in accordance with LAUSD policies, and State and Federal guidelines. Small school counselors, lead teachers, and administrators will be responsible for 504 Plans within their school.

## **Part 4: Assessments and School Data**

### **4a. Educational Goals and Metrics**

The Accountability Matrix (see Appendix 8) details specific goals and action steps. In summary, Gardena High School will re-organize in order to meet these goals:

- A 95% participation rate on all state and district assessments
- 70%+ of English Learners will score in the appropriate performance range on the CST for English/Language Arts as prescribed by the District Progress Benchmarks
- 70%+ of English Learners will progress one ELD level per year
- 70%+ of English Learners will score an overall ELD level of 4 or 5 on the CELDT after 4 - 5 years of instruction
- A 95% attendance rate for staff and students
- Decrease the number of suspensions to 25%
- An API score of 680 in 2010 and 710 in 2011
- A graduation rate of 83.2%
- 54.8%+ of Gardena students will score proficient/advanced on math CSTs in 2010
- 55.6%+ of Gardena students will score proficient/advanced on English/Language Arts CSTs in 2010

### **4b. Student Assessment Plan**

Gardena High School will fully implement a strategic plan utilizing District Periodic Assessments, state assessments, and school-created assessments and benchmarks to monitor student progress toward standards mastery. Teachers will meet regularly to use data from assessments to improve their teaching to meet the needs of their students.

- The CSTs, CELDT, CAPA, CAHSEE, PSAT, SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement exam scores will continue to provide summative data for our students.
- Core departments will use these data to analyze trends and identify action steps to bring students to mastery of the standards.

- District-created Periodic Assessments will be used as formative assessments; teachers will use these data to pinpoint what they need to re-teach.
- All departments will create several additional standards-based benchmark assessments for each course so students can regularly demonstrate their skill level and teachers can adjust their teaching to catch up students who are falling behind.
- Small Schools will institute project-based learning experiences for their students. Teachers in each small school will meet regularly to look at the student work generated by these activities in order to shape their own teaching practice. Students will create rubrics and use them to evaluate their own progress and the work of others, asking them to work at the highest level of Bloom's Taxonomy.
- All small schools will use the "Parent/Student/Teacher Compact" as an assessment and data collection tool.

Students enrolled in *Accelerating Academic Literacy* will continue the *Read 180* curriculum, and EL students will continue the *High Point* curriculum. Teachers will use these unit assessments to monitor progress and adjust their teaching.

The RtI<sup>2</sup> framework will utilize these assessments and others specifically created to monitor the progress of our students.

- Every teacher will use regular formative assessments to track the effectiveness of in-class intervention strategies in core classrooms.
- All teachers will use differentiated instructional strategies to provide enrichment and intervention daily so all students will learn.
- The culture of continuous improvement will be evident in all subject areas - teachers, students, and parents will have a complete understanding of what standards mastery is, and where they are in relation to it.
- The school's website, the parent center, and on-going parent trainings will provide information to all stakeholders on the meaning of assessment and its use.

Monthly time will be allocated to give teachers, both in small schools and in departments, the opportunity to share best practices and positive experiences while looking at student data and student work to shape their instruction. Professional development will provide the needed background and support to implement RtI<sup>2</sup>.

#### **4c. Data Team and Instructional Team**

The Shared Decision-Making Council will convene an Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) to implement an effective plan for using data at Gardena High School. This team consists of the principal, UTLA representative, department chairpersons, instructional coaches, coordinators, counselors, the library media teacher and other interested teachers and community members. This team will schedule time within the professional development schedule for teachers, counselors, administrators, and support persons to review data and use it to inform practice. Data will be used in the following ways:

- Administrators and lead teachers will use data to create a master schedule that meets the needs of students, programming students into appropriate classes, A - G requirements, and small school-specific courses to ensure graduation, enrichment and intervention.
- Teachers within departments will use data to make decisions on curricula, teaching strategies, project-based learning experiences, interventions, enrichments, benchmarks, and grading policies.
- Staff will continue to access *MyData* regularly to monitor student progress.
- Support staff will continue to use data to identify students who need services and monitor the effectiveness of those services.
- At the beginning and end of each school year, the ILT will meet with feeder schools to review data and track the progress of cohorts of students as they move through the system. This team will then create and improve policies and procedures as a result of the data.

**4d. Data Systems**

Gardena High School will continue to employ all LAUSD data systems to monitor all students. We will fulfill the requirements of the Modified Consent Decree by utilizing the Integrated Student Information System (ISIS) to track student records and identify services, using the MCD indicators to measure progress of students with disabilities.

**4e. LAUSD School Report Card**

Gardena High School will continue to utilize the LAUSD School Report Card. Stakeholders on the School Site Council, the Compensatory Education Advisory Council, the English Language Learners Advisory Council, the Shared Decision-Making Council, parents, and students will review and analyze the School Report Card in January of each year to capture student, parent, and staff data and feedback.

**4f. Research and Evaluation**

Gardena High School agrees to participate in research and evaluation projects in partnership with LAUSD, higher education institutions, and research organizations. Teachers, administrators, staff, students, and parents will be available for surveys, focus groups, and interviews in order to replicate best practices.

**4g. Operational Goals and Metrics**

Gardena High School will comply with the operational goals and metrics of the Los Angeles Unified School District.

