



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

# PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

## Central Region High School #13 Executive Summaries



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

# PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

Technology and Math Science High School

Alliance College-Ready Public Schools

Executive Summary

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- a. **Mission and Vision.** State the mission, vision and core beliefs of the proposed school as well as the school's values about teaching and learning. Include an explanation of what students will know and be able to do as well as the rigorous intellectual habits of mind, essential skills, knowledge and attributes they will possess upon matriculation that will prepare them to be successful adults in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- i. **Mission** -TAMSHS mission is to operate a small high performance college-preparatory school that will prepare all students to graduate ready for success in college and the workplace in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
  - ii. **Vision** - Our vision is all students prepared for college-level technology, math and science course work.
  - iii. **Core Values** - Alliance TAMSHS students, staff and community will embrace five core values in establishing the culture of the school: 1) High expectations for all students; 2) Small personalized school and classrooms; 3) Increased instructional time; 4) Highly effective principals and teachers; 5) Working with parents as partners.

Our core values support our education plan based on our belief that student learning occurs best when:

- There are consistent school-wide high expectations for 100% success for all students with <sup>1</sup> clear expectations for what students should know and be able to do and how well.
  - There is a clear focus on developing proficiency in science; technology; engineering; and mathematics; communication skills; critical thinking; and in core content standards.
  - The learning experience is enriched by active student engagement in a challenging and rigorous program of study focusing on the application of STEM subjects.
  - Each classroom in the school creates a thirst for learning through inquiry-based instruction designed to help students learn how to learn.
  - The school functions as an educational laboratory that seeks to create a dynamic learning community by embodying the best practices of teaching and learning where staff and students know and respect each other and each other's similarities and differences.
  - The instructional methodology helps students see the real-life relevance of the material they are studying and is relevant to students' real world.
  - Instructional methods include strategies that provide opportunities for project-based learning through STEM coursework where the curriculum is integrated and students see the relationship of the various academic courses to each other and to the real world.
  - The school curriculum includes courses and pathways for preparation in STEM fields and occupations, especially for underrepresented populations that prepares students for successful post-secondary education, employment, and life.
- v. **Unique and Innovative** – As part of the Alliance CollegeYes<sup>®</sup> i3 Innovation Technology Grant Implementation, all students will complete two Capstone science projects using 1:1 iPads provided for each student where students work in teams using technology to research a team hypothesis.
- vi. **Research Driven** – We believe public schools serve as fundamental centers of community, as well as serving as the major provider of formalized STEM instruction for America's youth. <sup>2</sup> "Mathematics is the language of the sciences, and thus fluency in this language is a basic skill. Thus STEM coursework provides opportunities for students to prepare for pathways in STEM fields and occupations."
- vii. **Data-based elements** – TAMSHS will demonstrate student readiness for success in college by setting clear measurable performance targets based on indicators of college-readiness including: annual growth in student proficiency on state academic standards; proficiency in English and math on high school exit exams; annual increase in Advanced Placement course access and exam scores of 3 or higher; annual increase of students meeting college-ready performance levels on SAT, ACT, and EAP exams; annual increase in students prepared

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<sup>1</sup> Lauren Resnick, *Institute for Learning, Principles of Learning*

<sup>2</sup> *Statement on Competencies in Mathematics Expected of Entering College Students - CAS Subcommittee on the Mathematics Competency Statement*

to take pre-calculus by grade 12; and achieving a 90% success rate of students graduating in four years who are accepted and enroll in four-year colleges.

viii. A Day in the life of a Student at TAMSHS

Students arrive at TAMSHS wearing the Alliance College-Ready Public Schools uniform. Most walk to school from close-by neighborhoods. Parent volunteers, a vigilant principal and teachers greet students as they arrive. Students gather on campus in a safe, calm, welcoming atmosphere that reflects the demographics of the community and the school's focus on technology, math, science and getting ready for college with college pennants recognizing students accepted to college displayed throughout the school and in classrooms. By 7:45 am, students are seated in classrooms ready to begin their daily advisory period. The advisory focuses on personal, academic, school and community connections. The advisory teacher serves as the students' counselor for four years so that students are connected to a consistent adult for guidance with studies, student relationships, and planning for college.

Students are excited as they begin the first of three two-hour periods per day following the advisory period. Students learn in academic classes with an average class size of 25 that are small enough to insure that each student receives individual attention differentiated to meet their needs. Students begin work immediately upon entering each classroom by logging in on an individual laptop to their personal online vault where their portfolio of student work, new assignments, and messages from their teacher are housed. Students' core classes reflect rigorous grade level appropriate standards-based instruction with high expectations for all students. California content standards are clearly evident as the focus of instruction in the agenda for the day displayed in each classroom; student work displayed as examples of clear expectations for proficient work.

Teachers engage students in understanding clear expectations for what students must know and be able to do to achieve proficient work on grade level standards. Students are actively engaged in their learning through "accountable talk" about what they are learning in pairs, small group, or whole class interaction. Math, English Language Arts, physical education, and art classes are integrated with technology, math and science.

Teachers involve students in defining and understanding criteria for proficient work so that students are able to judge their own work. Teachers establish clear expectations so that students know how good is "good enough" and so that students know what it takes to improve their performance. Teachers provide directed instruction and facilitate student learning using a variety of instructional materials and resources including online and traditional textbooks, integrated use of technology, science, and math projects in CollegeYes i3 Innovation Technology Grant Implementation using 1:1 iPads, and by connecting learning to real life applications through extended integrated technology, science, math projects. Students are in A-G and Advanced Placement courses as well as academic electives aligned to our STEM pathway and electives that provide intervention to accelerate learning for students performing below proficient levels or enrichment for students performing at proficient and advanced levels.

All students have the opportunity to participate in the nutrition meal program following the first two-hour period. Because of the small size of the TAMSHS campus, passing from period to period takes place within 3 minutes. Students are self-directed and show respect for each other and their school. Students see examples of quality student work aligned with California content standards displayed inside and outside their classrooms. English learners are supported in developing English proficiency through English as a Second Language and in content classes through English immersion with "sheltered English" instructional strategies based on individual needs and through our CollegeYes i3 Innovation Technology Implementation Grant utilizing 1:1 iPads.

Students performing below or far below proficient levels based on quarterly interim assessments and teacher assessment receive individual tutoring based on their needs in math or English language arts in after school or Saturday classes. The campus is buzzing with extra curricular activities after school and on Saturdays that include, STEM student interest clubs, cheerleading, and competitive sports as well as with parent and community members to whom the campus is open.

- b. **Student Population.** Describe the student population that your proposed school will serve, including the interests and critical educational needs of the students. Explain your team's experience serving a similar population of students, and how your proposed school will meet the identified needs of these students.

TAMSHS will relieve overcrowding for Local District 4 high schools (Eagle Rock, Franklin, and Marshall). Students in the attendance area for these 3 schools have priority for all seats available. TAMSHS' will serve the students of the relieved schools and will comply with all requisite admissions requirements.

TAMSHS students will reflect the demographics of the schools it will relieve including race/ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, English learners, standard English learners, students with disabilities, and foster care placement. Alliance agrees to establish and maintain ongoing review mechanisms to ensure that student retention and composition at TAMSHS continues to reflect that of the overall school community in the 450-550 students to be enrolled. 2009-10 demographic data for the 3 schools is similar to Alliance Environmental Science and Technology High School (ESAT) that opened nearby in 2009 to provide relief for the Eagle Rock, Franklin, Marshall high school attendance area. In its second year, ESAT, made up primarily of students who would have otherwise attend these same schools, achieved an API of 859 and is ranked #7 among the top 10 highest performing high schools in LAUSD. A critical need of the 3 schools is to increase proficiency in English and Math for all subgroups to meet AYP targets required to exit Program Improvement status.

Addressing the Needs of All Students: TAMSHS will analyze student performance and implement diagnostic testing to assess the needs of each student after enrollment. The assessment data will be used to identify learning strengths, gaps, and/or disabilities, psychological development, and speech and language fluency. Students identified as having special needs, a plan for Students at Risk of Retention, English learners, and/or special education will be implemented. The Alliance recognizes that students who are gifted and talented also have special needs and will provide appropriate identification and instructional strategies to meet their needs. Strategies that insure the success of Alliance schools with similar demographics and student needs include:

• Diagnosis of student needs	• Afterschool and Saturday tutoring to accelerate learning
• Math and English summer bridge programs for new and continuing students at risk	• Personal Learning Plan (PLP) for each student to insure that no student slips through without support.
• Differentiated instruction in our classrooms through the use of technology.	• High expectations for all students including English learners and students with special needs.
• Math and/or English support class in addition to regular grade level math and English course	• High expectations for all students by providing increased learning time for students needing more support.
• Individual supplemental learning using online programs such as Carnegie Math Cognitive Tutor, Revolution Prep, Achieve 3000	• Standards-based grading where grades communicate academic performance to students so they know where they are and what they need to do improve.

- c. Instructional Program. Provide an overview of the instructional program of the proposed school, identifying and describing the key instructional strategies and practices that the school will employ to drive student achievement. Briefly explain the research base that demonstrates that the identified strategies will be successful in improving academic achievement for the targeted student population.
- i. TAMSHS instructional program is guided by our core values, our beliefs about how learning best occurs, and by<sup>3</sup> best practices researched in high performing high schools that consistently produce well-educated students prepared to successfully enter and succeed in STEM college studies and careers. The philosophical base and the organizational structure for TAMSHS' curriculum are student centered and are in accordance with accountability for achieving proficient to advanced performance on core state standards with emphasis on student use of technology, math and science, and appreciation for STEM curriculum. TAMSHS instructional program reflects<sup>4</sup> best practices researched in high performing schools that consistently produce well educated, urban students prepared to enter and succeed in college including:

<sup>3</sup> Best practices researched in successful high schools. See Bibliography (Attachment 1)

<sup>4</sup> Betsy Hammond and Bill Graves, *The Oregonian, Ten Practices that Set High-performing High Schools Apart.*

- a. Personalized Learning Environment – Students learn best in small learning communities where their education is personalized so that students know their teachers and are well known as individuals by adults.
- b. Student Engagement – Student voice is essential in all aspects of the school that directly affect student learning, interests and needs through advisory groups that connect student with a personal learning team.
- c. College-readiness for All Students – All students, including students in historically underachieving communities can successfully learn at high levels, when given the opportunity, and have a right to high expectations and instruction that prepare them to enter and succeed in college and the workplace. All students must pass A-G college prep courses, complete 230 course credits with a C or better, and be sufficiently proficient in core academic standards (reading, writing, math, science, history/social science, and the arts) to be ready for college. Students have the opportunity to concurrently complete up to 30 early college credits earning their first year of college before graduating.
- d. Increased Time for Learning - All students must have sufficient time to learn successfully. The school will offer a school year 190 days, including 10 days of supplemental extended learning time, and summer session to meet individual student needs. Daily learning will be in longer 2-hour blocks of time for in-depth uninterrupted learning time where students can engage in applying skills learned in projects and teamwork.
- e. Meeting the Needs of English Learners – College-readiness requires proficiency in English for all students. Structured English language development curriculum and instructional strategies will be provided for English language learners and non-standard English learners integrated in core and supplemental support classes to insure that students learn grade level academic vocabulary and develop English proficiency.
- f. Rigorous Standards-Based Instruction – We believe that students learn best when there is a rigorous standards-based curriculum with high thinking demand that challenges students to test their understanding of concepts through experiencing real-life applications; when students know clearly the expectations and criteria they are trying to meet and can judge their own work; and when students participate actively in talk about the concepts and standards they are learning and communicate their learning to others.
- g. Integrated Technology – Student learning will be a hybrid / blended model of online and teacher directed instruction. Students and teachers will have access to technology for use in student learning, classroom instruction, data management and communication with immediate access to student progress data for teachers, students and their parents.
- h. Principal Leadership – TAMSHS will have an exemplary principal who is a highly effective instructional leader with the skills to support and evaluate classroom teacher performance and a community partner who will embrace our STEM career pathway.
- i. Highly Effective Teachers – Students learn best with teachers who know their subject field, are well trained to deliver rigorous instruction, and can attend to diverse needs of students. Teacher effectiveness will be determined based on four elements; teacher effectiveness rubric; annual student achievement growth; parent/student survey; and peer feedback.
- j. Parents as Partners – Parents will be actively engaged in their children’s education at TAMSHS and will be responsible and accountable for supporting their children’s learning at school and at home. Parents will be supported through parent education academies to insure understanding of what it will take to prepare their children for college and life, and will support TAMSHS goals through their voice and volunteering.
- k. Authentic Ongoing Assessment – There will be multiple ongoing measures of student learning to inform instruction through real life projects, analysis of student work, Alliance interim assessments, and mandated standardized on-demand assessments as well as student performance on math and science projects.
- l. Accountability for Results – The principal will be responsible and accountable for leading the implementation of core values, beliefs and best practices insuring that each student achieves individual and school performance goals. Beginning in 2013, teacher and principal compensation will be based on measures of effectiveness instead of years of service and degrees.
- ii. Instructional Strategies: Effective classroom instruction will be based on The College-Ready Promise (TCRP) teacher effectiveness rubric adapted from Charlotte Danielson’s framework on effective teaching. TAMSHS students will learn at higher levels in classrooms where teaching strategies reflect high expectations for all students with differentiation to meet individual student needs. Students will apply skills and concepts learned to

real world projects, service learning, and community internships that require problem solving, critical thinking and active engagement in classroom talk around the concepts and standards they are learning through<sup>5</sup> project based instruction, TAMSHS learning environment will be a self-directed learning environment in which teachers are facilitators and students are learners and doers using technology to create and prepare assignments as well as to learn at individual levels through differentiated online learning including but not limited to Achieve 3000. TAMSHS classrooms will engage students in clear understanding of criteria for high performance, how to judge and improve their own work – so that students know how “good is good enough” for proficient and advanced performance.

- iii. **Track Record of Proposed Curriculum:** The best evidence of our track record for curriculum and instruction strategies to be implemented in TAMSHS High School is results achieved in Alliance schools over the past seven years serving similar students, including students with special needs, and English learners in similar communities where Alliance high schools have consistently not only outperformed neighboring schools, but have also achieved results significantly higher than the average of high schools in California and LAUSD based on the Academic Performance Index (API). In 2010, 3 Alliance High Schools were among the top 10 performing LAUSD high schools.

Alliance schools have implemented the A-G college-preparatory curriculum and coursework, integration of technology, two-hour block schedule, and increased time for learning since the opening of the first high school in 2004-05. All teachers new to the Alliance participate in a summer orientation to prepare them to successfully implement core elements of the Alliance instructional model including but not limited to: Teaching in a 2-hour Block Schedule, Standards-based Instruction and Grading, Student Advisory and using technology in blended instruction.

