



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

# PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

Central Region High School #16

Executive Summaries



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

# PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

Academy of the Sun College and Career-  
Ready High School

Chris Johnson/Santee Teacher's Working  
Group

Executive Summary

## Executive Summary

In order to make sure that we are creating the best possible school to accomplish our vision, the Academy of the Sun College and Career-ready High School has entered into a collaborative partnership with the design teams for Synergy Academies (Synergy Quantum Academy) and Social Justice Schools to govern Central Region High School #16 (CRHS #16). If chosen together, we will work in collaboration to oversee all shared aspects of the campus, and to share high-level resources for our students' benefit, as indicated throughout our proposals.

All three design teams have also entered into a partnership with WestEd, the nationally recognized non-profit education research agency, to advise us and help us to effectively run our schools. WestEd intends to make CRHS #16 a model school for its successful schools philosophy (see below) and as such, will be aggressively pursuing grant funding for our professional development, as well as for many of the key supports. All three teams feel that WestEd can bring a wealth of resources to bear to help us create a successful school, solve problems as they present themselves, and ultimately succeed in our respective missions. Please see the letter of agreement between WestEd and our schools in the Appendix.

In order to be successful, all three design teams believe that our campus must embrace the seven qualities identified by WestEd's Tipping Point School Turnaround Center as the characteristics of successful schools, and if chosen together, we intend to make these the foundation of our campus. These characteristics are: 1) They have effective school leadership; 2) They are staffed with committed, highly qualified teachers who use effective and equitable instructional practices; 3) They provide a rigorous, standards-based curriculum and use a system of assessments to provide classroom and systemic interventions for students not meeting learning goals (this includes the development of a culture of data use where teachers and administrators have regularly scheduled opportunities to analyze student data together); 4) They incorporate targeted, ongoing professional development to ensure instructional quality and share best practice (this includes strategies that address the unique needs of English language learners and students with disabilities; it also involves ongoing coaching and time for reflection); 5) They create a safe school environment and a supportive climate of mutual trust and reciprocal accountability; 6) They align all of their fiscal and human resources to support student achievement; and 7) They engage families to support the education of their children and to work in partnership with teachers, principals, and other administrators to ensure the effective implementation of education programs and services.

### **Sec. 1: Our Mission**

The Academy of the Sun College and Career-ready High School (AS) will graduate students who will be able to face the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They will be prepared to go directly into the workforce and/or to pursue higher levels of education. AS graduates will utilize the critical thinking and creative processes of: writing, listening, speaking, mathematical and scientific methodologies, object-design, and object-making in order to successfully navigate through the obstacles of contemporary society. The skills students need in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are not new. Critical thinking and problem solving, for example, have been components of human progress throughout history. What is new is the extent to which changes in our economy and the world mean that collective and individual success depends on having those skills. AS will offer a rigorous learning environment through an interdisciplinary approach where all students will be proficient in California state learning standards and fulfill the A-G requirements for graduation and college. Students will also have the opportunity to choose an individualized area of concentration following a multiple pathways curriculum that prepares them for college and/or the workforce.

The Academy of the Sun will be dedicated to supporting each student in the achievement of his or her highest academic potential. The educational focus is designed to foster each individual's capacity for self-development with rigorous academics and career technical education. This curriculum will prepare students for success in college and adult life. Learning will occur in a safe, comfortable environment with a high-degree of personalization and increased interaction with academic teachers and career technical professionals. Students will be active learners and they will demonstrate insightful learning through the production of complex and significant work. They will be able to combine interdisciplinary learning with real world skills to foresee the connections to their lives ahead in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **Sec. 1: Our Vision**

The Academy of the Sun College and Career-ready High School (AS) will provide its students with more opportunities than a traditional high school. Young people should have a variety of good options. Alongside a rigorous college-prep curriculum that includes Advanced Placement and honors classes in English, history and economics, the Academy of the Sun will offer innovative and relevant career technical education programs and apprenticeships that build on students' interests and help them develop real-world skills that will give them an economic foothold in the world after graduation. AS will partner with businesses to coordinate requirements for certificates of competency in a variety of careers. The AS design team envisions the development of students who possess critical thinking skills and expertise in the areas of technology, engineering and health services who will infuse change in our society as leaders and innovators and who will transform their community, their country and the world.