**Part 5: Professional Development Program**

### **5a. Professional Development**

Teachers on the Professional Development Committee and the Instructional Leadership Team will design the professional development topics and calendar for each school year. United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA) has a training program available to teachers who desire to become professional development leaders, including developing and facilitating professional development for school sites. Teachers will be encouraged to receive this training, called the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) UTLA Educational Research and Dissemination (ER&D) course.

Professional Development planning will comply with the LAUSD/UTLA contract. The focus is on the implementation of standards-based instruction, the quality of teaching and learning, and the development of academic targets for students to achieve. Specifically, the data show the school needs to focus on reading comprehension and writing, and Algebra 1. The data also tell us that the school needs to focus its attention and instructional practices on our identified groups, ELs, students with disabilities, and African Americans. Professional development will continue to support teachers in meeting the needs of all learners in the following ways:

1. The content will center on effective, research-based teaching, strategies, concept lessons, professional readings, protocols for looking at student work, and assessment data to inform instruction.
2. All teachers will master SDAIE (Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English) methodology and incorporate CRRE (Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education) strategies into their everyday practice across the curriculum.
3. Professional development will highlight the Access Strategies (Academic Language, Cooperative Learning Structures, Instructional Conversations, and Graphic Organizers/Visual Patterns) to support our ELs, SELs, and SWDs.
4. Professional development will provide the background for continued implementation of technology in every classroom, including its uses in project-based learning, interdisciplinary projects, distance learning, and conceptualization for rigorous tasks.
5. Professional development will give teachers the tools they need to differentiate for GATE students as well as those at-risk, helping teachers maximize the quality time they spend with students every day.
6. Support teacher attendance at Pillar (a Partnership between LAUSD and the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce) conferences, which provides the framework and lesson plans necessary to successfully introduce or enhance integrated curricula in schools.

Teachers will collaborate in small schools to examine the quality of student work and to help them pinpoint areas of need and effectively implement State learning standards into the curriculum. Teachers will regularly look at CST, CAHSEE, and Periodic Assessment data to develop new and effective teaching strategies to address the goals established for professional development and the teaching and learning practices of each small school.

Department meetings will focus on developing and analyzing common and periodic assessments. Whole-school professional development will showcase best practices presented

by the staff. All professional development and collaboration time is aligned with our action plan goals from the (SPSA) Single Plan for Student Achievement.

Four additional areas for professional development have been identified by Gardena High School. By implementing the following practices, student achievement will improve while teachers are collaborating to develop additional practices to meet the needs of all of our learners.

1. Increased level of questions asked by teachers and students in the classroom to the highest levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, by 50%. The goal in the next three years is for 90% of the questions to move from comprehension to the highest levels, synthesis and evaluation.
2. Improved quality of questioning in every classroom, using Bloom's Taxonomy to move from least rigorous to most rigorous to support critical thinking and creativity.
3. Use of a common academic and school cultural language by all staff, students and the community. As part of this development, a common and shared vocabulary with associated behaviors will be attached.
4. Strong relationships between staff and students developed to serve as a motivational tool so students can establish long-term goals and see value in their educational experience through advisory time each week with an adult mentor.

The transition of students matriculating from one school to the next has been determined by research to be a major cause for underperformance in some students. Professional development articulation between the feeder middle school staffs and the Gardena High School staff will be important for seamless educational social and academic transitions to occur. This will not only be part of our school-wide professional development program, but will be part of our teacher collaboration time in our small schools.

### **5b. Teacher Orientation**

As with other professional development, new teacher support will be designed by the professional development committee. Support for new teachers will begin with a two-day orientation at the beginning of every school year. The orientation will focus on the operational and instructional structures of the school. Data, curriculum, programs, policies, and procedures will be particularly highlighted. The school's vision, mission, and guiding principles will be explained to integrate new teachers in the delivery of curriculum and implementation methodologies. As importantly, new teachers will be introduced to the effective instructional strategies to differentiate instruction and make data-driven decisions to tailor the curriculum to meet student needs. Monthly new teacher meetings will be sponsored by the administration and the lead teachers of the small schools. Probationary teachers will be assigned a BTSA (Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment) program support provider through Los Angeles Unified School District. New teachers will receive school-wide professional development on Tuesdays, and differentiated professional development throughout the year to meet their needs.

### **5c. Professional Development Calendar**

The professional development calendar will be developed each year by the teachers on the professional development committee in conjunction with the school leadership. Minutes from the designated Banked-Time Tuesday Professional Development Days have been reduced to 60 minutes for each meeting, thereby allowing for teacher collaboration time each Tuesday of the school year. This time will be divided between small schools and departments. Professional Development will be tailored to individual teachers' needs and will support the vision, mission, and philosophy of the school. (See Appendix 9.)

### **5d. Program Evaluation**

Gardena High School will evaluate and modify the effectiveness of its professional development program by assessing student work, summaries of classroom observations, and various data points including grades, CST performance, surveys, and periodic assessments. The school's Instructional Leadership Team will collectively monitor and evaluate the required modifications to more effectively develop professional development to continuously improve academic achievement. The administrators will collaborate with department chairpersons, and lead teachers to further differentiate the professional development program to meet the needs of the small schools and vertical and horizontal learning across core curricular classes.

Small schools and department meetings will be differentiated as needed. Professional Development opportunities during the summer and on Pupil Free days will further differentiate and meet the individual needs of teachers on the professional development continuum. The Stull Evaluation Process will be used to identify targeted areas of growth, and will be used to tailor individual and school-wide development goals.