- d. **School Culture. Describe the school culture that your team envisions for the proposed school and what, if any social-emotional supports are necessary to create that culture.**

School Culture: TAMSHS school culture will be driven by Alliance core values, high expectations for all students including the expectation of 90% graduation and college entrance rate for all students. TAMSHS will provide a sound educational program for all students through its rigorous college preparatory curriculum, its culture of high expectations for all students, highly effective teachers, and its principal leadership in a small and personalized learning environment where students know their teachers well and are well known by adults. The culture, environment, and practices at TAMSHS will reflect commitment to our mission:

*“The mission of Alliance College-Ready Public Schools is to open and operate a network of excellent small high-performing public that will annually demonstrate student academic achievement growth and graduate students ready for success in college.”*

The proposed culture of TAMSHS that supports our core values will reflect:

- Appreciation of knowledge as power that is worth pursuing for its own sake and recognition that it takes personal effort to acquire meaningful knowledge. Recognition that all students can acquire the necessary skills to be lifelong learners and to be ready for college.
- Goodwill and a supportive attitude towards others, toward school spirit and community pride as a statement of belonging to something larger than oneself. Participation in school sponsored or approved service opportunities as a means of developing a caring and compassionate spirit and making a positive difference in the school, family and community.
- Intellectual openness, analysis, interpretation, reasoning, argumentation, and proof, inquisitiveness, problem solving, and precision and accuracy.

- i. College and Career Readiness Support: Conley defines college-readiness as “the level of preparation a student needs in order to enroll and succeed—without remediation.”<sup>6</sup> At the heart of TAMSHS is a

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<sup>5</sup> Linda Darling-Hammond, *Stanford University: 10 Features of Good Small Schools: Redesigning Schools, What Matters and What Works: Project-based Learning – “One strategy for linking the curriculum to real-world issues is through project –based learning where students are engaged in challenging tasks that involve knowledge and skills from more than one academic discipline. These tasks require students to work independently to solve complex problems, and they culminate in real-world products.*

<sup>6</sup> Conley, David T. March 2007 *Redefining College Readiness*

college going culture that focuses on succeeding in college. It is not whether a student will go to college, but which college the student will attend. TAMSHS students will have multiple college and career supports to achieve college-ready goals including advisory curriculum that will focus on college and career readiness helping students prepare applications, write their personal statement, apply for scholarships and support from a school college-counselor who coordinates our goal of a having each student submit at least 10 applications to 4-year colleges.

e. **Accountability and Performance Goals. Briefly discuss how your organization will set and annually update targets for the indicators in the table below. Please share key data from the Performance Management Matrix highlighting the goals of the proposed school.**

- i. Educational Goals and Metrics: Alliance performance accountability metrics for principals, individual teachers and schools are aligned to our core mission of preparing students to graduate college and work-ready. Performance data informs administrator and teacher accountability for meeting performance targets. Priority targets not met trigger performance improvement plans, intensive support and probation for principals, teachers and the school. Metrics and goals set reflect State and Federal accountability, district performance targets, and board targets.

Relieved Schools 2009-10	API 2010	Rank State-Similar	AYP Eng School & Subgroup	AYP Math School & Subgroup	PI	ELL %	F/R Meal %	Primary Ethnicity Latino	Sp Ed %	Gate %	Calendar
Eagle Rock	738	5-2	No	No	Yr5	12	68	66%	10	24	Sgl Tr
Franklin	658	2-4	No	No	Yr5	25	73	91%	11	8	Sgl Tr
Marshall	685	3-7	No	No	Yr3	23	72	70%	10	18	3-Tr

Source: CDE Website, Accountability Progress Reporting, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ar/>

- ii. Student Assessment Plan: Alliance has clearly defined what students should know and be able to do to demonstrate proficiency in each core subject at each grade/course level in it's 9-12 Instructional Guides for all core subjects and in it's UC-approved A-G Course Descriptions. Measurable student outcomes guide the content of the curriculum and serve as the basis to measure student progress. Using multiple indicators, proficiency is measured using formative and summative assessments. Students are benchmarked against state and district benchmarks and against themselves from year to year for longitudinal study of school and individual student progress. Assessments include: Diagnostic exams; CA Standardized Tests; Alliance Benchmark and Classroom Assessments and Standards-based Report Cards that assess academic, life and study skills.

Grade	Table of Assessments by Grade Level:
9th	CST, CEDLT, Alliance Quarterly Benchmarks (Math, ELA, Science, History), MDTP
10th	CST, CEDLT, CAHSEE, PSAT, Alliance Quarterly Benchmarks (Math, ELA, Science, History), MDTP
11th	CST, CEDLT, SAT, ACT, AP, Alliance Quarterly Benchmarks (Math, ELA, Science, History), MDTP
12th	SAT, ACT, CEDLT, AP, Alliance Quarterly Benchmarks (Math, ELA, Science, History)

- iii. Data Team and Instructional Team: TAMSHS will implement assessment and data analysis practices in operation in all Alliance schools. CST Results and Analysis reports are sent directly to schools during the summer and uploaded into DataDirector for longitudinal analysis, individual school analysis, and planning during the summer before instruction begins. Analysis of student performance data drives professional development and classroom instructional planning, quarterly instruction, Interim Benchmark Assessment, and analysis. Real-time assessment will inform classroom instruction as teachers analyze current student data, identify strengths and gaps, and develop personalized learning plans for their students. TAMSHS will provide all required data to LAUSD to comply with the requirements of the Modified Consent Decree.

- f. **Community Analysis and Context.** Describe the community that your proposed school will serve. Include an analysis of the strengths, assets, values and critical needs of the community. Discuss your rationale for selecting this community, your experience serving this or a similar community, how your team has engaged the community thus far and how it will continue to do so if selected.
- i. Identification: Alliance is committed to serving the families of the Eagle Rock, Franklin, Marshall attendance area. Alliance successfully operates 18 schools in Los Angeles communities with demographic populations and needs similar to the TAMSHS community. Alliance Environmental Science and Technology High School (ESAT) opened in the area in 2009. In its 2<sup>nd</sup> year, ESAT achieved a 2010 API of 859 and is ranked #7 among the top 10 highest performing high schools in LAUSD. We believe all students can learn at high levels given the opportunity to do so. Alliance reached out to and will continue to engage the community to gain feedback for TAMSHS. Our “parents as partners” core value reflects our assurance that TAMSHS will engage the community to support student success.
- g. **Leadership.** Provide an overview of the proposed school’s governance structure and leadership team. Highlight the strengths of the leadership team and the proposed leader. If a leader has not been identified, speak to the key attributes the potential leader should possess.
- h. Leadership Team Capacity: The Alliance has a proven track record and staff capacity to design and operate new schools and to perform all tasks required as demonstrated by the successful opening and operation 18 Alliance schools in the following key areas: leadership development, curriculum, instructional strategies, data analysis, efficient operations, financial management, school culture, and accountability. The Alliance leadership team includes but is not limited to:

Judy Burton, President/CEO	Laura Alvarez, Director, Human Resources
David Hyun, Chief Financial Officer	Kirsten Woo, Director, Assessment and Data Services
Steve Synott, Chief Operating Officer	Nicole Mariella, Director, College Counseling
Joan Massey, Chief Academic Officer	Marcee Seegan, Vice President, School Family

- ii. School Leadership: TAMSHS must have an exemplary principal who is a capable instructional leader with a passion for STEM curriculum and an entrepreneur in managing resources and STEM professional partners. Exemplary principals are developed through in depth leadership training and apprenticeship with principals who have demonstrated success in their schools. Dr. Eliza Zamor, a former science teacher and current Principal Intern at ESAT, is an expert in STEM curriculum and instruction and is committed to serving as principal of TAMSHS HS.
- iii. Principal Accountability for Results - The principal will have primary responsibility and accountability to the school community for working with teachers and all staff in implementing the core values, beliefs, curriculum, instruction and best practices of the Alliance education model insuring that each and every student gets what they need to achieve their individual and school performance goals. The Alliance will be responsible and accountable for guarantees made to TAMSHS in providing operational and management services, monitoring academic progress, documenting and publishing results to the school community and the community of Los Angeles.
- h. **School Governance Model.** Briefly explain the rationale for your choice of school type. Why are you applying to operate your school as a traditional, Pilot, Expanded School-Based Management Model (ESBMM), Network Partner, Affiliated Charter or Independent Charter school?
- i. School Governance Model: Alliance will operate one fiscally independent charter high school, TAMSHS. We envision the family of 5 schools having a shared site governance coordinating structure while maintaining individual schools that collaborate in a vibrant learning environment. Alliance has a proven track record to successfully lead and operate TAMSHS on a shared campus. Eight Alliance schools are on shared campuses with other schools or colleges. Our governance structure supports our vision, mission, and core

values and reflects our belief that students, staff members and parents all have a voice and accountability in a collaborative process to achieve our goals. TAMSHS will be incorporated as a 501 (c)(3) with its own board of directors and will be managed by Alliance, a 501 (c)(3) (non-profit benefit California Corporation).

Our vision for Taylor Yard Complex is that it will be a family of five schools working collaboratively to educate students in the attendance area and to serve the community. It is essential for all five schools to participate in a shared plan for facility; safety; student school choice; and school activity coordination. Alliance College-Ready Public Schools has ultimate responsibility for the governance of TAMSHS and the educational model.



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

**ArtLAB: Arts and Community Empowerment**

**Teri Klass**

**Executive Summary**

## **ARTLAB EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**a. Mission/Vision.** State the mission, vision and core beliefs of the proposed school as well as the school's values about teaching and learning. Include an explanation what students will know and be able to do as well as the rigorous intellectual habits of mind, essential skills, knowledge and attributes they will possess upon matriculation that will prepare them to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### **WHOLE SCHOOL ALIGNMENT**

The Taylor Yard complex, which has grown out of a rich history of community and LAUSD collaboration, will provide students access to five distinct Linked Learning options. Each small school plan provides personalization and choice while the whole school provides the resources of a larger campus. All five schools will work in cooperation to provide a safe campus where students and families feel a sense of community responsibility and pride.

### **PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATION**

ArtLab's educational philosophy is rooted in access, equity, and democratic participation for all of our students. We are committed to furthering the work of Dewey, Freire, and Oakes as we ensure that each student finds meaning, challenge and purpose in his/her learning experiences. ArtLab has deep respect for the individual contributions of every learner in our school community.

**VISION** ArtLab is dedicated to creating a learning environment where young people are supported in their desire to innovate, create, and transform their worlds by engaging in critical inquiry in the arts and sciences.

**MISSION** All ArtLab students participate in interdisciplinary arts-integrated, project-based curriculum where they are continuously engaged in acts of intentional cognition; understand their unique experiences within the context of enduring ideas; and are empowered to express new ideas and venture into uncharted artistic and intellectual territory. All ArtLab students are prepared to meet the academic challenges of post-secondary learning and have developed the necessary skills and knowledge to pursue a career in media arts. ArtLab is a supportive community of educators, students, parents and community members, where safe, productive, collaborative interaction instills a sense of pride and belonging to all members.

**ARTLAB HABITS OF MIND** are seven values that are critical for each student's personal and academic success. These are the values that all adults on our campus will uphold as they model the benefits of lifelong learning.

1. **Creating, Imagining, and Innovating:** Feeling free and confident to find new ways of thinking. Knowing that being original is normal.
2. **Questioning and Problem Posing:** Being curious about your world and unwilling to merely accept what you are told.
3. **Service:** The desire to imagine and create a more just world.
4. **Thinking about Thinking:** Being aware of how you learn best and being reflective about your actions.
5. **Interdependence:** Collaboration that is rooted in respect for others.
6. **Gathering Data Through all Senses:** Being aware of and open to the world around you.
7. **Persisting:** Never giving up. Defining your goals and sticking to them

**BEST PRACTICES** ArtLab incorporates the best practices identified by research and supported by our teaching philosophy. Those practices include:

- Linked Learning provides our framework for offering an integrated core curriculum that prepares students for postsecondary education and a career in media arts;
- We focus on English language learners by providing an arts-integrated, challenge and project-based curriculum that uses a multidisciplinary approach. Students apply their individual strengths as they connect classroom learning to interests and essential career skills;
- Inclusive classrooms remove the barriers between special and general education, providing rich learning opportunities for all students;
- Development of personal skills such as collaboration and teamwork, problem-solving, communication and the ability to self-express and reflect;
- Assessments that provide the opportunity to demonstrate critical thinking, understanding of “big ideas,” and mastery of content knowledge and skills;
- Interdisciplinary thematic units that offer assessments in written, oral, visual, and performance-based projects;
- Student-centered classrooms where teachers act as coaches and learning partners;
- A focus on social action, both local and global, integrated with community partnerships and service learning projects dealing with equity, justice and the environment;
- 21<sup>st</sup> literacy skills, including the integration of technology and blended learning.

## **CORE LEARNING COMPETENCIES**

**Value beyond school** Every day, in every ArtLab class, students will see the connection between their learning and life. If we as teachers cannot answer the question of how our content applies to the real world, then we must rethink our priorities. Students will learn how, for example, mathematics operates in the real world. They will see that their public voices are necessary and that their ideas matter. They will see that their learning in high school paves the way for a meaningful quality of life. ArtLab will prepare its graduates for success in post-secondary learning, for careers that are fulfilling, for active engagement in the cultural and civic life of their city, and for participation in American democracy.

### ***ArtLab Core Competencies***

1. Language Arts: Students will become confident and persuasive oral and written communicators.
2. Social Studies: Students will understand the enduring ideas in social, political, philosophical, and economic history in order to learn how their lives connect to the past.
3. Mathematics: Students will demonstrate mastery of mathematical concepts and will know how to employ practical applications in multidisciplinary settings.
4. Science: Students will know how to use scientific investigation to form hypotheses about phenomena that are of interest to them and experiment to demonstrate validity.
5. Arts: Students will develop their artistic voices through the media arts career pathway and will use arts on a daily basis to become innovative thinkers and creative problem solvers and to engage in critical reflection.
6. Physical, Social, and Emotional Wellbeing: Students will understand the connection between physical wellness and their quality of life. They will feel comfortable in accessing services and knowledgeable in seeking resources that support their holistic wellbeing.

**b. Student Population.** *Describe the student population that your proposed school will serve, including the interests and critical educational needs of the students. Explain your team’s experience serving a similar population of students, and how your proposed school will meet the identified needs of these students.*

## ArtLAB: Arts and Community Empowerment

ArtLab will be part of the school site currently known as Central High School #13 located near the intersection of San Fernando Road and Division Street. The School will serve northeast Los Angeles, relieving three area high schools: Eagle Rock, Franklin, and Marshall.

Our students come to us with a wealth of cultural and personal resources. Still, we know that many of our students will need supports to ensure that they excel academically. We understand the barriers that many of our students will face as second-language learners; the ArtLab curriculum and instruction is designed to engage and accelerate learning for this student group. Arts integration across all disciplines, thematic interdisciplinary curriculum, and project-based assessments are all aimed at increasing access to rigorous curriculum for English language learners. Art at the core of instruction provides a common language that helps students understand essential questions, engages them in higher-order thinking, and builds academic language as they begin to discover and interpret thematic connections.