As Diane Ravitch has written: "The educated person learns not only from his or her own experience, but from the hard-earned experience of others. We do not restart the world anew in each generation. We stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us. What matters most in the use of our brains is our capacity to make generalizations, to see beyond our own experience. The intelligent person, the one who is truly a practitioner of critical thinking, has the learned capacity to understand the lessons of history, to engage in the adventures of literature, to grasp the inner logic of science and mathematics, and to realize the meaning of philosophical debates by studying them." The Academy of the Sun will be focused like a laser beam on providing our vision to our students, their families and the community to develop and graduate the next great generation.

**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.

**b. 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.

**c. 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.

**d. 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**

**e. 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.

**f. 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.



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

# PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

Synergy Quantum Academy

Synergy Academies

Executive Summary

# Public School Choice Proposal for Synergy Quantum Academy

## 1. Executive Summary

In order to make sure that we are creating the best possible school to accomplish our vision, Synergy Academies (Synergy Quantum Academy) has entered into a collaborative partnership with the design teams for the Academy of the Sun College and Career Ready High School and Social Justice Schools to govern Central Region High School #16 (CRHS #16). If chosen together, we will work in collaboration to oversee all shared aspects of the campus, and to share high-level resources for our students' benefit, as indicated throughout our proposals.

All three design teams have also entered into a partnership with WestEd, the nationally recognized non-profit education research agency, to advise us and help us to effectively run our schools. WestEd intends to make CRHS #16 a model school for its successful schools philosophy (see below) and as such, will be aggressively pursuing grant funding for our professional development, as well as for many of the key supports. All three teams feel that WestEd can bring a wealth of resources to bear to help us create a successful school, solve problems as they present themselves, and ultimately succeed in our respective missions. Please see the letter of agreement between WestEd and our schools in Appendix E.

In order to be successful, all three design teams believe that our campus must embrace the seven qualities identified by WestEd's Tipping Point School Turnaround Center as the characteristics of successful schools, and if chosen together, we intend to make these the foundation of our campus. These characteristics are: 1) They have effective school leadership; 2) They are staffed with committed, highly qualified teachers who use effective and equitable instructional practices; 3) They provide a rigorous, standards-based curriculum and use a system of assessments to provide classroom and systemic interventions for students not meeting learning goals (this includes the development of a culture of data use where teachers and administrators have regularly scheduled opportunities to analyze student data together); 4) They incorporate targeted, ongoing professional development to ensure instructional quality and share best practice (this includes strategies that address the unique needs of English language learners and students with disabilities; it also involves ongoing coaching and time for reflection); 5) They create a safe school environment and a supportive climate of mutual trust and reciprocal accountability; 6) They align all of their fiscal and human resources to support student achievement; and 7) They engage families to support the education of their children and to work in partnership with teachers, principals, and other administrators to ensure the effective implementation of education programs and services.

### **1a. Mission and Vision:**

#### **1a. Prompt #1. State the mission, vision and core beliefs of the proposed school as well as the school's values of teaching and learning.**

Synergy Quantum Academy will follow in the instructional footsteps of its two predecessor schools, Synergy Kinetic Academy, and Synergy Charter Academy, a 2010 National Blue Ribbon Award Winner.

In 2004, Synergy Academies opened its first school, Synergy Charter Academy, in one of the lowest-performing areas of inner city South Los Angeles. Its Mission was to eliminate the staggering achievement gap that has persisted for generations among educationally disadvantaged students, and its Vision was for its students to eventually attend the four-year college of their choice. Over the past seven years, Synergy's students have thrived. In 2010, they earned an API score of 897, and the U.S. Department of Education named Synergy a winner of a 2010 National Blue Ribbon Award. This is the highest honor that an American public school

can earn, and Synergy is the first elementary school in the history of South Los Angeles to win this award.

In Synergy's South Los Angeles community, local middle schools have been struggling to an even greater degree than local elementary schools. Therefore, in 2008, Synergy Kinetic Academy opened to help address this problem. By following the same instructional philosophy used by Synergy Charter Academy and adapting it to middle school students' needs, Synergy Kinetic Academy is already establishing a legacy of its own. While schools less than a mile away have not yet reached 600 on the API, Synergy Kinetic Academy already broke the coveted 800-point API barrier in just its second year of operation with an API score of 802.