## **Part 6: Professional Culture**

### **6a. Professional Culture**

In order to promote a positive academic, behavioral and social environment, Gardena High School will begin by creating a collaborative culture of professionals; a professional learning community. Teachers will be afforded decision-making opportunities through participation on the School Site Council, the Shared Decision-Making Council, the Instructional Leadership Team, and the small school councils. Teachers and administrators will develop a more collaborative culture with the intended result of a supportive, professional climate that promotes the continuous renewal of instructional methods and curricular offerings in an atmosphere of collegiality, trust, and a shared mission of serving all of our students in the school. This type of school culture will serve as a foundation for change, continuous improvement, and renewal. Teachers will regularly engage in professional dialogue with colleagues; share ideas, knowledge, and techniques; and participate in collaborative problem-solving around classroom issues. As a result, instruction and curriculum are regularly being refined or changed to meet our student needs.

Collegial relationships among and between staff are another important feature of these schools. Formal ceremonies that mark transitions in the school year are rituals that bind people to each other and shape the unwritten culture, and meaningful traditions that shape and mold new staff and seasoned staff. These activities can reinforce collegiality and collaboration. Examples of these yearly traditions are 1) a collaboratively developed, school-sponsored professional development conference for teachers; 2) retreats for collaborative planning; and 3) regular shared development of school improvement plans and budgets; 4: celebration lunches and assemblies.

Staff will have opportunities to collaborate in activities that are positive, self-directed, and important to them such as: school-based management, school improvement planning teams, faculty study groups that meet to discuss professionally relevant topics, regular and continuous communication of ideas, sharing of materials, time to reflect on one's work, time to create inter-disciplinary projects, team teaching, and peer observations. Collective work on new instructional methods and collaborative decision-making and planning of staff development activities are all organized structures that give all teachers the chance to work together, get to know each other, and build on collegial relationships. Developing strong, trusting, collaborative cultures will help build a foundation for continued growth for students, teachers, and administrators.

The Gardena High School leadership team will serve as one of the ways in which teachers are included in the school-level decision-making process. The ILT will be made up of department chairpersons, small school lead teachers, instructional coaches, and program coordinators. This team will be responsible for meeting regularly to discuss best practices, analyzing assessment data, providing support to struggling teachers and staff, designing professional development activities to address the needs of students, teachers and staff, as well as ensuring that the Gardena High School community is collectively addressing the school's mission and vision, the Accreditation Expected School-wide Learning Results (ESLRs) through implementation of the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) accountability matrix, and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) recommendations and critical areas for improvement.

#### **6b.and 6c. Evaluation and Feedback**

The Gardena High School administration will continue to monitor faculty and staff performance through the Stull Evaluation process. Administrators will visit classrooms on a regular basis by following a visitation calendar designed for the purpose of ensuring equitable distribution of visits of teachers while also ensuring accountability of administrators to support teacher practice. Administrators will give written and verbal feedback immediately after observation of practice. Differentiated professional development will be provided to teachers who are having challenges in helping students achieve. Coaching, peer observation, mentoring, and the services of the Los Angeles Unified School District's BTSA (Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment) program will be among the recommended supports.

In addition to the traditional Stull evaluation, Gardena High School will implement a peer coaching program one of the methods used to enhance teacher performance. This non-

judgmental and non-evaluative method will be used to reflect on current practices or expand, to refine, and build new skills. Peer coaching will be utilized to share new ideas, to teach one another, and to conduct classroom observations. Each team will be comprised of an instructional coach, the small school lead teacher, a department chairperson, and one other teacher. The level of trust that Gardena High School will develop will make it possible for the staff to support and listen to one another and to adapt instruction based on the individual needs of students. Allowing peers to observe classes will allow for feedback on individual strengths and weaknesses without having to be evaluated by an administrator. This feedback will then be used to provide professional development, mentoring, and individual coaching to those teachers who are struggling to meet the needs of our diverse student population.

As part of the peer coaching program, several methods will be used to support the struggling teacher:

- Model Lessons - Instructional coach, small school lead teacher, department chairperson, or other teacher leaders visit classes and model the tool or strategy with students.
- Co-teaching Lessons - Teachers work with instructional coaches to create a lesson that incorporates the tool or strategy being introduced. Both then execute this lesson with the teacher's class.
- Observe Lessons - Instructional coaches observe the teacher while he/she implements the strategy or tool.

After each step, reflection and discussion on what worked, what did not work, how the teacher might approach the lesson differently, etc., is crucial to success. This process will continue for the remainder of the school year or until the teacher and coach see improvement in student performance.

Gardena High School will also develop a performance assessment tool for teachers that will supplement the peer coaching program. This tool will be based on subject-specific teacher state standards and the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. It will also incorporate elements of peer observations, demonstration lessons, portfolio documentation, professional growth activities, and elements of self-evaluation.

The entire Gardena High School staff will adopt a philosophy of "no excuses." Each teacher is responsible for improving the academic achievement of all students. Periodically, teachers will discuss the progress of his/her students with the Instructional Leadership Team. These quarterly reviews serve several purposes: they provide the presenting teacher with opportunities for improved teaching strategies; they provide the overall support team with a focus for coordinated efforts; they provide the coaches and administrators with data for planning professional development programs; and they allow the administration to monitor the progress of students on a classroom-by-classroom basis. Feedback from these instructional sessions will allow the instructional team to design professional development that gives teachers strategies for improving their lessons.

To improve professional practice, and consequently to improve student learning, teachers need accessible opportunities and models for collaboration, sharing of ideas, feedback and assistance

with their practice so that students have the most optimal situation for learning, achievement, and success at school.