Students at our feeder middle schools are 83.5% Latino. On average, only 27.75% of the students are on grade level in math, and 32.5% are on grade level in English. 86.25% of these students are economically disadvantaged and 12.75% have special needs. Marshall High School, the primary high school being relieved by the new campus at Taylor Yard, is 68% Latino. Only 10% are on grade level in math and 37% are on grade level in English. 70% are economically disadvantaged and 9% have special needs. ArtLab has grown out of Humanitas Global Studies at Marshall High School and has had 10 years of experience successfully serving these populations. One example of our success with these students is that 88% of our economically disadvantaged 10th-grade students passed the California Exit Exam in math and English on the first try, compared to 69% school wide. 75% of our Algebra I students passed this gateway course, compared to 42% for non-Humanitas students.

A recent survey shows that students from the feeder school, Irving, overwhelmingly value arts education. The highest rated small learning community theme was Fine Arts/Communication. Students from this community are interested in the arts and research shows that the benefits of arts participation can make a difference for economically disadvantaged students (Catterall, Chappleau, Iwanage, 1999). ArtLab is aligned to serve the interests and the needs of the community. Students in the L.A. public school community have been historically underrepresented in visual arts and technology higher education and industry, and ArtLab aims to change that.

Our design team is comprised of teachers from the community, education specialists, and community members. Together we bring a wealth of expertise, community awareness and passion for the collaborative promise we can offer the youth and community that ArtLab will serve. Richard Shelton, director of integrated learning at Otis College of Art and Design, will co-develop our multimedia curricula and community-based projects. Dr. Wendy Murawski, professor of education and inclusive education specialist and researcher at Cal State Northridge, will work with ArtLab teachers to create an environment that has high expectations and opportunity for all special needs students. Jane Patterson, Humanitas director at the Los Angeles Education Partnership, will ensure that all ArtLab teachers have access to on-going professional learning in interdisciplinary curriculum development. Members of the Cypress Park, Atwater Village, and Elysian Valley neighborhood councils (Yancey Quinones, Cindy Marie Jenkins, and Ceci Dominguez, respectively) will co-develop our community-based service learning projects and will assist ArtLab in creating a thriving Linked Learning instructional program by connecting students to mentors, job shadowing opportunities, and entrepreneurial enterprises.

**c. Instructional Program.** *Provide an overview of the instructional program of the proposed school, identifying and describing the key instructional strategies and practices that the school will employ to drive student achievement. Briefly explain the research base that demonstrates that the identified strategies will be successful in improving academic achievement for the targeted student population.*

We believe, and the research proves, that arts education is linked to academic success for students of poverty, English Language Learners, and students with special needs. “Research on the arts and cognition demonstrates a correlation between training in the arts and improved academic performance” (College Board, 2009). ArtLab students will have greatly increased opportunities in traditional and media arts in their core classes, scheduling choices and after school programs. This Linked Learning pathway consists of extensive, embedded and sequenced real world and project-based experiences which promote holistic academic and college preparation and the technological and soft skills proficiencies essential to 21<sup>st</sup> century careers (Masalski & Elliot, 2005).

All core instruction will be centered around and integrated with arts concepts and processes through Humanitas methodology. Students will use a variety of mediums, tools, forms and genres to imaginatively connect with and apply the core curriculum, as well as to engage with and empower their community. Inquiry based investigations into the meaning, relevance and substance of content, promote students’ intrinsic capacities for curiosity and personal expression. In addition, students will gain professional-level arts and media production experience while demonstrating their mastery of content.

ArtLab’s unique instructional program exemplifies a 21<sup>st</sup> century relevant ideology of flexible adaptation and connectedness in learning. ArtLab Pilot teachers are newly empowered as a collective, collaborative body, with the autonomy to innovate learning experiences to meet the prioritized needs of individual students. Multiple forms of assessment and data, including dimensioned, authentic performance, will provide robust criteria for forming lessons and interventions that effectively support the challenges and motivations of developing students. Students will collaborate with artists, community-based organizations, and college faculty to enhance their learning and improve their community. Students will learn how to assess and address the needs of the community and to develop and implement solutions.

Key components of the instructional program include:

- Flexible and extended day scheduling for student independence in learning pathways
- Humanitas interdisciplinary methodology in core subjects and the arts
- Student-centered and culturally relevant and responsive learning strategies
- Comprehensive A-G offerings with choices for acceleration, specialization and remediation
- College and career preparation: AP courses, college seminar, fully articulated media arts pathway
- Advisories for personalized and consistent developmental guidance
- Fully supported inclusion for students with special needs
- ELL and SEL pairing with multimedia production to promote cultures of language
- Community collaborations for mentoring, internships, training and real world experiences

**d. School Culture.** *Describe the school culture that your team envisions for the proposed school and what, if any social-emotional supports are necessary to create that culture.*

ArtLab emphasizes an authentically student-centered approach that empowers students to become engaged, inventive collaborators in their own learning. This approach is founded in the experience that our students need guidance in developing entrepreneurial, networking and collaborative skill sets necessary for academic and career success. The community provides a context for actively applying the classroom content and for making the personal and professional connections necessary for a stable transition to adulthood.

Students are expected to participate in the governance and sustenance of the general school program through leadership and school service. They organize school and community events, and they support the collective student body towards academic success through achievement reward programs, peer counseling and academic support services.

## ArtLAB: Arts and Community Empowerment

Clear and high expectations and a college-going culture are co-developed through community, student body and staff input, and proactively instill a school culture of professionalism, positive social well-being and self-discipline. This achievement focused program is enforced through tiered intervention and support strategies that seek the true sources of challenges to learning and avoids negative, punitive confrontations. School-wide sports programs, scholarly seminars, cultural celebrations and the school garden extend and complement this emphasis on ethical behavior and empathic contribution to community vitality.

School identity and cohesion is continually invigorated through student multimedia productions, which are the conduit for expressing core principles and student voice. The school website is socially and artistically dynamic, providing a communications infrastructure that highlights student learning and successes across a spectrum of domains and interests. It embodies ArtLab's ideology of continuity in learning beyond school boundaries by encouraging vigorous local and global community interactions

Community outreach efforts and funding development will supplement school site programs, often impacted by budget and resource limitations. External partners and associations, such as Afterschool Children's Nature Institute, Elysian Valley United, 826LA are considered to be an intrinsic aspect of school community. They will be represented in school governance to develop and assess instructional objectives, and will be utilized to provide community based experiences, mentoring and internship opportunities, social services and enrichment activities.

**e. Accountability and Performance Goals.** *Briefly discuss how your organization will set and annually update targets for the indicators in the table below. Please share key data from the Performance Matrix highlighting the goals of the proposed school.*

N/A

**f. Community Analysis and Context.** *Describe the community that your proposed school will serve. Include an analysis of the strengths, assets, values and critical needs of the community. Discuss your rationale for selecting this community, your experience serving this or a similar community, how your team has engaged the community thus far and how it will continue to do so if selected.*

ArtLab will serve the communities of Glassell Park, Elysian Valley, Atwater Village, Cypress Park and Eagle Rock, whose populations are primarily Latino (average of 61%). These are generally economically depressed, working class neighborhoods. Some areas are dense with crime and inter-generational legacies of gang culture. The student constituency is highly diverse and is, for the most part, academically "at-risk". Their families tend not to identify with, nor to interact with, the school culture, staff and site.

The local residents have strong work ethics and value civil participation in democratic institutions. Family, heritage, and ethnic identity are important to these stable, rooted communities. Our students value experiential connection with classroom content that captures their imagination and honors them for who they are. They appreciate practical, concrete examples of academic abstractions that they can successfully apply and find meaning in. And yet, there is a critical deficit of entrepreneurial confidence in students. They need strong guidance in order to sustain higher education or professional ambitions, and solid articulations with work experience and job training programs.

ArtLab's emphasis on arts and media integration is strategically associated with career potentials in the regional \$286 billion "Creative Economy" (Otis, 2010) in entertainment and associated industries. There are also several areas of potential and strategic benefit to the local region, such as a local proposed redevelopment zone aimed at attracting environmentally friendly businesses to the area. Along with several stable commercial districts nearby, there are also a handful of artistically vibrant cultural enclaves on these streets that present the strong potential for significant community transformation and economic improvement. There are many nearby post-secondary institutions that service the arts – LA Valley College, for example, has a newly expanded media arts facility and program and Occidental College has a vibrant media and performing arts program.

ArtLab's emphasis on creative industry and community involvement is aligned with local community strengths, needs and interests. There is a long legacy of artistic activity in the area that continues to thrive today. The Southwest Museum is the first museum constructed in Los Angeles and serves as an annual Native American celebration of culture. The associated Charles Lummi house is a monument to one of many historical characters that championed the arts in this community. Building on this tradition, ArtLab recognizes the arts as a cultural and commercial generator that can revive economically challenged communities. Furthermore, students polled from this community are interested in the arts and research shows that the benefits of arts participation can make a difference for economically disadvantaged students (Catterall, Chapleau, Iwanage, 1999).

**g. Leadership.** *Provide an overview of the proposed school's governance structure and leadership team. Highlight the strengths of the leadership team and the proposed leader. If a leader has not been identified, speak to the key attributes the potential leader should possess.*

ArtLab's arts and community emphasis implicitly requires shared input regarding the larger educational mission and programmatic design. Its active ties to a long roster of parents, organizations, businesses and individuals will be highly beneficial to the learning outcomes for students and to experiential opportunities that include community projects and internships. Thus, it is imperative that stakeholders have solid representation through advisories and the Governing Council that can bring their ideas and recommendations for serious consideration in school plans.

The Governing Council maintains the vision and mission of the school, approves the budget, evaluates the principal and has significant input on all aspects of the schools operational and instructional program. Its structure is inclusive and transparent. Its elected members will be trained in the protocols of participation. The Design Team oversees comprehensive instructional programming and instructional strategies. It consists of the Principal, the Counseling Coordinator, and three elected members: Academic Lead Teacher, the Arts Lead Teacher and the Grade Level Team Leaders. Several Advisories and Councils will have specific input on the school's development. Compensatory Education Advisory Committee (CEAC): This committee composed of elected parents and teachers will advise and make recommendations on development of an effective educational program and plan that raises the achievement of disadvantaged students. English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC): This committee is composed of three parents of English Language Learner pupils and two teachers elected by teachers at the school. It has the responsibility to advise and make recommendations on the development of the Single Plan (SPSA), especially those sections related to English learners. Community Advisory Committee (CAC): The committee will be composed of at least five, and no greater than ten elected representatives of the various constituencies from the local community including: political representation (such as a councilmember), business partner, arts organization or individual, post-secondary representative and a member of CEAC. The committee will review the SPSA, and advise the school on community issues, needs, concerns, resources and ideas regarding programmatic design and long-term considerations. Media Arts Advisory Committee (MAAC): The committee meets CTE requirements for industry oversight of the Linked Learning program and will be composed of at least three representatives of the media arts community, including post-secondary and industry partners. The

## ArtLAB: Arts and Community Empowerment

committee will advise the media and visual arts teachers on the quality implementation of an authentic, sequential and articulated vocational program that adequately prepares students for entry level media arts positions and instructional integrations.

ArtLab's principal must oversee a complex and evolving educational program that provides multi-faceted supports for student learning in community outreach, Linked Learning and Humanitas integrations, and an arts and technology focus. He or she will then need to fulfill high level competency in organization and planning, inclusive leadership, team building, resource development and operational and personnel management. In addition, these criteria are considered critical to the position:

- Effective experience in instructional leadership and in supporting teacher growth;
- Experience in interdisciplinary teaching and curriculum design at the high school level, preferably with the Humanitas model;
- Commitment to arts and technology integrations and project-based learning;
- Demonstrated experience in and understanding of community based interactions and development;
- Successful experience with similar student demographics of Glassell Park.

**h. School Governance Model.** *Briefly explain the rationale for your choice of school type. Why are you applying to operate your school as a traditional, Pilot, Expanded School-Based Management Model (ESBMM), Network Partner, Affiliated Charter or Independent Charter school? Please reference Appendix B for more information on the governance models listed above.*

ArtLab has chosen the autonomous Pilot governance structure to provide the flexibility necessary to innovate in institutional architecture and resource allocations to meet the specific, differentiated needs of our diverse student constituency. Autonomy in staffing, budgeting and governing systems will support:

- Linked Learning integrations of arts and media productions with a rigorous, interdisciplinary Humanitas delivery of core content;
- Sequenced course instruction towards vocational preparation and professional level productions in choices of fine arts, cinema, animation and multimedia communications;
- ESL and multimedia production pairing to support language acquisition through a student centered and produced 'culture of language';
- Increased accountability and commitment from staff and administration;
- Additional staffing to support
  - Full inclusion;
  - Coaching in instructional integration across all subjects;
  - Grant position for external fund-raising efforts.
- Scheduling flexibility that support:
  - Instructional team collaboration;
  - Longer school day and options for remediation, specialization and/or acceleration;
  - Differentiation and intervention for EL, Special Education and "at-risk" students.
- Community outreach staffing and facilities that will service:
  - Substantial articulations with numerous middle school, post-secondary, community and industry partners;
  - Mentorships, internships, school visits, project-based learning, community interactions;
  - An open media arts lab for parent training and participation;
  - Increased parent involvement;
  - An accessible and inviting Community Center;
  - Transparent and inclusive governance structures for meaningful community participation in decision-making.



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

# PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

The Los Angeles River School

Paul Payne/Kristin Szilagyi

Executive Summary

### 1. Executive Summary

- a. Mission and Vision. State the mission, vision and core beliefs of the proposed school as well as the school's values about teaching and learning. Include an explanation of what students will know and be able to do as well as the rigorous intellectual habits of mind, essential skills, knowledge and attributes they will possess upon matriculation that will prepare them to be successful adults in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**Mission:** Student voice is at the heart of the Los Angeles River School mission to graduate young adults who are ready to be builders and stewards of ecologically sustainable and socially just communities. Los Angeles River School graduates will have the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind needed to move into the workforce or continue their education, and to exercise the powerful, positive influence one person can have on our world.

**Vision:** The vision of the Los Angeles River School is based upon a fundamental shift in the traditional relationship between students and adults in education. Central in this school will be student voice, student choice, and student responsibility. To ensure our students' success we will design powerful support systems for them. Our school will extend beyond the physical school-building walls into the community to take advantage of community resources and to develop students who are problem-solvers and community builders well before they leave high school.