Now, Synergy Quantum Academy high school plans to open, and like its successful elementary and middle school predecessors, its instructional philosophy is to value quality teaching and to use sound, research-based instruction that has proven to be effective with helping educationally disadvantaged students learn. It will teach a complete, rigorous, standards-based, college-preparatory curriculum, and will have an emphasis on STEM education (science, technology, engineering, and math).

Synergy Quantum Academy's core belief is that all students can succeed regardless of their background or circumstances. The inner city may define where our students come from, but it in no way defines or limits where they are going. Therefore, Synergy Quantum Academy intends to help its inner city high school students make that final QUANTUM leap into college.

**1a. Prompt #2. 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 prepare them to be successful adults in 21st Century.**

Synergy Quantum Academy's goal is for its students to become educated 21st century persons who have a well-rounded education in the four core curricular areas of language arts, mathematics, history-social science, and science as well as the arts, health, and physical education. In a pluralistic society, they need to be self-motivated, self-directed, and self-reliant individuals who can work with others. In an information age, educated persons are not just users and consumers, but they are developers and creators as well. Educated persons are lifelong learners and possess the skills and traits necessary to further their education by attending the four-year university of their choice or pursuing whatever educational path they choose.

Synergy Kinetic Academy believes that in order to be a true 21st century learner students must possess the following sixteen intellectual habits of mind described by Arthur L. Costa: 1) Persisting, 2) Communicating with clarity and precision, 3) Managing impulsivity, 4) Gathering data through all senses, 5) Listening with understanding and empathy, 6) Creating, imagining, innovating, 7) Thinking flexibly, 8) Responding with wonderment and awe, 9) Thinking about thinking (metacognition), 10) Taking responsible risks, 11) Striving for accuracy and precision, 12) Finding humor, 13) Questioning and problem posing, 14) Thinking interdependently, 15) Applying past knowledge to new situations, and 16) Remaining open to continuous learning.

**1b. Student Population:**

**1b. Prompt #1. Describe the student population that your proposed school will serve, including the interests and critical educational needs of the students.**

The students that Synergy Quantum Academy will serve live in inner city South Los Angeles. Working personally with these students, one can tell they have just as much of a desire to learn as anyone else living in more advantaged areas.

However, the inner city presents many barriers to achieving that mission. The tremendous economic needs in the area are evident in the inner city's high poverty rates. In the 90011 zip code, the average adjusted gross income (AGI) on the 2004 income tax returns was \$20,486, far below the state average of \$58,600. Housing is a critical need as well, and

overcrowding is a direct result of economic hardships. With the cost of housing so high, relatives often move in with each other in crowded conditions in order to save money. Public safety is another critical need, and the LA Times described Synergy neighborhood as having some of the highest crime rates in Los Angeles.

It is not difficult to see how these factors also lead to tremendous educational needs as well. Every traditional public middle school and public high school in Synergy's zip code is in Program Improvement, and students have a critical need to catch up. Fortunately, since Synergy Academies has been extraordinarily successful working with students at the foundational elementary and middle school levels, it is uniquely positioned to help high school students make up for the gaps that they have from previous years.

**1b. Prompt #2. 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 team that started and currently leads the successful Synergy Charter Academy and Synergy Kinetic Academy is the same team that is now founding Synergy Quantum Academy in the exact same neighborhood. CEO Meg Palisoc is a former LAUSD teacher, and she helped to found Synergy Charter Academy and Synergy Kinetic Academy. Dr. Barbara Shannon is also a former LAUSD teacher. She Co-Founded Synergy Kinetic Academy and will serve as the Principal. Chief Achievement Officer Randy Palisoc is another former LAUSD teacher, and he helped to found Synergy Charter Academy and Synergy Kinetic Academy. Erika Chua is the Director of Operations and oversees the operations of both campuses.