## **Part 7: Serving Specialized Populations**

### **7a. Specialized Instruction**

#### **English Language Learners**

The English Language Learners (ELs) at Gardena High School consist of students from a wide variety of different language and cultural backgrounds. At Gardena High School, the EL population incorporates 17 different languages from 20 different countries as far away as Mongolia to the Hispanic majority, thus creating a true multicultural community. These ELs share the considerable challenge of having to learn English while responding to the subject matter demands of the core curriculum.

The ELs at Gardena High School are further subdivided into three major categories:

1. Newly arrived under-schooled students
2. Newly arrived highly educated students
3. Long-term English learners who have been in U.S. schools for six years or more

Each of these subsets has specific and unique educational needs. These students must be served individually to facilitate their education.

The Bilingual Education Department at Gardena High School is devoted to the development of a school culture which promotes academic success and social responsibility. The overarching mission statement and goals of the Bilingual Education Department have been the development of a climate of respect for the individual creating a community which cultivates educational success. The English Learner Department is founded on the core concept that effective education begins with a compassionate understanding of ELs' needs utilizing a holistic philosophy.

At Gardena High School, the educational process of the English Learner begins from the very first encounter during registration and enrollment. Students are greeted with language support in their primary language while assimilating into the school environment. An open door policy has been established with the Bilingual Education Department housing both coordinator and counselor as a welcoming location for students and parents alike.

Staff interaction and peer mentoring at Gardena High School support the philosophy that a student must feel comfortable, secure, and safe in order to learn. An example of the culturally inclusive environment strategy is that both student and parents are given a "Welcome Packet" in a variety of languages containing school information such as school policies, school calendar and bell schedules. Students and parents meet with the bilingual coordinator and counselor initially and periodically to provide a support resource for all ELs.

During the initial enrollment period, the student is guided through their school day with a peer mentor who often is fluent in their primary language to support their movement from classroom to classroom. The peer mentors accompany the students throughout the school and assist with familiarity of school surroundings.

An additional instructional strategy the department provides is peer tutors for ESL levels 1A, 1B, 2A, and for students in all classes where the teacher does not possess the bilingual capabilities in that student's primary language.

English Learners are equitably distributed across each small school by ensuring student choice of small school community, thus providing students with both access to the curriculum and specialized electives related to career choice.

We will implement the following strategies to teach and reach the ELs in a variety of educational settings:

- Alignment of all instruction to the California Standards and the Master Plan for English Learners, as mandated by LAUSD. This will be the foundation for all curriculum in the English Learner department.
- Use of the *High Point* curriculum with ESL students for English language literacy. This curriculum is an intensively organized platform which guided both the teacher and student in a scaffold structured program covering the domains of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Each of these domains is delivered to the student in the format of audio, visual, and kinesthetic methods.
- Use of the *High Point* curriculum as an assessment tool to evaluate student progress and movement from one level to another.
- Use of the students' learning style as the beginning point for all lesson planning.
- Use of a balanced approach to instruction via audio and video, incorporating all modalities into daily lessons.
- Use of SMARTboard technology to deliver lessons.
- Student use of computers in each classroom as a supplemental method for classroom instruction and individual work assignments.
- Use of cooperative learning activities as a significant portion of all classroom instruction to support positive social interactions and to foster communication in English to complete assignments.
- Use of Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies as the main method of content delivery in all EL classrooms. SDAIE implies use of the following:
  1. Visual and context clues to access the subject matter with charts, graphs, and visual aids
  2. Explanation of subject concepts and context with slower speech
  3. Lesson planning built upon prior knowledge drills
  4. Incorporation of cultural background information
- Implementation of specially designed intensive literacy programs to serve the under-schooled student, to assist in bridging the achievement gap with the implementation of after-school tutoring, and extended-year programs during the summer months.

- Development of the Saturday program as a learning community. Saturday instruction for ESL students increases the instructional time in English skill-building. This program creates a bi-fold opportunity for the student to gain skills while associating in a collegial community of like-minded learners.
- Introduction of culturally appropriate literacy and accelerated programs for those students who have advanced levels of academic fluency in subjects other than English.
- Placement of students in AP classes as academic capability permits to provide students access to this rigorous curriculum.
- Introduction of meta-cognitive activities such as study skills, time management and planning at all levels of English language acquisition.
- Providing additional instructional time for students to acquire their English skills more rapidly, allowing students to move through the step levels of *High Point* as a faster pace. This has produced in unique cases two valedictorians from the English Learner Department.
- Providing adequate training for teachers of ELs in the practices and processes of second language development.
- Scheduling meetings for ESL teachers on a regular basis to discuss instructional strategies and curriculum alignment among the levels.
- Allowing for individual student placement and programming into the curriculum by the counselor for entry at any age and any point in the school year.
- Allowing for the counselor and bilingual coordinator to operate as a team to solve student academic and social problems.
- Programming struggling PRP (preparing to reclassify) students (identified by grades and CST scores) into an additional English skills class to supplement their English instruction and assist in bridging the achievement gap in their skills.
- Holding special classes on Saturday and after school for EL learners who have not passed the CAHSEE.
- Mentoring the PRP students toward reclassification through individual counseling sessions. Students are given detailed information regarding their status, the steps necessary to reclassify, and the data which indicates exactly which grades will be required to move into the mainstream and exit the EL program. The bilingual coordinator conducts these meetings, which have resulted in successfully moving 15% of students to RFEP status in one year.