**Core Beliefs and Values:** It is common in a traditional high school setting for teachers and other adults to be speakers and for students to be listeners. If we want to develop articulate adults who can convey their ideas powerfully, clearly, and effectively, we need to design schools in which student voices are those most commonly heard. We will ensure this in a number of ways:

#### 1) Student Voice:

**Instructional Practice.** We will build all of our courses around critical inquiry. Teachers pose an important, complex central question, always one for which there are no clear or easy answers. Student learning evolves through investigation, experimentation, and most importantly, discussion. This instructional practice helps students grow to regard teachers as coaches and facilitators rather than as the only source of knowledge and to understand that there are not always right or wrong answers, that we can look at issues through multiple lenses. This practice also helps students develop rigorous habits of mind, such as intellectual curiosity, critical thinking and questioning, and innovative problem solving. These intellectual habits will enable our students to use their growing skills to think critically about real community issues and needs and find ways to address these in novel ways. All students learn to participate in thoughtful civil discourse necessary to sustain a democracy.

#### **Taylor Yard Schools Collaborative:** Introduction

Our collaborative of Pilot schools has been working cooperatively since May 2010 to plan for the opening of the five small schools at CRHS#13, and we are eager to expand our collaborative to include all school that will share the site. Together, we will create a safe and welcoming campus—a school that will unify our communities of Atwater Village, Cypress Park, Elysian Valley, and Glassell Park, communities that have similar needs but have traditionally been isolated from one another. These Northeast Los Angeles communities have never had a high school located near their own neighborhoods. We are excited about working with our neighbors to fulfill their needs and build a center for civic action in the interest of the environment, which will be a source of pride for these previously underserved communities.

:: ArtLAB :: Los Angeles River School :: School of Technology, Business, and Education :: School of History and Dramatic Arts ::

**2) Student Voice: Students as Educational and Civic Partners.** The Los Angeles River School students will participate in all decision-making bodies and practices at school. They will also be encouraged, trained, and supported to take part in the civic bodies of their communities through regular collaboration with community groups and stakeholders. We will be preparing generations of adults who will be actively engaged in building and sustaining healthy, just, environmentally sound communities.

**3) Student Choice and Responsibility.** Traditionally, throughout most of a student's day, the adults in charge make decisions for her. At Los Angeles River School, students will be supported to become effective decision makers: Students will build their own class schedules (with an advisor's assistance), check out the textbooks they need, decide upon activities such as internships, community work projects, and clubs, as well as their own movement about the school. We need to trust young adults to make these decisions to help them develop into active agents of their own educational achievement rather than passive receivers of knowledge—ultimately becoming lifelong learners.

**4) Powerful Support.** To support students in these new practices and roles requires carefully crafted support systems. Rather than simply make these new demands, we will build support systems to provide a scaffold for the new learning and the changes in practice that we will expect of our students.

**5) Community as School.** Our communities are rich in resources. We are in the heart of Los Angeles, one of the great cities of the world. Our school neighborhood lies along an important environmental resource, the Los Angeles River. We have a great opportunity to play an important part in the development and environmental health of this area. Too often teenagers do not play a part in the productive life of their neighborhoods. We will reach out to involve people and other resources in real-world, authentic learning to build the bridges needed to empower young people as full participants in their growing and flourishing communities.

- b. **Student Population.** Describe the student population that your proposed school will serve, including the interests and critical educational needs of the students. Explain your team's experience serving a similar population of students, and how your proposed school will meet the identified needs of these students.

The students in these Northeast Los Angeles neighborhoods have not had a local high school, but instead have traveled to Eagle Rock, Franklin, or Marshall; the communities have worked for many years to get a high school of their own. (See table 1b.1 for a demographic breakdown of the three high schools. Data was taken from the CDE website.)

Our students will be primarily Latino, Filipino, and Asian based on their track designations. Many come from homes in which a language other than English is primarily spoken. The majority of students are economically disadvantaged. What is most important about future Los Angeles River School students is that they are culturally rich, eager for experience and learning, and recognize the profound importance of education as the key to upward social mobility. Their families work hard to ensure a bright future for their children and care deeply about the quality of their education.

But our students face the significant barriers to educational success. In addition to the barriers they face outside of school due to poverty, they have been housed in large, impersonal schools in traditional-style classrooms in which they have had little opportunity to develop their language skills. They have had insufficient information about UC/CSU entrance requirements, a lack of mentors and support for completion of university applications, inconsistent counseling support, a lack of high-quality career pathways programs, and insufficient integration of community resources to support students' well-being and encourage career interests.

Perhaps the most significant barrier to academic achievement our students face is that many of them have remained in the English Language Learner Program for most of their school years. The majority of the students in "sheltered" classes spend between eight and ten years awaiting re-

designation. Often long-term English Language Learners and their parents are not aware that the students are not prepared to go on to college. It is critical that schools work more effectively with this population of students and their parents to overcome these educational deficits.

Our design team is comprised of teachers with a wealth of experience working with this group of students. They are our students; we know them and the community well. Most of us live in the school community or nearby neighborhoods. Several of us grew up and attended schools in the neighborhoods served by the new school. All of us have spent our careers teaching students from these neighborhoods, and we are profoundly committed to serving these communities. Few people know our students as well as we do. We know what they are good at, and we know their struggles, and we know how brilliantly they can succeed.

- c. **Instructional Program.** Provide an overview of the instructional program of the proposed school, identifying and describing the key instructional strategies and practices that the school will employ to drive student achievement. Briefly explain the research base that demonstrates that the identified strategies will be successful in improving academic achievement for the targeted student population.

To develop into articulate adults who can convey their ideas powerfully, students must spend much of their time in class speaking rather than only listening; this is even more critical for our students, many of whom are second language learners. To embody these values, we have developed an innovative instructional plan that will create heterogeneous, mixed-ability, mixed-age classes; focus on developing students' communication fluency; and engage students and teachers in authentic, purposeful, collaborative work. We will create an environment in which students and teachers collaborate as they investigate the complex challenges of our city and environment and seek solutions.

Curriculum at the Los Angeles River School will be designed by teachers, using the Humanitas instructional model. In a traditional Humanitas program, grade-level teacher teams (who share a common cohort of students) develop a thematic link for their courses and unit, which connects their disparate subjects to a question or concept larger than what any one subject can address alone. An instructional "unit" at Los Angeles River School is a semester-long collaboration among the four teachers and 100 students. Each unit is designed by teachers as an interdisciplinary, thematic approach to a vexing societal problem. We have adapted the Humanitas model, with teachers working with mixed-age classes and with additional electives. The Humanitas model has a twenty year track record of being a powerful tool, both for creating exciting, engaging curriculum, and for sustaining teachers' interest and focus on collaboration and instructional practice.

All Los Angeles River School courses are standards-based. All students will complete the UC/CSU A-G college entrance requirements while developing the communication and thinking skills necessary for college and career success. All students, regardless of their special needs or educational backgrounds, deserve a rigorous and engaging curriculum. Interdisciplinary, relevant, project-based learning provides a powerful context for students to develop the skills necessary to transfer learning, communicate persuasively, and apply higher-order thinking skills to cognitively demanding tasks.

### **Key Strategies:**

**Multi-Age Classes.** Another important support will be our multi-age class settings. To the extent possible all our classes will be multi-age, including students from all grade levels. Traditionally older students in a class are there because they have not previously been successful in that class; these older students typically do not provide appropriate models for younger students. When classes are populated only by younger students, there are not many good models for them either. If younger students are in classes in which many of their classmates are successful older students, they become quickly socialized into the academic and intellectual norms of a school (Kappler, 2002). This will be critical in a school like ours in which students have such a high degree of responsibility.

**Critical Inquiry.** Critical inquiry is a set of instructional practices that compel students to preview texts, take layers of notes from those texts, and formulate questions. While critical inquiry is engaging for all students, it is particularly well-suited for the large academically at-risk population of students we will serve at the Los Angeles River School.

**Linked Learning.** We will develop a CTE-certified pathway in the Energy and Utilities Sector (Environmental Science pathway) to engage students in relevant learning. Linked learning, a framework for college- and career-ready high school curriculum, is a powerful tool for creating engaging and relevant learning opportunities for students. Linked learning has four critical components: challenging academics, demanding technical learning, work-based learning, and support services.

**Environmental Science focus.** As an environmental studies school, students will gain a strong foundation in the sciences through interdisciplinary coursework, project-based curriculum and relevant learning through service to the community. Inquiry-based science presents many opportunities for students to use science and the English language to strengthen their skills in both. As a school within the Energy and Utilities CTE sector, it will be essential for students to work alongside professionals and CTE teachers in the lab on a consistent basis. Students will take courses in which they will develop skills to prepare them for a career, additional certification, or postsecondary education in the fields of energy and environmental technology.

**Advisory.** High levels of student choice and responsibility require powerful methods of support. Students will be supported both by adults and by their peers. We will develop a comprehensive system of advisory support for all students. Each student will have an adult advisor from matriculation to graduation. Advisors will assist students as they make the important decisions outlined above and be the adult point of contact for student assistance and for communication with parents and other staff in anything concerning the student.

**Long-Term English Language Learners.** This group of ELLs is very different from their short-term peers: They appear to be fluent in English, but they struggle academically. Many long-term ELLs are disengaged; they either do not see the connections between working hard in school and the quality of their future lives, or they may feel hopeless about changing this situation. Reconnecting long-term ELLs with their more proficient peers, through mixed-ability, multi-age classes will certainly help, since long-term ELLs are typically segregated and isolated from their peers. Project-based learning, linked learning, and CTE pathway classes will help them draw a clearer connection between work in school and success after graduation, especially as they engage in relevant curriculum with their more academically proficient peers.

- d. **School Culture.** Describe the school culture that your team envisions for the proposed school and what, if any social-emotional supports are necessary to create that culture.

We envision a school in which students and adults demonstrate high levels of respect and empathy for one another. We aspire to create heightened levels of trust within and across the adult and student communities, replacing capricious and arbitrary mandates with humane policies, inquisitiveness, and appreciation for diversity and human challenges. In this way we can nurture generations of creative, articulate problem solvers and community leaders. Not only do we want to build a school in which student voice and student choice are valued and put at the center of classroom and governing practice, but we want to help our students create a school building in which they feel a deep sense of proud ownership.

When young people feel that the adults at school care deeply about their attendance and success, when they see the purpose of their work, make real connections between school and their own aspirations, work alongside adults who are passionate about their academic discipline, and have access to the expertise of adults in the community outside the school, they are more likely to remain engaged in school. For many students prior lack of success is a barrier—which undermines future success, and this is a pattern that needs to be broken.

The culture of the Los Angeles River School will be supported with the following:

**Supportive Adult Relationships.** Personalized attention through advisories and teacher teams ensures that all students have access to the rich curriculum at our school. The four teachers who comprise each interdisciplinary team will keep close on their 100 students, working together on the interdisciplinary projects over the course of each 18-week module. Through our multiple community partnerships, projects, and career pathway, students will further have access to a number of successful adult role models in the local community.

**Advisories.** The centerpiece of our support for students will be the personalization inherent in advisories. Each student will be assigned an advisor and will meet with that advisor for 120 minutes each week (three 40-minute sessions). Simply put, the advisor's role is to ensure that all of her or his students graduate. The research of Linda Darling-Hammond affirms that deep, meaningful relationships between students, teachers, and parents or caregivers have a positive impact on all students, but particularly those at risk of dropping out (Darling-Hammond et al., 2006/2007). Advisors will regularly monitor data pertinent to following their advisees. We will develop a "dashboard" style data array with relevant data for case management, such as students' attendance, homework completion, background information, and other data. Advisors will review data regularly to inform interventions.

**Family Support.** Through the advisor, families will have a point person who is a partner in their child's academic success and emotional well-being and who will track their child's progress through his or her high school career. It will be the responsibility of the advisors to meet several times a year with the parents of all their students for progress conferences, some of which will be student-led. These conferences will allow the advisor to build a personal relationship with parents, to keep parents informed about their child's academic progress and progress toward achieving goals for post-secondary plans.

**Parental Involvement.** Too often, "parental involvement" simply means keeping the school open for a few extra hours a handful of times each year. Strategies for engaging parents more meaningfully in their children's education include parent visits, opportunities for volunteering, participants in end-of-unit project evaluations, parent conferences and utilizing the expertise of parents in various contexts.

**Open School Culture.** We will regularly host visitors to our school, such as parents, community organizations, and volunteers. Our school is structured to invite and regularly engage community members and parents to work closely with parents and students on operations, curriculum, and end-of-unit projects. Visitors to our school will observe an open, transparent school culture with a value for academic achievement.

**College and Career Readiness.** The transition from high school to college and career is often a difficult one for our students. Students often feel under-prepared, unaware of their options, and overwhelmed by the changes. Researchers identify three primary barriers to college for low-income, minority students: poor academic preparation, navigating college enrollment, and access to financial aid (Nagaoka, et al., 2009; Oakes, et al. 2006). We hope to address all of these challenges. We will partner with Los Angeles Education Partnership and join their college access network and are working with the GEAR-UP coordinators at Marshall HS to write our schools into a new grant, targeting the students of Irving MS and CRHS #13.

We anticipate that our work with community partners and organizations as we develop our CTE strand will help us build our career-readiness path and opportunities. We will create ample opportunities for students to observe adults in their work setting, from working alongside researchers in the HELAB to job shadows and mock interviews.

**On Campus Services.** In order to be focused and engaged in school, students' basic social, physical, and emotional needs must be met. We will work with the other four schools on the CRHS #13 campus to create a variety of shared services such as a school psychologist, a campus health clinic, after-school programs, and other services.

- e. **Accountability and Performance Goals.** Briefly discuss how your organization will set and annually update targets for the indicators in the table below. Please share key data from the Performance Management Matrix highlighting the goals of the proposed school.

The faculty of the Los Angeles River School will set up and annually update targets for performance and accountability goals including student, faculty, and staff attendance, student course grades, CSTs, first time pass rate CAHSEE, and graduation rates. In order to set these targets we will monitor school level data, SIS data, and other District level data. Students' advisors will be accountable for maintaining a data "dashboard" and for helping their advisees to interpret and understand this information and how it relates to student academic achievement goals.

- f. **Community Analysis and Context.** Describe the community that your proposed school will serve. Include an analysis of the strengths, assets, values and critical needs of the community. Discuss your rationale for selecting this community, your experience serving this or a similar community, how your team has engaged the community thus far and how it will continue to do so if selected.

The community that the Los Angeles River School will serve spans the Northeast Los Angeles neighborhoods of Atwater Village, Cypress Park, Elysian Valley, and Glassell Park which all lie along the Los Angeles River north of Downtown. These neighborhoods are primarily Hispanic, Filipino, and Asian in ethnicity with a smaller white population. Average household incomes range from \$40,000-\$50,000 yearly, and median household occupancy is average to high for the county. Forty to fifty percent of families own their homes, and about the same number are renters. The number of single parent households is average for the county. The number of people twenty-five and older who hold a four year degree is low to average, and in two of the neighborhoods the number of adults with less than a high school education is high for L.A. County.