**1c. Instructional Program:**

**1c. Prompt #1. Provide an overview of the instructional program of the proposed school identifying the key instructional strategies and practices that the school will employ to drive student achievement.**

This deceptively simple diagram by Richard Mayer in Applying the Science of Learning captures Synergy Quantum Academy's instructional program. Synergy believes that when there is effective teaching and a research-based and standards-based curriculum (first circle on the left), learning will occur. Therefore, Synergy Quantum Academy will mostly use existing, commercially available curriculum, and it places a high value on developing master teachers to deliver that curriculum. Synergy Quantum Academy will be a data-driven school that uses assessments to make sure that learning is happening and to drive future instruction. There are many nuances and specific instructional strategies and practices that need to exist to make this model successful, and they are described below.

**1c. Prompt #2. Explain the research base that demonstrates that the identified strategies will be successful in improving academic achievement for targeted student population.**

**A Critical Mission: Making Adolescent Reading an Immediate Priority in SREB**

**States:** The Southern Region Education Board says that developing students reading comprehension skills should be the number one priority in middle school and high school because reading defines learning in every subject, and those that do not read well by the ninth grade are destined to become high school dropouts. Most public school students do not receive formal reading instruction after the early grades, but researchers and educators **NOW REALIZE** that it should continue through high school.

**Applying the Science of Learning:** Applying the Science of Learning is a book used in the Doctorate of Education program at the USC Rossier School of Education. In the book, Richard E. Mayer describes the following: 1) The science of learning, 2) The science of instruction, and 3) The science of assessment. Mayer explains numerous strategies in each of the areas above. For example, Mayer describes how to reduce extraneous processing (which leads to

no learning and cognitive overload), manage essential processing (which is rote learning), and foster generative processing (which leads to meaningful learning).

**Teach Like a Champion:** Teach Like a Champion was written by Doug Lemov, the founder of the highly successful Uncommon School in New Jersey. Lemov's books describes 49 techniques, and they are broken down into the following chapters: 1) Setting High Academic Expectations, 2) Planning that Ensures Academic Achievement, 3) Structuring and Delivering Your Lessons, 4) Engaging Students in Your Lessons, 5) Creating a Strong Classroom Culture, 6) Setting and Maintaining High Behavioral Expectations, 7) Building Character and Trust.

**The Academic Achievement Challenge:** Synergy Quantum Academy also uses the direct instruction model described by Jeanne S. Chall in The Academic Achievement Challenge. In the direct instruction model, the teacher is responsible for delivering a structured and sequenced curriculum. The direct instruction model is used because research has shown that the vast majority of students reach higher levels of achievement with this form of instruction, especially students with low socio-economic backgrounds.

**Synergy's Own Results:** As discussed earlier, the results of Synergy Academies' first two schools offer empirical evidence that these strategies work for the targeted population.

### **1d. School Culture:**

**1d. Prompt #1. 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.**

Synergy Quantum Academy refers to its students as "scholars," and it actively promotes a culture and climate that is in line with its vision of college admissions for its students.

**Academic Achievement:** Synergy Quantum Academy will create a culture in which academic achievement is valued and celebrated, and students are taught about college. For example, a tradition at Synergy's middle school is for all incoming students to take a college campus tour to help them visualize their college goals and to help them understand why academic achievement is important.

**Student Motivation to Succeed:** Synergy Quantum Academy will motivate its students by helping them attribute their success to hard work and effort rather than external factors such as luck and circumstance. This approach is based on attribution theory, which was developed by Fritz Heider, Edward Jones, Harold Kelley, Lee Ross, and Bernard Weiner. Carol Dweck also explains attribution theory her book Mindset: The New Psychology of Success.

**Personalization:** Adolescents go through many changes as they develop their sense of self and personal identity. In the publication This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents, the National Middle School Association (NMSA) explains that young adolescents often "believe that personal problems, feelings, and experiences are unique to themselves." Since personalization is such an important issue at this age, Synergy Quantum Academy will value each individual and help make them feel that their school experience is personalized.

**Safety:** The NMSA explains that successful schools for your adolescents are inviting, supportive, and safe. The culture will promote a safe campus in which interactions between and among students and adults demonstrate a high level of respect. The school will promote an environment that is free of bullying, harassment, and teasing.

### **1e. Accountability and Performance Goals:**

**1e. Prompt #1. 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.**

[This section is to be included in the post approval phase.]