Although students are diffused across the small schools, a sense of community has been maintained and acknowledged by a centralized office location to facilitate student and parent involvement. This sense of community is enhanced by sensitivity to the EL student's educational success on the part of the faculty and staff.

Other ways the EL department enhances the sense of community are through awards, honors, field trips, workshops, and speakers directly related to the needs of the English Learner. Each of these activities invite parent involvement. The activities include:

- Student Awards Night for positive academic achievement held each semester
- Certificates for honor roll students

- Field trips to local colleges and universities
- Financial aid workshops
- Guest speakers to discuss college and vocational career pathways

The successful counseling component of the English Learner program consists of monitoring and mentoring each student. Students meet with counselors on a regular basis. At-risk students are called in for a meeting every five weeks based on grades. Letters are sent home for parent signature requesting conferences to discuss grades and credits. Intervention strategies are devised and discussed with parents to improve student academic performance.

The success strategies previously implemented have been validated and documented in a recent research project conducted by UCLA. The Gardena High School English Learner Program was ranked number one of all 47 large comprehensive high schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District. This ranking was designated by the on-time graduation rate of the English Learner population. This study is evidence of the continuity of our program and its development upon a holistic approach to education. Success can also be attributed to the faculty, staff, bilingual coordinator and the English Learner counselor, who have all demonstrated cultural literacy and sensitivity to the differences among students.

We have a number of projected plans and ideas for improvement, including:

- Vertical teaming with feeder schools to facilitate English Learner student matriculation in the program.
- Implementation of assessment and intervention based on data-driven planning.
- Organizing an International Club as a means of maintaining a cohesive student community.
- Hosting a section on the Gardena High School website to announce events and activities of the EL program.
- Seeking new methods of tapping the intrinsic motivation of the EL student who has been in the program more than six years or who exhibits other at-risk qualities.
- Group counseling for a homogenous group of at-risk students to improve academic skills, social skills, and mental health issues.
- Peer tutoring for students using college students.
- Increased attention to truant and tardy EL students to determine causal factors and to work toward solutions.
- Providing additional workshops and information sessions for students and parents regarding college admissions and financial aid.
- Providing additional field trips for college visits.
- Increasing our reclassification rate for the 2010 - 2011 school from 15% to 18%, resulting in a yearly net gain of 3%.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Ten percent of Gardena High School's student population requires special education services. The restructured Gardena High School understands that the special education process is

integral to ensuring that students with disabilities have IEPs that support their educational and career goals.

The school will first institute a campus Modified Consent Decree (MCD) committee consisting of the school principal, the special education coordinator, two special education teachers, two general education teachers, and a parent representative. The charge of this committee will be to review the school's MCD Progress Report. It will also verify that the Principal's Checklist, outlined in the Los Angeles Unified School District's Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual, is implemented in good faith as well as to ensure that the MCD outcomes are met to stabilize the school's special education process. Gardena High School will use Welligent's master calendar concurrently with the school's SIS files to schedule IEP meetings and check IEP distribution to special education teachers. The school will complete all IEPs within 60 days upon receipt of the Special Education Assessment Plan. The special education coordinator and MCD clerk will "back-up" the school's schedule to ensure that large groupings of scheduled IEPs are completed in advance to meet outcome 10 of the MCD. All special education teachers will receive up-to-date support on changes to Welligent, using formal methodologies for assessing students and completing resource logs. The school will ensure that there are at least four Behavioral Intervention Case Managers (BICMs) on site to guarantee that the school is meeting the requirements outlined in the District's Policy Bulletins H-50 (rev.) and BUL-3958.0. We are working to ensure all special education teachers will have an additional conference period to assess students and to complete IEPs within five years. All students receiving IEP services will have an Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) to assist them with transitioning to a career-ready adulthood. Gardena High School will also use the Los Angeles Unified School District's DOTS/Bridge Collaborative Best Practices document as a reference to help the school meet outcomes 3, 4, and 9 of the MCD.

Gardena High School values the role of parents and guardians participating in the special education process. The school, in accordance with the Los Angeles Unified School District's Policy Bulletin BUL-4140.0, will provide the parent or guardian a special education assessment plan within 15 days of receipt of the request. IEP team members will be notified within 10 calendar days prior to the scheduled date of the meeting. The school will implement conference calls and make every effort to communicate with and accommodate the needs of parents who cannot attend the IEP meetings during the school day. The MCD clerk will record all attempts to contact parents and convince them to attend IEP meetings. The IEP meeting room will be identified, centrally located for easy parent access, and secured to prevent the outside transmission of confidential information. The school will provide parents with copies of the IEP goal pages in conjunction with school progress reports and report cards.

Gardena High School understands that while special education services should be offered to students who have identified needs, it is clear that special education is by its nature, a service. Studies have consistently concluded that students with disabilities have better access to education if they are routinely evaluated and "mainstreamed" to a general education setting where appropriate. Gardena High School will use operational guidelines provided by the Los Angeles Unified School District's Special Education Division to require a learning center designed to assist students with special needs in meeting their IEP goals, improving their