**Identified Strengths and Needs.** This community has many important strengths as well as some critical needs such as increased community services, transportation, access to the arts, jobs growth in the community, and the development of local business, they have traditionally seen themselves isolated from one another to a great degree. The new high school will serve to unify these neighborhoods.

These Northeast L.A. neighborhoods need a great school. We want to be certain that the students who will be displaced from Franklin, Eagle Rock, and John Marshall High Schools will have an excellent school to attend. We know our students and community well. Most of us live in the school community or nearby neighborhoods. Several of us grew up and attended schools in the neighborhoods served by the new school. All of us have spent years teaching students from these neighborhoods, and we are profoundly committed to serving this community.

**Community Engagement.** We have established partnerships with community organizations which enrich our curriculum as well as help carry out the mission and vision of our partner organizations. We have commitments from organizations such as Friends of the L.A. River, Northeast Trees, Tree People, The River Project, Descanso Gardens, Urban Semillas, the Environmental Justice Coalition for Water, and others. Community members will serve on our school governance councils and committees.

- g. **Leadership.** Provide an overview of the proposed school's governance structure and leadership team. Highlight the strengths of the leadership team and the proposed leader. If a leader has not been identified, speak to the key attributes the potential leader should possess.

The Los Angeles River School's primary governing body will be the Governing School Council, which will include representatives of the students, parents, community, faculty, and staff and will be responsible for maintaining the school's mission and vision, ensuring our continuous improvement, and

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making decisions about the overall operation of the school. As a Title I school we will establish a School Site Council as well as its advisory councils, the English Learners Advisory Council (ELAC) and the Compensatory Education Advisory Council (CEAC). These councils oversee the writing and maintenance of our Single Plan for Student Achievement and the categorical budgets.

Because the campus will be made up of five autonomous small schools, we will also establish, along with the other schools, a Building Council and maintain a Site Operations Manager for oversight of campus operations. The Site Operations Manager will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the campus. The Building Council will be responsible for supervision of campus-wide operations and collaborative decision-making about resource and space allocation. The campus-wide Building Council will be composed of the principal from each of the five schools. The Site Operations Manager will report to the Building Council. Our design team is our leadership team; this leadership team will expand as we complete our faculty because as a small faculty we will be able to take on the collective responsibility of distributed leadership.

We will seek a principal who understands the classroom and instruction as well as administration in a small school setting, who is a skilled collaborator, and who shares our vision. Our Principal must demonstrate a commitment to serving students, especially those marginalized students from communities of poverty, and must be committed to developing and maintaining relationships with community organizations and with the families of our students.

- h. School Governance Model. Briefly explain the rationale for your choice of school type. Why are you applying to operate your school as a traditional, Pilot, Expanded School-Based Management Model (ESBMM), Network Partner, Affiliated Charter or Independent Charter school? Please reference **Appendix B** for more information on the governance models listed above.

The Los Angeles River School will be a small, autonomous school serving 400 to 500 students and staffed by about twenty teachers. We will operate under the Pilot school model. This model allows people closest to the students to make the decisions that most directly affect student achievement. It encourages and supports innovation and holds teachers and other school personnel accountable for the success of their students. This model also makes it possible to make rapid changes to policies and programs when needed to improve student achievement.

In order to carry out our proposed programs we need the autonomies offered under the Pilot school model. Our programs require the intensive teacher collaboration of professional learning communities; hiring and supporting teachers who welcome this level of commitment is critical to our students' success. We are excited about the opportunity to create a school that will ensure our students' high achievement; we understand and welcome the responsibilities demanded by the Pilot model.



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

# PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

Partnership to Uplift Communities (PUC) LA

Executive Summary

1. Executive Summary (5-7 pages)

- a. Mission and Vision.** State the mission, vision and core beliefs of the proposed school as well as the school's values about teaching and learning. Include an explanation of what students will know and be able to do as well as the rigorous intellectual habits of mind, essential skills, knowledge and attributes they will possess upon matriculation that will prepare them to be successful adults in the 21st Century.

*The mission of our proposed Partnership to Uplift Communities (PUC) Central Region High School #13 (CRHS #13) is to offer every enrolled student a dynamic learning environment within a small community committed to educational excellence and personal integrity. PUC CRHS #13 will guide and nurture its students as they discover and cultivate their unique gifts and talents, challenging each individual to achieve his or her full potential. We will prepare our students to enter and have success in the colleges and universities of their choice and inspire in them a lifelong commitment to intellectual growth so that they will enrich and serve the communities in which they live.*

PUC serves two high need communities in Los Angeles; Northeast Los Angeles and the Northeast San Fernando Valley. Our organization's ties to these two communities stem from our Founders deep connections to the communities. Dr. Ref Rodriguez is a life-long resident of Northeast Los Angeles and Dr. Jacqueline Elliot has served the communities of the Northeast San Fernando Valley all her career in public education. We have developed 12 successful, small public charter schools over the course of the past 12 years as a result of overwhelming community requests to create alternatives to the large, low achieving public schools located in the neighborhoods we serve. We differ from many CMO's in that we focus only on two specific communities, our primary focus is quality rather than quantity and we only seek to open schools when we are convinced there is truly a community desire and need. PUC has 3 commitments as follows: 1) we will increase the college graduation rate by 5 times within the communities we serve; 2) after four years with us our students are proficient; 3) students will commit to uplift their communities now and forever. This is the first time we are applying for Public School Choice and are doing so in great part due to the fact that we still find ourselves with extensive waiting lists for our existing schools. Valley Region High School #5 and Central Region High School #13 are located in the hearts of the communities that we serve and once again, the community is beseeching us to apply for at least one small learning community in each of the two new facilities. We see the benefits of this opportunity as two-fold: we will be able to serve more students through the creation and operation of high quality public charter schools and we will have the opportunity to collaborate and share with the other expert educators who will be located within the facilities. The latter of these two benefits is of critical importance because we have long since come to the realization that all of the students belong to all of us in the education arena and if we are to close the achievement gap, it will be achieved through a high level of strategic collaboration between all of us (both charter school and traditional public school personnel). We embrace and are thankful for this opportunity to work with LAUSD and other educators in our quest to provide an excellent education for each and every child in Los Angeles.

The PUC vision for its students is to achieve demonstrable mastery of the state standards, and a disciplined and enthusiastic approach to learning that will enable them to graduate from college, pursue their dreams, and contribute positively to society. In addition to mastery of state standards as demonstrated on standardized tests and work products in student portfolios, our schools define the rigorous intellectual habits of mind, essential skills, knowledge and attributes students will possess upon matriculation that will prepare them to be successful adults in the 21st Century. With input from stakeholders - including faculty, PUC home office educators, students, and families - each PUC school defines its own school-wide learning results. The school-wide goals for PUC's existing high school, CALS Early College High School will form the initial foundational goals for PUC CRHS #13, but will be reformulated with input from our school's staff and families. These current foundational goals are "the five A's" that have proven to be effective in successfully educating students.

**Authenticity:** Students are able to connect work with their interests and passions and to real world issues or concerns.

**Academic Rigor:** Students engage in challenging course work which enables them to develop new skills and knowledge, achieve depth in research and produce assignments and exhibitions to the best of their ability.

**Active Exploration and Learning:** Students are advocates for their own learning by pursuing out of school activities including internships, service learning, college classes and civic involvement in their communities.

**Adult & Peer Collaboration:** Students are able to work effectively with others (adults and peers), accepting and giving appropriate assistance.

**Assessment & Reflection:** Students are able to exhibit and assess their own work in light of personal, school and real world standards of performance.

Students who enter and graduate from the charter high school operated by PUC at CR HS #13 will be prepared for active citizenship in our 21st century society. We believe an educated person of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be one who has learned to be self-directed and accountable. That person will work cooperatively to develop constructive answers to difficult questions for the good of society, will have an acute awareness of global perspective and responsibility, appreciate the strength of diversity, and be able to look at himself/herself and others in a variety of ways. An educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will have knowledge of literature, mathematics, history, science, technology, and the arts, as well as have mastered the skills and developed the values necessary to become a contributing member of society.

The charter high school will provide every student and in particular those who are placed in at risk situations with a powerful, engaging and accelerated curriculum that will enable them to succeed. Our goals for student success are as follow:

1. The educational program will enable pupils to become self-motivated, confident, and life-long learners.
  2. Pupils will master the basic and augmented skills in context, develop concepts and become critical thinkers and problem solvers.
  3. Pupils will receive an enriched curriculum in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, technology, health, physical education, and performing and visual arts.
  4. Pupils will develop an attitude of self-respect, respect for others, and an appreciation for the strength of diversity.
  5. Pupils will demonstrate cooperative pro-social behavior with a sense of responsibility to their school, home, and community. Students will display this sense of responsibility by being of service to their school and community. For example, students will continue to conduct canned food drives for local shelters and continue their activities with the residents of a local Senior Citizens Home (entertaining them on holidays, etc.)
  6. Pupils will be exposed to career and post-secondary opportunities to develop personal and professional life goals.
  7. Pupils will begin to establish long-term, post-secondary goals and identify strategies, resources and support to help them achieve these goals.
- b. Student Population. Describe the student population that your proposed school will serve, including the interests and critical educational needs of the students. Explain your team's experience serving a similar population of students, and how your proposed school will meet the identified needs of these students.**

PUC schools have been serving the Northeast Los Angeles area since 2000 when we opened CALS Charter Middle School. Three years later we opened a high school (CALS Early College High School) and then a K-S elementary school (Milagro Charter Academy) - both of which have been named California Distinguished Schools. In the past four years, prompted by local demand, we opened two more middle schools (Excel Academy Charter and Santa Rosa Charter Academy) in the Northeast Los Angeles community. If our current schools in the area are an accurate depiction of the proposed school's population, it can be anticipated that 94% of our students will be Latino, 2% African- American, 2% Caucasian, 1% Filipino and 1% Asian. Eighty-nine percent of our students qualify for free or reduced lunch through the Federal Lunch Program. We anticipate that approximately 11% of the students will qualify for special education services.

Since our schools have long waitlists and regularly outperform the local neighborhood schools, we believe our program would be a welcome addition to this region. Furthermore, in a community where the high school dropout rate exceeds 50%, the better than 90% graduation rate and college entry rate at our schools indicates that our Early College Program model could effectively address community needs.

Throughout this application we will provide a detailed description of the students this school proposes to serve including socio-economic demographic data and achievement scores of the public schools currently serving the community. PUC founded charter schools serving the communities of Northeast Los Angeles have been developed in direct response to these communities. Because of our founder's, Dr. Ref Rodriguez' life-long ties to this area, the schools were specifically and organically developed to serve the students in this specific region. Our charter schools are not cookie cutter replications of schools that were founded in another region, another city, or another state. PUC Schools in Northeast L.A. were developed to serve the residents of these communities.

**c. Instructional Program. Provide an overview of the instructional program of the proposed school, identifying and describing the key instructional strategies and practices that the school will employ to drive student achievement. Briefly explain the research base that demonstrates that the identified strategies will be successful in improving academic achievement for the targeted student population.**

We currently serve 330 high school students in this region through our award-winning CALS Early College High School (ECHS) and believe PUC-Cf~HS#13 can implement a similar program and build upon CALS ECHS's successes. The major components of this Instructional Program are:

- Honors-level program of study for all-- no tracking
- Standards-based curriculum that holds all students to high expectations
- Engaging instruction that emphasizes learning through student-centered inquiry
- Connections between academic learning and student interests, cultures, talents
- Academic catch-up program combining basic skills with advanced concepts
- Small classes and differentiated instruction that meet the learning needs of each student
- Immersion for English language learners and inclusion for special education students
- Daily schedule and yearly calendar structured to extend learning
- Early College: Scaffolded exposure to college- level instruction and college courses

Our Early College program is a direct response to current educational research that demonstrates the traditional high school experience and structure has led many at risk students and in particular those of color to never achieve a high school diploma or to graduate but never matriculate at a college or university. Through the Early College program, students take college classes while still under the umbrella of support of the high school. As they experience success, students' confidence soars and they can fully vest themselves in the PUC vision of college graduation. With this program, 86% of PUC students in Northeast LA's first 4 graduating classes graduated within four years, and 100% of them had been accepted to and were enrolled in

college at the time of graduation.

The broad categories of our Instructional Strategies are listed below, with detailed explanations and research basis described in the body of the application:

- A Reflective Learning Community
- Data-Driven Instruction
- Student Interventions and Differentiation
- Collaboration w/ Resource Specialist
- Parent Engagement
- Backwards Planning
- Independent Practice linked to Mini-Lessons (EPK)
- Basic Skills Practice
- Maximizing Student Engagement
- Reading, Writing, and Speaking in the Discipline
- Expect Excellence
- Scaffold and Accelerate, Not Remediate

PUC CRHS #13 will also take part in the *The College Ready Promise*. This \$60 million initiative, funded through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, focuses on teacher effectiveness through the implementation of a number of teacher and leader support strategies and a sound evaluation system that includes student achievement results, that will be linked to compensation. The purpose of the initiative is to ensure that our students are taught by highly effective teachers who ensure that they are truly college ready when they graduate from our high schools.

**d. School Culture. Describe the school culture that your team envisions for the proposed school and what, if any social-emotional supports are necessary to create that culture.**

The culture and climate of a PUC school is a collaborative community of learners in which educators from the school site and the home office work with students and families in order to ensure that all students learn, graduate, and attend college. Our schools implement specific practices to support and maintain this culture such as the use of the **Community Circles** from the *Tribes* program, an empowered School Advisory Council (comprised of students, parents, community members, faculty, and administrators) , and in-house counselors at every school site.

Another essential aspect of our school culture that focuses on *academic achievement* and student *motivation to succeed* is our **College Entry** goal. All staff members possess a deep commitment to ensuring that each and every student not only graduates from the high school but also enters college prepared for college success. The school is small enough to allow staff members to work toward this goal by identifying student needs and addressing them through intervention in class, zero periods, seventh periods, lunchtime, extended day, Saturdays, and during the summer.

We promote our vision of college entry by: discussing college goals on a daily basis, displaying college related artifacts, prominently posting our mission and vision, designing our college center to be the heart of the campus and a favorite “hang out” spot for students, and by teachers sharing details about their own college experiences. We post the names of students in the lobby of the school as they are accepted to college. Parents attend free workshops from the time their child enters high school in order to prepare them for their child's eventual entry into college. During their high school years, our students visit a number of colleges and universities.

**e. Accountability and Performance Goals. Briefly discuss how your organization will set and annually update targets for the indicators in the table below. Please share key data from the Performance Management Matrix highlighting the goals of the proposed school.**

Our emphasis on collaboration and data driven instruction enables our faculty and administrative team to create a detailed action plan (called the School Success Plan) every summer that responds to student performance data and utilizes best practices of teaching/learning/assessment in order to work together to meet targeted performance goals.