## **1f. Community Analysis and Context:**

**1f. Prompt #1. Describe the community that your proposed school will serve. Include an analysis of the strengths, assets, values, and critical needs of the community.**

Synergy Quantum Academy seeks to serve students in the 90011 zip code of inner city South Los Angeles, and the schools of Synergy Academies already have a proven track record of providing a transformational education for the students in this community.

The demographics of Synergy Quantum Academy’s target 90011 zip code consists of a majority of the schools enrolling 99% Hispanic and African American students in grades K-12 (See Table 1). Additionally, the school’s target neighborhood has a high rate of low-income families with the majority of the schools consisting of 70-90% of the students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch.

According to a July 6, 2005 LA Times article about Synergy Quantum Academy’s neighborhood’s Jefferson High School, “Jefferson's students come from neighborhoods with some of the city's highest rates of crime, homelessness and teenage pregnancy. There are few jobs and even fewer recreation outlets... Among Los Angeles Unified's 49 high schools, Jefferson had the second highest number of major crimes in its attendance area — 94 homicides, more than 2,700 robberies, and about the same number of aggravated assaults from 2002 through mid-2004, according to a Times analysis of LAPD data for that period.”

Therefore, as demonstrated by the demographic and academic performance information in Tables 1-2, Synergy Quantum Academy purposefully targeted one of the most economically disadvantaged neighborhoods in the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Table 1 Demographic Data for Middle and High Schools in the 90011 Zip Code

School	Enrollment	African American	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Filipino	Hispanic or Latino	Pacific Islander	White	Multiple Race or No Response
Carver Middle School	1,963	7.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	92.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Los Angeles Academy Middle School	2,278	7.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	92.5%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Adams Middle School	1,421	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	97.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Synergy Kinetic Academy	229	8.7%	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	90.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Santee Education Complex	3,475	7.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	91.8%	0.0%	0.1%	0.7%
Thomas Jefferson Senior High School	1,970	8.7%	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	90.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%

Source: California Department of Education DataQuest (<http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>)

Although Synergy Quantum Academy will be located in a high-poverty inner city neighborhood, its community still has many strengths, assets, and values, which can be categorized as the three “P’s” – People, Places, and Programs.

**People:** One strength of the community is that it has many people who value creating a better life for children. Parents are one group of people who have been instrumental in Synergy’s success. Another group of people who are assets are civic leaders such as Los Angeles City Councilwoman Jan Perry, who has provided field trips for Synergy students.

**Places:** Los Angeles is known as an urban cultural center. It is in close proximity to USC, and students have visited campus numerous times. Museums such as the California Science Center are located within one mile, and students have been to theatres such as the Ahmanson Theatre and Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

**Programs:** Synergy Quantum Academy’s community also has many programs that are available for students. For the past seven years, Synergy has partnered with A Place Called

Home, which provides after school services free of charge for students. There are several parks in the area that provide athletic programs such as softball, swimming, and soccer.

In addition to having strengths, assets, and values, the inner city has critical needs that cause many stresses for residents.

**Education Needs:** Synergy's neighborhood has struggled for generations with low performing schools. The average API ranking for elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools in the neighborhood is a ranking of 1 out of 10, placing neighborhood schools in the bottom 10% of schools statewide. Many education needs stem from other challenges in the neighborhood, which will be described below.

**Economic Needs:** According to citydata.com, the average adjusted gross income (AGI) on the 2004 income tax returns was \$20,486 in the 90011 zip code, far below the state average of \$58,600. There were 9,774 single parent households in the 90011 zip code alone.

**Housing Needs:** Housing is a major issue as well. In the 90011 zip code alone, there were 6,809 households with six or more people living in it. Often, this overcrowding is a direct result of the economic needs described above.

**Public Safety:** As described above, a July 6, 2005 Los Angeles Times article detailed the public safety concerns about Synergy Quantum Academy's neighborhood. These include high crime rates, homelessness, teenage pregnancy, and unemployment.

From this analysis, one can see that families in the neighborhood have many more issues that they must deal with that compete with the need for greater educational outcomes. However, Synergy Quantum Academy intends to address the community's educational needs, since education is part of the solution to the societal challenges presented above.