academic skills, and improving overall academic achievement. The special education coordinator, in conjunction with special education teacher input and support, will provide a "passport" document to general education teachers identifying students receiving IEP services, goal summaries and accommodations. Placement of students will be determined through the IEP process and the offer of FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education), including support and services, and will be driven by the unique needs of the individual student. Gardena High School will provide special education classrooms interspersed throughout the small school on the campus to provide maximum social interaction with the general education population. Gardena High School will provide least to most restrictive options throughout the campus to meet the needs of students with varying levels of disability. These options may include general education with collaborative consultation, designated instruction, resource specialist program, and special day class. The MCD committee will work with assistant principals, the special education department chairperson, and the small school lead teachers to determine LRE options based upon student need. Students will have equal access to general education programs including lunch, nutrition, extra-curricular activities, field trips, and other programs. Gardena High's special education program will provide access to general education academic and elective classes along with the necessary appropriate personnel. Administrators, general education teachers, special education teachers, paraprofessionals, related service providers, and other personnel will collaborate to provide opportunities for social interactions between special education students and the general student population. Resource Specialists will be given opportunities to collaborate with the general education teachers in planning strategies and activities for the students on their caseload. Gardena High School has a Community-Based Instruction (CBI) classroom that serves students up to 22 years of age. Gardena High School has provided on-campus employment for CBI students from 18 to 22 years of age through the recycling program. All special education students between the ages of 18 and 22 are eligible for instructional services through the special education department, as mandated by current state and federal law. In keeping with the Los Angeles Unified School District's commitment to serve all students with disabilities who are near graduation or have the required attendance, we will complete a Summary of Performance (REF-4132.1).

Gardena High School will ensure that extended school year (ESY) services are provided to students with disabilities who have "unique needs and require special education services and related services in excess of the regular academic year," according to District policy. The MCD committee will prepare guidelines for school IEP teams to use when determining ESY for a student. These guidelines will address:

- Severity of disability
- Critical areas of learning
- Extent of regression in learning
- Recoupment rate
- Availability of alternative resources such as general education and intervention programs

In order for an IEP team to recommend a student for ESY, the team will document and review regression-recoupment and critical skills criteria outlined in the Los Angeles Unified School

District's Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual. The school's IEP teams will determine the type of ESY program, related services and transportation, if needed, for qualifying students. The IEP teams will ensure that ESY services are part of the FAPE summary offer on page 12 of the IEP, provided that these services are different from the regular academic year. However, according to District policy, the IEP team can refer a student with disabilities to general education summer program if warranted. These referrals will not be documented on the IEP.

## **At-risk students**

We will meet the needs of our at-risk students (low-achievers, students of poverty, students with behavioral issues, pregnant students, truant students, students with drug issues, students with sexual identity issues, and students with emotional issues) in a number of ways.

We will more effectively align the following resources to better support at-risk students: SLC Interventions, Coordination of Services Team (COST), Student Success Team (SST), Student Attendance Review Team (SART), Special Education Assessment and 504 Plan, Student Attendance Review Board (SARB), as well as the Pupil Services and Attendance Counselor (PSA). These service providers work collaboratively and individually to serve students, families, and the community. These teams will monitor and continue to use data-driven strategies designed to prevent and reduce dropouts, absenteeism, suspension, detention, and low academic achievement rates of the at-risk student population.

Data will be secured from the following sources: CAHSEE, CST, attendance records, suspension records, and detention records.

The collaborative efforts will match the needs of the at-risk student by referring to one or more of the following options: individual and group counseling, parent education, parent conferences, home visitation/dropout recovery, case management/intervention, referral to agencies and services, establish and coordinate community partnerships, work with the non-graduate population, connect students who have dropped out with alternative educational programs, liaison/advocate homeless students/families, liaison/advocate foster and group home youth.

## **Part 8: Family and Community Engagement Strategy**

### **8a. Identification**

The city of Gardena is a full-service city of 5.9 square miles, with an ethnically mixed population of just under 60,000 people. Of those residents, 47.8% are male, 51.3% are female and 23% are school-age children. Young adults, ages 18 - 24 comprise 45% of the population. Adults age 45 and older represent 30% of the city's population.

Gardena is a family-oriented city with a high quality of life. The median household income is \$49,508. Other household income is derived from Social Security (22.5%), Supplemental Social Security income (5.9%), retirement income (14.0%), and public assistance (6.6%). The city's

unemployment rate is 4.9%. Eighteen percent (18%) of families with children under 18 years of age live in poverty. Married households represent 48.4% of the population, those never married represent 32.3% and those divorced represent 9.6% of the population.

Seventy eight percent (78%) of the students attending Gardena High School live in Gardena; 11% live in Los Angeles, 5% live in Carson, and 3% live in Wilmington. Since our students come from many different areas, our school culture must become increasingly flexible to welcome these students as part of our community.

The city of Gardena is known for its rich cultural diversity. The city's ethnic distribution is 31.8% Hispanic, 26.9% African American, 12.2% White Non-Hispanic, 11.6% Japanese, 6.2% Korean, 3.3% Filipino, 2.4% Vietnamese, 1.6% Chinese, 1.3% American Indian, and less than 1% are classified as "others." Gardena residents speak a variety of languages. English-only speakers represent 51.9% of the households; 26.9% speak Spanish, and 18.9% speak Asian and Pacific Island languages at home. Approximately 67% of Gardena residents are native born, while 32.8% are foreign born. Of the foreign born, 14.0% are naturalized citizens and 18.8% are documented and undocumented immigrants.

Our challenge is to find ways to authentically engage families and other stakeholders in this diverse community.