In July, PUC site-based Instructional Leaders meet with the Home Office Instructional Team (HOIT) and faculty in order to review the school's state testing results. They analyze the data to determine which sub-parts presented a struggle for students. The staff is led through a reflection and data analysis process that leads to new goals being set in alignment with required annual Measureable Objectives and the school's vision. Teachers meet within departments and revise scope and sequences from the year prior to address the areas where goals were not achieved. This process results in the creation of the School Success Plan. Progress towards achievement of this plan's goals is analyzed throughout the year through ongoing discussions between teachers and administrators, with a focus on classroom assessment results, student work, benchmark assessment results, classroom observations, progress reports, semester grades, and finals. Technology such as Zoom Data (Data Director) and PowerSchool enables efficient uploading, analyzing and sharing of data. Teachers are supported in order to address students' learning gaps through the creation of intervention classes and professional development targeting classroom differentiation strategies. Throughout the school year, monthly data reports are generated to identify each school's progress in achieving the School Success Plan. Dashboards (see Appendix IV of the Supplementary Application) provide detailed assessment data and can be readily shared with the organization and the Board. When there are discrepancies between where the school wishes its students to be and where the students are, HOIT works with the Instructional Leader to implement interventions in the form of professional development, curricular changes, teacher coaching, resource specialist support and student-specific plans of action. Interventions can also be more encompassing as, for example, when a program was identified to specifically target high school English teaching to EL and when a program was identified to support teachers in filling student gaps in Algebra I. Depending on the specific gap identified, the organization will formulate a plan the same month the issue is identified and will be held accountable~ through monthly reports to the Board of Trustees.

Performance Management Matrix to be completed for next round of application.

**f. Community Analysis and Context. Describe the community that your proposed school will serve. Include an analysis of the strengths} assets, values and critical needs of the community. Discuss your rationale for selecting this community, your experience serving this or a similar community, how your team has engaged the community thus far and how it will continue to do so if selected.**

Our rationale for selecting this community is entirely based on our experiences serving students and families in this region and our desire to respond to the many students on our wait lists who have asked us to expand opportunities for them to attend our small schools. The Northeast area of metropolitan Los Angeles is comprised of 24 square miles with a resident population of approximately 241,400. Latinos make up 67% of the total population (Los Angeles Department of City Planning, n.d.). The 2000 census reported that of the total population over 24 years of age, 44.6% had an education attainment level of less than a high school diploma, 17.2% earned a high school diploma, 11.7% a college degree and 5.2% a graduate or professional degree. In 2000, the median income of the residents was approximately \$33,717 with 27.7% of residents earning below the poverty level (Los Angeles Department of City Planning, n.d.). According to the City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning, 98% of all households in the area speak a language other than English with 73.4% of all households speaking Spanish (Los

Angeles Department of City Planning, n.d.).

We see ourselves as a small piece of the collaborative tapestry which will develop and sustain the community-based charter school. The design team -led by the Regional Director working in collaboration with the CEO - will continue to meet with and work in collaboration with outside community agencies that already work with other charter schools the communities located in Northeast Los Angeles and who believe in the mission and vision of the school. These community organizations include the Los Angeles Boys and Girls Club, The Office of Councilmember Ed Reyes, the Northeast Education Strategy Group, the local parks and recreation centers specifically the State Park at Taylor Yard, One LA, and the Los Angeles River Center.

While this community is in need of schools that can better support students in reaching proficiency at grade level standards and can better support students in preparing for and completing college, we do not view this community with a deficit mentality. On the contrary, an area that has traditionally been pointed to as challenge, is viewed by PUC Schools as an asset. Since parental engagement is considered essential to student success, Latino families' respectful distance from school authorities is often considered to be an obstacle. PUC founders and staff, however, understand the Latino concept of familia and have implemented a holistic strategy to harness the energy of familia. The strategy (described below) was first implemented in 2004 and has been successful in all PUC schools since that time. In brief, this strategy consists of meaningful communication between parents and teachers, regular meetings of committed parent organizers, and integration of parent priorities into curriculum and school culture. It successfully involves parents in a self-propagating cycle of increasing parental voice, involvement in the education of their children, and the creation of Expected School-Wide Learning Results that become central to the school's identity.

**g. Leadership. Provide an overview of the proposed school's governance structure and leadership team. Highlight the strengths of the leadership team and the proposed leader. If a leader has not been identified speak to the key attributes the potential leader should possess.**

The PUC Schools leadership team has broad and deep experience in the educational and school reform arenas, specifically within the charter school movement. **Appendix III** of the Supplementary Application provides a graphical representation of the PUC organization and clarifies our governance structure. The PUC organization is headed by a CEO and overseen by a Board of Trustees. Three directors collaborate with the CEO in supporting and overseeing PUC schools. The High School Director (new position to be created) will oversee this proposed school as well as the other PUC high schools. PUC employees at the 'home office' support the schools by providing operations, fundraising, finance and instructional services. The Home Office operational team, for example, ensures that payroll, benefits, compliance, site-related issues, human resources, and other non-teaching/learning related concerns are attended to properly and promptly. The Home Office Instructional Team includes a Chief Academic Officer and others with expertise in specific subject matter, special education, instructional strategies and assessment. At the school site, an Instructional Leader (principal) leads and supports faculty and meets on a weekly basis with the Home Office Instructional Team and all other PUC Instructional Leaders to share best practices and receive support as needed. For the proposed high school, the Instructional Leader will also be supported by an Assistant Principal, who will manage operations-related matters and coordinate this work with the home office team, and a Dean, who will focus on student discipline, counseling and other special needs. In addition, our collaborative and power-sharing model includes parents, teachers, students and community members, encouraging them to vote for representatives to the School Advisory Council.

The Instructional Leader, Assistant Principal and Dean have not been identified but detailed job descriptions are in **Appendix X**.

The following people are the members of the applicant team and will collaborate to interview and identify the school leadership team:

1. Dr. Ref Rodriguez - Co-founder of PUC Schools, founded all schools in NE Los Angeles and gave support to Dr. Jacqueline Elliot for the founding of PUC schools in NE San Fernando Valley
2. Dr. Jacqueline Elliot - Co-founder and CEO of PUC Schools, founded all PUC schools in the NE San Fernando Valley and gave support to Dr. Rodriguez in the founding of the schools in NE Los Angeles
3. Nik Orlando - Regional Director for NE Los Angeles PUC Schools, has worked with PUC for 10 years and supported the founding of all PUC schools in NE Los Angeles
4. Kelly Montes De Oca - Chief Academic Officer of PUC Schools has given academic and professional development support for all PUC schools on an ongoing basis, has worked with PUC for 9 years.
5. Dr. Kaye Ragland, Ed.D. - Serves as Director of Special Education for PUC and is an expert in all aspects of special education, has worked with PUC for 6 years.
6. Mara Simmons, Ph.D. - Instructional Leader of CALS Early College High School has been responsible for leading the instructional program at CALS Early College High School for the past four years. She was founding principal of Animo Leadership, the first school in the Green Dot Public Schools network.
7. Veronica Deleon - A founding student of CALS Charter Middle School and CALS Early College High School and 2010 graduate of Occidental College.



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

School of History and Dramatic Arts

Meredith Ryley

Executive Summary

**CENTRAL REGION HIGH SCHOOL #13  
SCHOOL OF HISTORY AND DRAMATIC ARTS**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- a. Mission and Vision.** State the mission, vision and core beliefs of the proposed school as well as the school's values about teaching and learning. Include an explanation of what students will know and be able to do as well as the rigorous intellectual habits of mind, essential skills, knowledge and attributes they will possess upon graduation that will prepare them to be successful adults in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**INTRODUCTION**

The inspiration for the School of History and Dramatic Arts came through the experiences of teachers within the community that they serve. Design team members from the American Studies Academy at Franklin High School had great success increasing student's academic achievement (see data in Attachment A-1). They attracted students through their reputation as "I/tough." Their students even self-identified as "nerds." Nevertheless, history remains relatively esoteric and unattractive to many teenagers, so the teachers felt the need for creative and career components. Meanwhile, another design team member had successfully established a vibrant performing and production arts program in the Media, Entertainment, and Graphic Arts Academy, but felt that the student's experience would be greatly enriched through integration with rigorous core content classes. Thus, the idea of creating an academically challenging program within an artistic environment was conceived. We are eager to combine our strengths to in order to create a synergistic and dynamic learning experience.

**MISSION**

The School of History and Dramatic Arts will be a Linked Learning community with a college and career preparatory program. We will utilize a thematic, interdisciplinary, project-based approach. We believe that exploring ourselves, our society, human history, and the arts are key to understanding the present and creating our future. We will prepare students for success by implementing a rigorous and relevant curriculum, facilitating creative expression through addressing the needs of our students holistically, and inspiring community engagement by practicing equity and justice.

**VISION**

The School of History and Dramatic Arts will be an environment in which skilled and caring adults prepare future generations of capable and motivated professionals and community leaders by making connections between learning, arts, careers, and life. An in-depth study of history will develop an expansive perspective that will encourage local action and global citizenship. A study of historical context will also enrich our students' understanding of dramatic arts. The intensely cooperative nature of theatre and film production will develop the collaborative abilities that colleges and employers seek. This will also help students develop effective and creative communication skills.

Our goals are to advance college and career preparedness, foster creative expression, and cultivate community engagement. The values that underlie these goals are our core beliefs in relevant rigor, holistic education, and social justice. We think that rigor must be coupled with relevance in order for learning to endure. We also feel that the physical, emotional, and social needs of a student must be met for optimal intellectual growth to take place. Finally, we believe that we are all "part of the whole;" therefore, we want our students to experience making a positive difference through service to others.

Students will leave the School of History and Dramatic Arts with the ability and drive to pursue their aspirations and to make a difference in the lives of others.

## KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ATTRIBUTES

Our school's unique blend of History and Dramatic Arts will provide multiple pathways to learning. The combination of an intellectual and an imaginative approach creates a reciprocal relationship: students may access academic content through artistic experience, or conversely, deepen their creative expression with background knowledge. This blend allows knowledge and skills to be *integrated*, following Linked Learning principles. The key attributes that our students will possess are embedded in both History and Dramatic Arts. Each of these disciplines requires students to view the world through different lenses, which embodies our first habit of mind: *perspective*. Perspective, in turn, engenders our first Habit of Heart: *empathy*.

SoHDA has developed a set of the knowledge, skills and attributes that students will have upon matriculation that is based on our goals and core beliefs. They are informed by a combination of stakeholder surveys (See Attachment A-1) and surveys on the characteristics that employers seek in employees (Koncz, Andrea. "Employers Rank Communication Skills First Among Job Candidate Skills and Qualities." National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). January 21, 2010). The chart in Section 2a (Instructional Philosophy) summarizes these characteristics.

### **Taylor Yard Schools Collaborative**

Our collaborative of Pilot schools has been working cooperatively since May 2010 to plan for the opening of the five small schools at CRHS#13, and we are eager to expand our collaborative to include all school that will share the site. Together, we will create a safe and welcoming campus-a school that will unify our communities of Atwater Village, Cypress Park, Elysian Valley, and Glassell Park, communities that have similar needs but have traditionally been isolated from one another. These Northeast Los Angeles communities have never had a high school located near their own neighborhoods. We are excited about working with our neighbors to fulfill their needs and build a center for civic action in the interest of the environment, which will be a source of pride for these previously underserved communities.

:: ArtLAB :: Los Angeles River School :: School of Technology, Business, and Education:: School of History and Dramatic Arts ::

- b. Student Population.** Describe the student population that your proposed school will serve, including the interests and critical educational needs of the students. Explain your team's experience serving a similar population of students, and how your proposed school will meet the identified needs of these students.

SoHDA will be part of the school site currently known as Central High School #13 located near the intersection of San Fernando Road and Division Street. The school will serve northeast Los Angeles, relieving three area high schools: Eagle Rock, Franklin, and Marshall.

The Taylor Yard Complex will pull from five feeder schools: King, Virgil, Burbank, and Nightingale Middle School. As of the 2009-10 School Accountability Report Card (SARC), all of the feeder schools failed to meet their AYP goals and thus comprehensive collaboration between the Taylor Yard Complex and the five feeder schools is essential to assure a unified successful vision. All schools feeding into the Taylor Yard complex are in the fifth year of program improvement and their API scores range from a low of 663 (Burbank) to a high of 737 (King). All 5 feeder schools have lower tier ranking (from 1-10, with 1 being the lowest ranking): Burbank and Virgil Middle Schools have a ranking of 1; King Middle School has a ranking of 2; and Irving and Nightingale have a ranking of 3. Thus, all of the feeder schools rank either far below average or below average. (2010 "Data Summary Sheet" LAUSD)

The economic disadvantages for students from the five feeder schools are quite high, ranging from 81%

with Burbank Middle School to 91% with Nightingale Middle School. Despite the gentrification in northeast Los Angeles area, for too many students that feed into the Taylor Yard Complex, financial hardship is still a reality. In addition, the schools serve significant populations of both Special Education and Gifted/Talented students.

As evidenced in a study by the UCLA "Labor and Education Collaborative," northeast Los Angeles has a high percentage of labor union members, yet insufficient access to a-g courses. SoHDA's commitment to access and participation in a-g requirements with a "C" or better will help alleviate that inequity.

Terriquez, Veronica. "The LAUSD A-G Life Prep Curriculum and College Access for the Children of Labor Union Members." UCLA, Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access (IDEA). Web. November 2010. <http://idea.gseis.ucla.edu/newsroom/idea-news/files/A-G%20Union%20Report.pdf>

CST Proficient or Advanced 2009-2010 School Year

	Burbank MS	Irving MS	King MS	Nightingale MS	Virgil MS
Eng. Lang. Arts	33.3%	35.4%	46.2%	34.8%	28.8%
Math	30.5%	32.3%	39.4%	34.8%	36.5%

Students receiving Specified Education in the five Taylor Yard feeder schools

	Burbank MS	Irving MS	King MS	Nightingale MS	Virgil MS
Spec. Ed	15%	16%	11%	9%	12%
Gifted Tal.	13%	10%	25%	15%	7%

2010 Data Summary Sheet, LAUSD

According to a survey by Glassell Park community members Marge Piane and Alisa Smith, (Attachment A-1) of 1166 students who will be served by the Taylor Yard site, given the choice of 10 possible "Small Learning Communities" or school themes, more students from the area are interested in "Fine Arts and Communication" (defined in the survey as including Performing Arts, Filmmaking, Languages, Photography) than in other choices (389 of 1166 =33%). An additional 206 (17%) students expressed an interest in "Law and Social Justice" (defined in the survey as including Government Policies, Political Science, World History). That means that the blended themes of History and Dramatic Arts, at least according to this survey, reflect the interests of 50% of students in this community.