**1f. Prompt #2. 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 90011 zip code of inner city South Los Angeles is an area of great need, as shown in the analysis above. Synergy Academies intentionally opened in this area starting with an elementary school in 2004 because it wanted to be a part of the solution and directly address these needs. Synergy has been successfully serving area for the past seven years, filling a critical need of greater educational outcomes and raising expectations in the inner city.

Synergy's schools in the neighborhood (Synergy Charter Academy and Synergy Kinetic Academy) can now be considered community assets themselves. For example, Synergy Kinetic Academy middle school is scoring above 800 on the API.

Outside of the classroom, Synergy Kinetic Academy has taken its inner city students on a cross-country trip to Washington, D.C. During the trip, students learned valuable lessons about the history of our country, and they learned how to be our next generation of leaders who will help make our world a better place to live by "bringing out the best in others."

Additionally, Synergy Charter Academy elementary school is not just a community asset, but a district asset and a national asset as well. It earned a 2010 National Blue Ribbon award because of the difference it has made with students and because of its consistently high performance. Synergy Quantum Academy will serve in the same neighborhood and intends to uphold the tradition established by its predecessors.

Synergy believes that when community members are fully informed, they are as fully empowered as anyone else to do good. Therefore, Synergy Quantum Academy has already participated in numerous community outreach activities, including those organized by LAUSD and those the Synergy has initiated on its own. Meetings were held on the following dates: October 15, 20, and 22, and November 17 and 23.

If Synergy Quantum Academy is selected, it will continue to conduct outreach in order to engage the community. It plans to do so by conducting information and feedback sessions for the

community. Parents will continue to help with in-person outreach, and postcards will be mailed to households as well, which has been an effective outreach technique in the past.

### **1g. Leadership:**

#### **1g. Prompt #1. Overview of school's governance structure and leadership team.**

As a charter school, Synergy Quantum Academy will be governed by the Board of Directors of the non-profit Synergy Academies in accordance with charter school law. The Board of Directors seeks the input of all stakeholders, including teachers, parents, administrators, and staff in order to maintain a focus on academic achievement. It does so through groups such as Synergy's Parent Council and the School Operations Committee. The Board of Directors upholds the reputation that has been developed of Synergy Academies, and it bases its decisions on what is best for students.

The Board of Directors focuses on high-level decisions and allows the school staff to be empowered to lead the day-to-day operations of the school. Doing so enables school leaders to make decisions quickly to improve instruction. The leadership team is described below.

#### **1g. Prompt #2. Highlight the strengths of the leadership team and the proposed leader.**

Meg Palisoc is a Co-founder of Synergy Charter Academy and Synergy Kinetic Academy, and she is serving as the CEO of Synergy Academies. Meg is a former teacher in LAUSD. Prior to entering K-12 education, she worked in higher education at the USC Viterbi School of Engineering. Meg has a B.S. degree in Psychology and a Master of Education degree in Higher Education, both from USC. Meg holds a Tier II Administrative Services Credential.

Randy Palisoc is a Co-Founder of Synergy Charter Academy and Synergy Kinetic Academy, and he is currently the Chief Achievement Officer of Synergy Academies. Randy was former teacher and Title III Director at LAUSD. Randy has a B.S. degree in Business Administration from the USC Marshall School of Business, and he has a Master of Education from UCLA. He also holds a Tier II Administrative Services Credential.

Erika Chua joined Synergy Academies in spring of 2008 as the Director of Operations. Erika was a Program Specialist at the USC Viterbi School of Engineering. Erika holds a B.S. in Business Administration and a Master of Public Administration, both from USC.

Dr. Barbara Shannon joined Synergy Academies in the summer of 2008 as Co-Founder and Co-Director of Synergy Kinetic Academy. She holds a Doctorate in Learning and Instruction with an emphasis on Science Education from USC and a Tier II Administrative Services Credential. Barbara began her teaching career as a science teacher at John Adams Middle School, a LAUSD middle school. Her teaching experience includes grades 6-12 science and math at public, parochial, and private schools in Northern and Southern California.