#### **8b. Family and Community Engagement**

The Gardena High School faculty and staff believe that a strong partnership among parents, the community, and our school is vital to the success of both students and the school. We will engage parents and the community in a variety of ways:

1. Providing strong avenues of communication including the monthly school newspaper, *The Panther Press*, monthly "Coffee with the Principal" meetings, *Paw Prints* (the weekly bulletin), our monthly Title 1 newsletter, our school website, which has become the first in our District to have live streaming video which shows student and athletic events, and use of the District ConnectEd phone message system to announce school events.
2. Recruiting parents and community members to be part of each small school's advisory committee.
3. Inviting parents and community members to run for seats on our School Site Council, Shared Decision-Making Council, CEAC (Compensatory Education Advisory Council), and ELAC (English Learner Advisory Council) and be part of our decision-making process and to help develop the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA).
4. Providing opportunities for parents to interact with their children and their children's teachers through student-led conferences.
5. Inviting parents and community members to be a part of our "College-Bound Dream" project, described in section 3b.
6. Inviting parents to be members of our WASC committees, to help us develop our school-wide learning results.
7. Inviting members of the business community to be active partners with our small schools by providing speakers, mentors, job shadowing opportunities, and intern-ships

for our students. In addition, we will ask business and community leaders to be a part of our evaluation team for our senior projects.

8. Providing a system for parents and community members to volunteer both in and out of the classroom. Involvement opportunities will include, but not be limited to:  
1) monitoring school activities, plays, field trips, and sporting events  
2) tutoring  
3) supporting school offices and the library,  
4) organizing book fairs,  
5) making phone calls,  
6) assisting the Bookroom, and  
7) helping register students for the PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test) and other tests.
9. Maintaining a Parent Center, run by a full-time parent, who will act as a resource and liaison for parents. This parent representative will map community resources to support positive attendance.
10. Developing an after-school program that includes opportunities for alumni and community members to increase our students' job skills.

Because parental involvement and community support are so critical to ensuring student success, the small schools and Magnet school will host:

1. Orientation sessions for new students and their families at the beginning of each school year.
2. Small school informational meetings in the spring for incoming 9th graders from each feeder middle school.
3. Parent education nights throughout the school year to discuss such diverse topics as graduation and A - G requirements, school policies and programs, standards-based instruction and required skills, student testing program and preparation, expectations for student achievement , educational and intervention resources, interpreting assessment data, higher education guidance, and financial planning for college.
4. Family health trainings to help parents support good health, good habits, and good attendance in their children.
5. College Night to help parents and students set academic goals and learn about college entrance requirements, exams, applications, and financial aid.
6. Parent trainings on adolescent development and at-home academic and social support.
7. PTSA meetings - Gardena High School is one of the few high schools in LAUSD who still maintains an active PTSA.
8. A yearly community engagement meeting and partnership fair, which will feature ways community members can become involved with our students such as serving as role models and mentors and by providing speaker forums.

### **8c. Key Community Partnerships**

Community members will be vital in determining and maintaining the mission and vision of our school. Real world connections will be provided for our students through such opportunities as job shadowing, mentorships, internships, The school leadership, along with small school lead teachers, will solicit and maintain these partnerships. Small schools and their partners will sign an MOU in order to ensure a consistent and comprehensive partnership.

Gardena High School will strive to expand its partnerships with businesses and service organizations. The following groups have pledged their support and resources:

NAME	TITLE	ORGANIZATION
Dr. Gail Garrett	Principal	Peary Middle School
Keri Lew	Principal	Clay Middle School
Jane Tokubo	Healthy Start Coordinator	186th Street School
Tom Willaby	Student Director	Rotary Club
John Delino	Site Director	Boys & Girls Club of Gardena
Slo Moevae	Community Relations Officer Senior Lead Officer	Los Angeles Harbor Police
Chief Ed Medrano	Chief of Police, Community Safety	Gardena Police Department
Jerry O'Day	Technical Advisor	LAUSD Local District 8
Dr. Raquel Soto	Physician	Harbor UCLA Medical Center
Colleen Mooney	Executive Director	South Bay Center for Counseling
Ron Rubine	Diversity Advisor	LAUSD Human Relations
Dr. Sukivu Hutchinson	Human Relations Advisor	LA County Human Relations
Ray Padilla	Substance Abuse Counselor	Asian American Drug Abuse Prevention
Bill Tokubo	President	186th Area Homeowners Assoc./Neighborhood Watch
William P. Hayes, Captain	Commanding Officer	Harbor Area Community Relations Office/ Los Angeles Police Department
Rich Gomez	Chairman	Gardena Drug & Alcohol Abuse Prevention Task Force

(See Appendix 10.)

## Part 9: School Governance

### 9a. School and Advisory Organizational Charts

The school continues to explore alternate governance models. We will follow the Education Code regarding the formation and operation of the School Site Council.

While Gardena High School will maintain a governance and advisory structure that integrates stakeholder input of parents, students, teachers, classified staff, administration, and the community, we will continue to research other structures, including Expanded School-Based Management (ESBM) and affiliated charter school models.

Our School Site Council, mandated by the Education Code, has the decision-making responsibility for coordinating all resources to improve student achievement. Its 12 members represent the wide spectrum of our stakeholders ( 6 members from the community, 6 members representing teachers, classified staff and administrators.) This council is responsible for overseeing all categorical funds.

The School Site Council works with the two advisory councils representing categorical funding for English Learners (English Learner Advisory Council- ELAC) and Title 1 students (Compensatory Education Advisory Council-CEAC) to ensure equitable distribution of funds based on data and student academic needs.