The assembled SoHDA design team and partners are well-suited to address the critical needs and interests of this student population. Design team members bring a combined 76 years of serving similar student populations. In fact 57 of those years are by teachers serving at one of the relieved schools, Franklin. Design team lead Meredith Ryley, and design team members Richard Martinez, and Merri Garcia were founding participants in the Gilder Lehrman-sponsored American History Academy (now the American Studies Academy, or ASA) at Franklin High School. That program has a distinctly college preparatory focus. Design team member David Levine is currently the lead teacher for the Franklin Media, Entertainment, and Graphic Arts (MEGA) small learning community at Franklin High School. He has his **CTE in Media Arts**. The SoHDA design team also includes Dolores Lopez, special education teacher and the head of Franklin leadership, Peter Berlin, Franklin Algebra Project teacher, Chris Dipasquale, Franklin Chemistry teacher, and community members: Alex Soto (Franklin ASA alum and current Vice President for Student Affairs at Pasadena Community College), Samantha Sanchez, current Franklin student, Mr. Nunez, current Franklin parent and staff member for State Senator Kevin DeLeon, Birgitta Martinez, Special Education Assistant and Eagle Rock parent, and Ms. Telma Cifuentes, long-time Eagle Rock community member and Eagle Rock High School parent.

- c. **Instructional Program.** Provide an overview of the instructional program of the proposed school, identifying and describing the key instructional strategies and practices that the school will employ to drive student achievement. Briefly explain the research base that demonstrates that the identified strategies will be successful in improving academic achievement for the targeted student population.

## INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

The School of History and Dramatic Arts will utilize a state standards-based curriculum, and course offerings will meet California State University and University of California a-g requirements. In addition, curriculum and assessment autonomy will be used to go above and beyond these requirements, incorporating innovative electives, including Career Technical Education (CTE) courses.

The **Instructional Philosophy** underlying our program is progressive education, a theory developed by John Dewey and others during the first half of the 20th century. Proponents of progressivism believed that students learned best through experience and performance. This theory is reflected in Linked Learning, which "transforms students' high school experience by bringing together strong academics, demanding technical education, and real world experience..." The principles underlying progressive education are summarized in Section 2a.

The School of History and Dramatic Arts will take a unique approach to our instruction by also incorporating ideas derived from theorists who are considered "conservative." Too often, education reformists take extreme positions that discount the merits of the opposing side's arguments. There is a current debate between proponents of progressive, skills-based education and those such as E.D. Hirsch, Jr. who advocate common core knowledge. We feel that this is a false dichotomy: students can be provided with a rigorous academic curriculum which incorporates background knowledge *and* Project Based Learning. In fact, each enhances the depth of the other: a project is informed by core content, and core content is reinforced through projects.

This bridging of two opposing theories is illustrated in the work of Diane Ravitch, a leading proponent of testing and choice. After reviewing the results of 20 years of reform, she altered her position. Her quote in section 2a illustrates the merging of content and experience.

A primary research basis of ours is the field of cognitive science. What passes as educational research is sometimes questionable. Cognitive science is a field in which there is an attempt to recommend only educational practices that are grounded in quantitative scientific research. Daniel Willingham ties knowledge and thinking skills together in his quote in section 2a.

Our unique combination of seemingly contradictory educational theories will be manifested in the classroom. Our core content classes will provide contexts and analysis that will enhance dramatic productions. For example, our students may:

- Participate in a Constitutional Convention role play in their Government class in which disenfranchised groups such as African Americans are included.
- Analyze *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone* in English class.
- Tie Government and English together through the study of Greek philosophers that influenced both Greek drama and the creation of the U.S. Constitution.
- Create a contemporary version of *Antigone* in their theatre or film class.

Another way that our educational philosophy will be manifested is through a special 9th grade elective called *Historical Frameworks: The History of humanity*. This class will serve multiple purposes. It will provide background knowledge that many students lack. It can be likened to the picture on the cover of a jigsaw puzzle. The picture serves as the guide for placing the pieces-without it, putting together the puzzle would be extremely difficult. This class will serve as a "big picture" of history. It will give the students somewhere to place pieces of knowledge. We are working with the "World History for Us All" project, created through San Diego State University and the National Center for History in the Schools, to develop this distinctive, research-backed course. The quote in section 2a (Instructional Philosophy) summarizes this research. The "Historical Frameworks" will be part of a Humanities block using an interdisciplinary learning approach in which an English and History teacher team addresses the academic needs of freshman through enrichment rather than remediation. Our design team members

have taught these blocks before and have successfully emphasized and reinforced reading and writing skills. The results are demonstrated in our students' CAHSEE first pass rates, which were substantially higher than that of other Franklin students:

**SAMPLE DATA: 2007-2008**

	Non-AHA Students	AHA Students
CAHSEE First Pass Rates-ELA	50%	88% (+38%)
CAHSEE First Pass Rates-Math	51%	83% (+32%)
CST ELA Mean Scaled Score	298	335 (+37 points)
Source: LAEP	AHA-American Studies Academy	

This Humanities block also serves as a place to begin creating a school culture. We have been successful in creating a bonding and growth experience for 9th graders through activities such as a powerful "Buddy Program" in which our seniors mentor 9th graders in these classes.

Our curriculum will emphasize technical skills that are transferable to careers in addition to the content knowledge and critical thinking skills that are critical for success in college. We have developed three CTE pathways within the Arts, Media, and Entertainment Industry sector:

**POTENTIAL ELECTIVES**

**Linked Learning Sector: Arts, Media, and Entertainment Industry**

Pathways:	GRADE 10 (a-g/CTE)	GRADE 11 (a-g/CTE)	GRADE 12 (a-g/CTE)
1. <i>Media and Design Arts</i>	Introduction to Design	Theatrical Design	Production Design
2. <i>Performing Arts</i>	Introduction to Theatre	Intermediate Acting	Theatre Management
3. <i>Production and Managerial Arts</i>	Filmmaking 1-A/B	Filmmaking 2-A/B	Film History/Criticism

In ninth grade, during spring semester, the 9th grade English and History Elective teachers will team with the Theater Department for a two week "Introduction to Theater and Film" based on Romeo and Juliet. Students will rotate in four groups: Acting; Staging; Filming; Directing. This will help students choose their linked learning pathway for 10th\_12th grade.

SoHDA will utilize the Humanitas Instructional Model. Research shows that Humanitas has improved the academic achievement and graduation rates of disadvantaged students for over 20 years (Attachment A-1). This thematic, interdisciplinary model allows students to make connections across subjects with an emphasis on relevance to careers and their lives. It also allows teachers to collaborate on horizontal (grade level) and vertical (subject based) teams. See section 2a for examples.

**INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

Multiple forms of instruction and assessment will enable us to meet the special needs of ELL and Special Education students. We will also refer students with issues to Student Success Teams in order to implement appropriate interventions, and provide after-school tutoring.

Strategy	Professional Development
1. Reciprocal Teaching	1. Action Learning Systems
2. Shared Inquiry	2. Great Books Foundation
3. Interactive Notebooks	3. Teachers Curriculum Institute
4. Interdisciplinary Writing	4. Humanitas
5. Project Based Learning	5. Buck Institute for Education

Our professional development will center on the Humanitas instructional model and use the Understanding by Design framework for instructional planning.

- d. **School Culture.** Describe the school culture that your team envisions for the proposed school and what, if any social-emotional supports are necessary to create that culture.

SoHDA will have a collaborative school culture of high expectations in which success if possible for all students and is defined by measurable outcomes. The school climate will promote individual student investment in their academic achievement as well as family and community investment in students' success. SoHDA will also promote a safe and mutually respectful culture among students.

The advisory days will be used as follows:

Monday	Whole School Meeting
Tuesday	Community Building/Peer Support Groups
(Wednesday)	<i>Professional Development Days</i>
Thursday	Common Book
Friday	College Planning /Academic Counseling

SoHDA will propose creating a School Culture Committee for the Taylor Yard Schools Collaborative in which two teachers from each school collaborate on matters such as schoolwide community-building activities, a content-area lesson sharing group (due to small size of each school's departments), and safety-related concerns.

- e. **Accountability and Performance Goals.** Briefly discuss how your organization will set and annually update targets for the indicators in the table below. Please share key data from the Performance Management Matrix highlighting the goals. of the proposed school.

Per PSC Web site of 11/4/10 "only approved teams will have to submit this part.11

- f. **Community Analysis and Context.** Describe the community that your proposed school will serve. Include an analysis of the strengths, assets, values and critical needs of the community. Discuss your rationale for selecting this community, your experience serving this or a similar community, how your team has engaged the community thus far and how it will continue to do so if selected.

The Design Team of the School of History and Dramatic Arts looks forward to working in a community that has embraced the cause of better education for its own youth and will work at developing rich connections to the community groups around CHS-13 for both local history and local activism. In addition, the surrounding communities have a high percentage of family-owned homes and long term residents along with a more immigrant population. Without a school in their own neighborhood, it has been difficult for this working community to feel connected to secondary education and what happens to their students who are attending school in another community.

While principally Hispanic in ethnic makeup, the communities that will be served by SoHDA are made up of a rich tapestry of people of various heritage and backgrounds. Bordered by Cypress Park, Glassell Park, Atwater Village, and Elysian Valley, these communities together have a strong record of community interest and involvement. The existence of the "Taylor Yard" school site itself is evidence of years of work by community activists. Another Northeast Los Angeles group, "Friends of the LA River," sought to "protect and restore the natural and historic heritage of the Los Angeles River," ultimately resulting in the creation of a the "Rio de Los Angeles State Park." While some neighborhood revitalization efforts lean more towards property improvement, this community, like their fellow restorationists at the 'Cornfields,' gave evidence of their commitment to their own neighborhood's students by having a school be part of the Taylor Yard restoration goals from the beginning.

The SoHDA design team has engaged the community of Northeast Los Angeles from the beginning of the design process, seeking feedback from their own students, parents, and community members as well

as studying the history of the school site and the community sense of urgency to bring a high school to their own neighborhood.

The SoHDA design team members and community partners have a long record of commitment and service to and experience with the community that CS#13 will serve. In 2009-10, after a local guest speaker came to class, students in the American Studies (ASA) program at Franklin became aware they could vote for neighborhood council at 16. On their own, they created a write-in campaign and two of the current Highland Park neighborhood council members are from the Franklin ASA Class of 2010.

- g. Leadership. Provide an overview of the proposed school's governance structure and leadership team. Highlight the strengths of the leadership team and the proposed leader. If a leader has not been identified, speak to the key attributes the potential leader should possess.

The School of History and Dramatic Arts' proposed governance structure is made up of a twelve member Governing Council composed of the following members: one school leader, four elected members of the teaching faculty, one elected classified staff member, two elected parents, two elected students, and two nominated community partners. In addition to the Governing Council, an Instructional Leadership Team will be comprised of elected teacher leaders of the following committees: (1) Data Analysis and Accountability, (2) Community and Family Engagement, (3) Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development, (4) School Activities, and (5) Student Support.

Instructional Leadership Team members will preferably have experience with the committee subject matter and commit to keeping current on research relevant to guiding their committee. They should also, as with all SoHDA teachers and staff, be good collaborators and ready to receive and incorporate input from committee members, other teachers, leadership, the students, parents, and the community. The initial leadership team will be members of the design team, who will have the advantage of having worked together to write the school design. Subsequent leadership teams will be by staff-wide election.

- h. School Governance Model. Briefly explain the rationale for your choice of school type. Why are you applying to operate your school as a traditional, Pilot, Expanded School-Based Management Model (ESBMM), Network Partner, Affiliated Charter or Independent Charter school? Please reference Appendix B for more information on the governance models listed above.

The SoHDA Design Team is applying to operate a Pilot school as described in Appendix B, because the Pilot school model will allow for autonomies in the areas of budget, curriculum and instruction, professional development, governance, school calendar, and staffing that are critical to the achievement of the school's mission, vision, and performance goals. The Pilot school model will allow SoHDA to be governed by those stakeholders closest to its students: teachers, parents, community members, and students themselves.

Budget By receiving a lump sum per pupil budget, SoHDA can begin with a budget aligned to goals and in response to assessments and feedback from shared leadership, make adjustments during the year to needs that may arise, including (but not limited to) staffing, professional development, curriculum, and other student materials. Some preliminary budget uses aligned to SoHDA goals are outlined in this plan. (See WASC accreditation and Math Recovery programs.)

Curriculum and Assessment Autonomy in the area of curriculum and assessment will allow SoHDA to use its own standards-based curriculum and authentic assessments, embedded in interdisciplinary units rather than LAUSD mandated curriculum and Periodic Assessments to measure students' readiness for both state testing (CAHSEE and CST tests) and college entrance. SoHDA will use authentic and formative assessments in addition to mandated state testing. Because ongoing development of curriculum and assessment are key elements of the SoHDA plan, some Professional Development time

will be devoted to creating curriculum and assessments at the appropriate level of rigor and to analyzing the results of student assessments.

Professional Development SoHDA will use its autonomy over Professional development provide its teaching staff Professional Development during the summer to use for interdisciplinary planning and with two hours of Professional Development each week during the school year. The eight hours of monthly Professional Development will be used as follows: four hours for curricular planning in grade level, interdisciplinary teams, two hours per month for committees, one hour per month for subject area teams, and one hour per month to whole-staff meetings.

Governance Our school will be able to use autonomy over school governance to create a democratic decision-making governing body that will make decisions related to the school budget, curriculum, professional development, and staffing in alignment with the school's mission, vision, and performance goals.

School Calendar This autonomy will be used to add two weeks of Professional Development for teachers during the summer and to include two hours of Professional Development per week during the school year. While students will be released early every Wednesday to allow for Professional Development time for teachers, the school day on the remaining weekdays will be slightly longer to allow for hour long periods for each class each day. In addition, SoHDA will leave open a "zero" period and a "seventh" period to incorporate into the schedule as the agreed upon by the leadership team.

Staffing The autonomy to select staff allows our team to recruit and hire a teaching staff that holds high expectations for all students, is committed to interdisciplinary lesson planning and to working collaboratively in grade-level and subject-area teams, as well as serving on a school committee, and that possesses specific skills related to our school's career focus.



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

# PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

School of Technology, Business, and  
Education

Tara Alton

Executive Summary

# **PSC 2.0 TAYLOR YARD Proposal**

## **School of Technology, Business, and Education**

### **1. Executive Summary**

Our collaborative of Pilot schools has been working cooperatively since May 2010 to plan for the opening of the five small schools at CRHS#13, and we are eager to expand our collaborative to include all school that will share the site. Together, we will create a safe and welcoming campus—a school that will unify our communities of Atwater Village, Cypress Park, Elysian Valley, and Glassell Park, communities that have similar needs but have traditionally been isolated from one another. These Northeast Los Angeles communities have never had a high school located near their own neighborhoods. We are excited about working with our neighbors to fulfill their needs and build a center for civic action in the interest of the environment, which will be a source of pride for these previously underserved communities.