Our Shared-Decision-Making Council (SDMC) adheres to the mandates of the LAUSD/UTLA Collective Bargaining Agreement. SDMC is comprised of 16 representative members of teachers, UTLA representatives, parents, students, classified staff, and the principal. This council has purview over student discipline, professional development, bell schedules, school equipment and technology, and several general fund budgets, including the Instructional Materials Account (IMA), textbook/materials, and the School-Determined Needs account.

The Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) works in support of these committees, taking responsibility for recommending policies relating to instruction, textbook use, library use, testing, and other related academic issues.

In addition, each small school has an advisory committee, consisting of community members, teachers, parents, students, and administrators, who take responsibility for carrying out the policies related to the above councils as well as taking responsibility for setting, implementing and monitoring policies directly related to their particular small school.

Each of these councils, SSC, SDMC, ELAC, CEAC, ILT, and the small schools councils work together to support the academic progress of our students. Each council will review its policies on a yearly basis, and based on student data, will modify its practices and policies to ensure student success.

(See Appendix 11.)

We continue to operate with the current school administration responsibility structure for oversight of our instructional and activity programs. (See Appendix 12.)

## **PART 10: School Leadership and Staffing Plans**

### **10a. Leadership Team**

The Gardena High School Leadership Team has: 4 Assistant Principals, a Bridge Coordinator, a Data Coach, a Math Coach, a Testing Coordinator, a Title 1 Coordinator, an English Learner Coordinator, Department Chairpersons, Small Learning Community Lead Teachers, a Testing Coordinator, a Data Coordinator, 4 Deans, a UTLA Chapter Chair, a Financial Manager, a School Administrative Assistant, a Plant Manager, and a Cafeteria Manager. These personnel are essential to the instructional and operational components of the school The Leadership Team's

focus is to ensure a safe and nurturing environment for maximum teaching and learning results. This knowledgeable team is sensitive to the needs of the school community.

**10b. and 10c. Staffing Model and Compensation**

As an existing Los Angeles Unified School District school, Gardena High School will staff and compensate personnel in all certificated and administrative positions in accordance with the following Articles from the LAUSD/UTLA (certificated) and LAUSD/AALA (administrative) Collective Bargaining Agreements:

- Article XIII - Reduction in Force/Reinstatement (LAUSD/UTLA)
- Article IX - Hours, Duties and Work Year (LAUSD/UTLA)
- Article XI - Transfers (LAUSD/UTLA)
- Article XIV - Salaries (LAUSD/UTLA)
- Article X - Duties, Responsibilities and Hours (LAUSD/AALA)

**10d. School Leadership**

Prior to his appointment as Principal of Gardena High School, Mr. Mendoza served as an Assistant Principal at two Local District 8 high schools. Mr. Mendoza has demonstrated the required behavioral dimensions to effectively lead GHS in the implementation of the Public School Choice process and the accreditation process. Moreover, Mr. Mendoza fundamentally understands the inner workings of a secondary high school, and has the ability to effectively lead the school through the required transformation. He is a long-standing member of the South Bay community, and is a fluent Spanish speaker.

**10e. Leadership Team Beyond the Principal**

The faculty and staff of Gardena High School have the skill set to fully improve student achievement, and have shown dedicated commitment during the Public School Choice process. The faculty is committed to analyzing data to determine the required areas to improve practice via professional development. The faculty and administration plan to revisit and set the course for the 2010 school year during professional development sessions in August of said year. This professional development opportunity will set the stage to successfully begin Gardena's transformation this coming fall.

**10f. Recruitment of Teaching Staff**

Administrative and teacher candidates with experience in, or who demonstrate an ability to lead with Gardena's vision and mission in mind, will more than likely be selected. Likely individuals must be knowledgeable about implementing change, facilitating adult learning, understanding of District policies, have knowledge of Collective Bargaining Agreements, procedures and mandates, strong commitment to student achievement and the factors that contribute to improvement, prioritize work well given unique time constraints, and familiarity with our community.

School reform knowledge is required to encourage and motivate improvement efforts by creating a professional and supportive working environment for all stakeholders. Interested candidates for employment opportunities will receive and be familiar with our key beliefs and theory of action for our school program. Selections will be made by a staffing committee comprised of administration, department chairperson, and SLC lead teacher. Job duties and responsibilities will be explicitly reviewed during the hiring process.

## **PART 11: Operations**

### **11a. Internal Applicant**

Gardena High School will continue to use all existing LAUSD operational services provided at the school site and follow Collective Bargaining Agreements.

### **11c. Master Service Agreements**

Gardena High School will agree to enter into discussion regarding the viability of master service agreements.

### **11d. School Operations Experience**

Positions responsible for coordinating and leading all non-academic aspects of school management:

Payroll

Security

Transportation

Meals

Maintenance

### **11e. Operations Start-up Plan**

#### **Operations Plan**

Gardena High School will provide a menu of services as delineated by the Los Angeles Unified School District.

## **Part 12: Finances**

### **12a. Funding**

Gardena High School will receive funding via LAUSD's transparent budgeting process (based on ADA.)

### **12b. Budget Narrative**

Our budget addressed the following key assumptions and principles used to develop our financial model, ensuring alignment with the mission, vision, and overall strategic development of our school.

- All budget decisions are based on student need and student data

### **12c. Internal Financial Controls**

Our plan to ensure fiscal soundness and legal compliance for Gardena High School includes . . .

- Monitoring Process used:
- Financial Reports generated:
- Party Responsible and qualifications:

## **Part 13: Facilities**

### **13a. Facilities**

This proposal recognizes that LAUSD will provide facilities use agreement to be finalized by the Workforce Stability Taskforce.