#### Mission and Vision

**State the mission, vision and core beliefs of the proposed school as well as the school's values about teaching and learning. Include an explanation of what students will know and be able to do as well as the rigorous intellectual habits of mind, essential skills, knowledge and attributes they will possess upon matriculation that will prepare them to be successful adults in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.**

#### Mission

The School of Technology, Business, and Education (STBE) will create an engaging setting for students to strengthen learning, communication, decision making, planning and goal setting skills. STBE will provide multiple academic and career pathways focusing on technology, field experience and internships preparing its students for post-secondary success in a college or career setting. STBE will create classrooms that promote rigor, motivate students to excel, and promote self-confidence. Through community partnerships, STBE faculty and staff will provide training and job experience in preparation for real-world success. STBE will be a center for student and family participation, literacy and learning, active citizenship, and fostering success of the surrounding community.

#### Vision Statement

The School of Technology, Business, and Education (STBE) will contribute to the future educational and socio-economic growth of its community by encouraging students to utilize technology, business and educational pathways to enrich their community and pursue higher education. Through the process of Project Based Learning, STBE will foster proactive students who are effective communicators, critical thinkers, and active citizens.

#### **a) Student Population**

**Describe the student population that your proposed school will serve, including the interests and critical educational needs of the students. Explain your team's experience serving a similar population of students, and how your proposed school will meet the identified needs of these students.**

STBE anticipates that many of its students will come primarily from Track C at John Marshall HS in addition to a number from Franklin HS and Eagle Rock HS. This attendance area includes the communities of Atwater Village, Cypress Park, Elysian Valley, and Glassell Park. The students in these Northeast Los Angeles neighborhoods have not had a local high school, but instead have traveled to Eagle Rock, Franklin, Lincoln or Marshall High Schools; the communities have worked for years to get a high school of their own.

STBE students will be primarily Latino, Filipino, and Asian and come from homes in which English is not the primary language spoken. The majority are economically disadvantaged and face significant barriers to educational success. Prolonged status as English Learners is a significant barrier to academic achievement for many of the students coming to Taylor Yard. A recent analysis of 858 Marshall High School C-track students, who live in Elysian Valley and will likely attend schools at the Central Region HS #13, identifies 68.3% of students as English Language Learners; this includes students in ESL, students in “sheltered” classes, and those who have been reclassified as English proficient. Many of the students in “sheltered” classes spend an extended amount of time awaiting re-designation. Often long-term English Language Learners and their parents are not aware that the students have not reclassified as English proficient.

STBE is comprised of teachers with a wealth of experience working with this group of students. We know them and the community well and several of us grew up attending schools in the neighborhoods surrounding Taylor Yard. In our careers at John Marshall High School, we have taught students from these neighborhoods.

### **c) Instructional Program**

**Provide an overview of the instructional program of the proposed school, identifying and describing the key instructional strategies and practices that the school will employ to drive student achievement. Briefly explain the research base that demonstrates that the identified strategies will be successful in improving academic achievement for the targeted student population.**

The School of Technology, Business, and Education will provide an educational program that fits the needs of the students in the community. STBE teachers will create academic environments that are appropriate, support, engage and challenge all learners. STBE curriculum will be a detailed developmental sequence that incorporates academic and social contexts. Academically, the students at STBE will experience instruction that is modeled, scaffolded, rigorous and relevant. Teachers will implement technology and new media to enhance lessons on many levels. Activities will meet the California Content Standards, have procedural and contextual objectives that will demonstrate student understanding and ability, and will meet the needs and challenges of a 21st Century thinker.

To meet the needs of all learners, including its gifted population, STBE will utilize Distance Learning Opportunities and differentiate instruction. STBE teacher lessons will be data and research driven to support learning by using students’ strengths. Further, to make learning meaningful, STBE teachers will support student choice and identify relevance and purpose when implementing lessons and activities. Students will learn to collaborate, communicate effectively and think critically through the use of inquiry, applicability and demonstration of skill.

Meaningful instruction will also be supported through problem solving activities. Project based instruction and Shared Inquiry instruction will challenge all students to look at learning by posing questions, working on solutions, and supporting their findings through evidence. Instructional strategies including but not limited to interdisciplinary writing, Service Learning, advisories, backwards planning, reciprocal teaching, debates, cooperative groups, Socratic Seminars and the use of extensive graphic organizers will be used to encourage students to apply their learning to practical lessons and experiences outside the school setting and into their community. Through partnerships, classroom learning will inspire students to continue the academic process. STBE faculty and staff’s goal is for students to apply knowledge, think across disciplines and connect the dots to make sense of the knowledge they are acquiring inside and outside of the classroom.

Equally important will be instruction provided to English Learners. STBE will implement a pedagogical program that will engage all students in an academically challenging curriculum and use inquiry driven

instruction in order to support the language development needs of English Learners. To engage EL students and ensure English mastery, SDAIE methodology will be used and the curriculum will enhance students' native language and all skills which they previously acquired. STBE teachers will support EL students by incorporating instructional techniques using visual and tactile activities, listening and speaking skills, and organizational skills through graphic organizers. Likewise, through practice, EL students will strengthen their language acquisition skills towards English mastery and the use of academic language.

Special Education students will be supported to achieve socially and academically through a strong support system. Instruction for Special Education students will meet the guidelines of the State of California and the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for each student. STBE teachers will make all necessary accommodations and provide necessary external tools and support. Special Education Student progress will be monitored according to IEP goals and objectives to ensure that accommodations are implemented, assessed and modified as necessary to support student success. The needs of students with disabilities will be addressed by teachers and staff that are trained to use support strategies to ensure that STBE offers equal access to high quality education. Students, general education teachers, and special education teachers will work as a team to create a "least restrictive learning environment".

STBE faculty and staff will use school counseling, social service agencies, gang intervention, academic intervention and enrichment and peer counseling to help at-risk students increase their self-esteem while providing a supportive system in which they succeed. In the classroom and on the campus, STBE teachers and staff will also make a concerted effort to effectively implement nine strategies that have been proven to be successful when working with student who are impoverished. STBE will thus: build strong relationships; make beginning learning relational; teach students to speak in formal register; assess each student's resources; teach rules; monitor progress and plan interventions; translate the concrete into the abstract; teach students how to ask questions; and forge relationships with parents. (Payne, 2008)

In establishing a strong school culture, STBE will strive to make academic achievement a priority for all learners. In line with that goal, STBE will undergo the school accreditation process as early as it is eligible. STBE will also submit its courses to the University of California Office of the President to ensure it offers rigorous A-G courses that are UC approved, aligned with California State Standards.

#### **d) School Culture**

**Describe the school culture that your team envisions for the proposed school and what, if any social-emotional supports are necessary to create that culture.**

STBE faculty and administration will work diligently to create an environment that is welcoming, nurturing and safe. STBE will be a community where students, parents, faculty, administration, and community partnerships will support the academic and social progress of its students and programs. In establishing strong school culture, STBE will strive to make academic achievement a priority. Students will be encouraged to use their talents to strengthen their skills and plan and pursue post-secondary and career goals.

STBE will be a school where diversity is celebrated and embraced. STBE faculty and administration will create an atmosphere of respect, trust and responsibility that promotes citizenship, pride, shared ownership and active involvement. Lessons and activities will be designed to allow various perspectives that help students express individual thoughts and opinions.

A strong connection with the community will be built into the school culture. STBE faculty and administration will continue to develop partnerships with local businesses, organizations and leaders to enhance learning. Students will participate in volunteer and academic projects and get a hands-on

perspective to learning. Through their work, students will be inspired and encouraged to continue their work in the community and become active in civic duty.

Families will always be welcomed on the STBE campus. Strong family partnerships will be developed and nurtured to help create a safer school environment and a supportive academic environment at home. Parents will be encouraged to participate in numerous lessons, decision making policies, and extracurricular activities to maintain the bond between the home and school.

Through our committed partnerships with various community, social service organizations and businesses, such as the Los Angeles Police Department -- Northeast Division, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, Cypress Park Family Source, Aztecs Rising and others, STBE will strive to provide supplemental services that are essential to student support and overall well-being and success.

STBE faculty and staff will make a concerted effort to address the social and emotional needs of its students. The faculty, Principal, school counselors, and peer counselors will be trained to incorporate the Developmental Asset framework, developed by the Search Institute®. This tool will help identify and provide the social and emotional needs of our students. The counselor will also use resources at the school and in the community, including health care professionals. If students are in need of psychological assistance that cannot be addressed at the school, the student and parents will be referred to outside counseling agencies.

In compliance with its mission statement, STBE will promote parental and community involvement. Design team members will lead STBE's parent involvement component. STBE will effectively communicate and engage with its parents and the community at large in a variety of ways which provides equitable access for success to all students and ensures that all stakeholders have an opportunity for input. Parents will serve on the School Governing Council and will be involved in all aspects of school life, including the formation of a viable Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA).

In alignment with STBE's mission and vision statements, and through its curriculum, community and business partnerships, students will have opportunity to explore multiple academic and career pathways. Collaboration with parents and community members will create a culture of college and career awareness and readiness.

STBE's school year will begin in early August to allow the semester to end before the Christmas break. The second semester will begin in January and include a Spring break. Athletics will be after the school day ends. STBE's proposed bell schedule for the 2011-2012 school year will provide opportunities for students to enroll in additional classes as needed. STBE will utilize a 4X4 Block schedule that will provide flexibility, create an engaging setting, and strengthen learning by allowing students to maximize their learning by taking more courses during the academic year.

**e) Accountability and Performance Goals**

**Briefly discuss how your organization will set and annually update targets for the indicators in the table below. Please share key data from the Performance Management Matrix highlighting the goals of the proposed school.**

Not Applicable.

**f) Community Analysis and Context**

**Describe the community that your proposed school will serve. Include an analysis of the strengths, assets, values and critical needs of the community. Discuss your rationale for selecting this community, your experience serving this or a similar community, how your team has engaged the community thus far and how it will continue to do so if selected.**

The Taylor Yard High School community STBE proposes to serve is in the northeast area of Los Angeles which is roughly the area bounded by the 5, 2, 134 and 110 freeways and includes the neighborhoods of Atwater Village, Cypress Park, Eagle Rock, Glassell Park, Highland Park, Mount Washington, and Elysian Valley.

This particular community has numerous assets. It is rich in diversity, with current area high school students identifying themselves as Latino, with families originally from Mexico as well as Central America. In addition, there are those that identify themselves as Asian, with roots in China, Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia and many other Asian countries. The community is multilingual. About 60 percent are English Learners and 72 percent of students are considered economically disadvantaged. All students in the Taylor Yard community have personal strengths and experiences to contribute to the community and to draw upon as they pursue their education. Another strength of the community is its parents and caregivers, who have strongly-felt views on how their children should be educated, and who are deeply interested in advancing their children's education and opportunities for college and career.

In addition to its assets and strengths, the school community also has specific educational needs, some of which were raised by the Glassell Park Survey and/or by students, parents and members of the community. The Survey highlighted students' desire to have relevant and meaningful instruction and the need for a technology based school. The fact that for EL's there is a prolonged status as English Learner was also identified as a significant barrier to academic achievement. Further, some of the needs are associated with the lower socio-economic status of many in the community and the community's location. While these issues are critical, they are by no means insurmountable. All STBE teachers have personal experiences working with such students to help them improve their performance in class and on tests, and to motivate them to stay in school and graduate. Finally, there is a dire need for a community high school in this area of Los Angeles. Having a high school that will provide a relevant and meaningful educational program will address the interests and future goals of the community. STBE will address these needs through project based instruction and by incorporating Technology, Business and Education vocational pathways to its curriculum.

STBE design team teachers currently teach at John Marshall High School which is within the Taylor Yard community and has very similar demographics. STBE teachers have extensive experience and success working with C-track students that matriculate from Irving Middle School and will be attending Taylor Yard High School. Additionally, several of us grew up, attended schools and still live in the areas served by the new school. We have been teaching, counseling, and advising students from these neighborhoods, for many years and we are deeply committed to serving these communities. Further, the local community and the greater Los Angeles area are filled with people and organizations that are not just interested in education, but are willing to offer their time, experience and resources for the benefit of students and to help students make a difference. Together with business, educational and career partners such as California State University, Los Angeles, Irving Middle School, Antigua Coffeehouse, Cypress Park Familysource and Aztecs Rising among others, STBE feels that its faculty and staff can make a positive difference and create an educational environment that brings the community together with the purpose of helping students thrive and reach their maximum potential.

#### **g) Leadership**

**Provide an overview of the proposed school's governance structure and leadership team.**

**Highlight the strengths of the leadership team and the proposed leader. If a leader has not been identified, speak to the key attributes the potential leader should possess.**

STBE's Principal will have a strong record of exemplary teaching and leadership skills, especially in the fields of education and technology. Along with being responsible for supporting and engaging teachers as leaders and professionals, this individual should know how to implement change, comprehend

District policies, Collective Bargaining Agreements, procedures and mandates and have a strong commitment to achievement. The candidate will be knowledgeable about the factors that promote improvement and school reform. Since the Principal will work closely with the community, Board, and other governing bodies, a familiarity with the Taylor Yard High School community is desirable. The alignment of the vision and mission of STBE to the candidates' experience, beliefs and/or understanding will serve as essential criteria in the selection process. STBE will comply with both the Education Code and the state standards for a Principal to outline the evaluation process.

Alongside the Principal, STBE will establish a Leadership Team that will consist of teachers, counselors, a student representative, and a parent/community representative. The leadership team will meet on a monthly basis and establish goals that will support STBE's instructional program.

STBE's Principal will be evaluated annually through the use of the Standards for School Leaders. All stakeholders will have access to the criteria that will be used to evaluate STBE's Principal. The Governance Council will make sure that the Principal's vision, instructional leadership, management skills, and his/her ethical behavior are aligned with STBE'S vision and mission. STBE's faculty will complete the Staff Review of Principal Performance at the end of the Spring Quarter. Similarly, students and parents will evaluate the Principal through surveys at the end of the Spring Quarter.

#### h) School Governance Model

Briefly explain the rationale for your choice of school type. Why are you applying to operate your school as a traditional, Pilot, Expanded School-Based Management Model (ESBMM), Network Partner, Affiliated Charter or Independent Charter school? Please reference Appendix B for more information on the governance models listed above.

STBE's inclusive governance and organizational structure will provide stakeholder input to create an engaging setting for students to strengthen learning, communication, decision making, planning and goal setting skills. The STBE management and advisory structure incorporates all stakeholders in the decision-making process, giving vote and voice to parents, students, teachers, administrator, and other community members. As the primary governance board, the School Site Governance Council (SSGC) will encourage the advisory committees to submit proposals for school improvement, with the ultimate goal of increasing student achievement. All elected representatives who serve on SSGC or any established advisory will collaborate to identify areas where educational or operational focus is necessary and implement policies, training, and support as necessary to foster student success.