Dr. Barbara Shannon has already been identified as the principal for Synergy Quantum Academy. Dr. Shannon is well qualified to lead the school because of her tremendous background helping students from diverse backgrounds to be successful, including educationally disadvantaged students in need of catching up academically.

### **1h. School Governance Model:**

#### **1g. Prompts #1 & #2. 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?**

We have chosen to operate as an Independent Charter because this gives us more flexibility with our budget, personnel, curriculum and instructional methodology, and it is the model that Synergy has been using successfully for the past seven years.

While Independent Charts are exempt from most state codes and district rules regarding curriculum instruction, the students are still assessed by the CSTs, CAHSEE, and other Standardized test in the state of California. We have also chosen to use the same textbooks, many of the same programs, and pattern the school day after that of LAUSD to show that student achievement could in fact be increased in South Los Angeles. Our Vision for our schools is that they will become professional development schools that serve as national models of how to eliminate the achievement gap.



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

## Social Justice Schools: Fine Arts Academy

Melissa Naponelli & Joseph Zeccola, Robert  
Lee (Local District 5), and United Teachers  
Los Angeles (UTLA)

Executive Summary

## 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 21st Century.

The job of an educator is to teach students to see vitality in themselves.  
—Joseph Campbell

The mission of the Social Justice Schools: Fine Arts Academy (heretofore known as the SJS: Fine Arts Academy) is to invest young adults in developing personally, intellectually, and artistically to forge a path toward graduation and a Bachelor's degree so that they emerge as leaders and artists who can help to change the way people think and transform their community.

The vision of the SJS: Fine Arts Academy (in concert with its proposed sister school, The SJS: Global Issues) is to produce college graduates who use their academic foundation in the arts and sciences to become transformative leaders in their own lives, their communities, and their world.

The core beliefs for the SJS: Fine Arts Academy (and its sister school) begin with the simple, yet sublime, quote from Joseph Campbell above, and develops that by embracing two principles asserted by Jim Cummins regarding the most effective way to teach language learners:

- 1. Cognitive Engagement**
- 2. Identity Investment**

**These two core, foundational beliefs will be embodied by every teacher in every classroom, as well as embedded in the school culture.**

This means that we intend to give our students a curriculum that excites them, challenges them, is relevant and responsive to them, and makes them think about their world and their relationship to it. It also means that we do not believe our instruction will be effective unless we show our students--every day, in every class, and in our relationship to them, that we value them for who they are, where they come from, and for who they are capable of becoming.

Further, we are believers in the concept of educación: educating the whole person. As Lisa Delpit points out, "When we strip away a focus on developing the humanity of our children, we are left with programmed, mechanistic strategies designed to achieve the programmed, mechanistic goal of raising test scores." (Other People's Children: xv) We do not believe that our students are products to which we merely add knowledge. We intend to provide a rich, well-rounded educational experience so our students can both maximize their potential and actualize their ambitions.

Lastly, we believe in a strong arts education because, according to Arnold April, director of CAPE: Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education. "The research has shown that youth "at risk" benefit the most from arts-integrated programming. Young people living in challenging circumstances tend to be high creatives because they need so much flexibility, creativity, and improvisation to survive challenging

circumstances. Their assets are typically enormous and under-recognized. The arts can be life-saving and life-affirming for young people who have been discarded by the culture."

## **Collaborative Campus Agreement and Partnership with WestEd**

In order to make sure that we are creating the best possible school to accomplish our vision, the Social Justice Schools have entered into a collaborative partnership with the design teams for the Synergy Quantum Academy and the Academy of the Sun College and Career Ready High School to govern CRHS#16. If chosen together, we will work in collaboration to oversee all shared aspects of the campus, and to share high-level resources for our students benefit, as indicated throughout our proposals.

All three design teams have also entered into a partnership with WestEd, the nationally recognized nonprofit education research agency, to advise us and help us to effectively run our schools. WestEd intends to make CRHS #16 a model school for its successful schools philosophy (see below) and as such will be aggressively pursuing grant funding for our professional development, as well as for many of the key supports. All three teams feel that WestEd can bring a wealth of resources to bear to help us create a successful school, solve problems as they present themselves, and ultimately succeed in our respective missions. **(Please see the letters of agreement between WestEd and our schools in the appendices.)**

In order to be successful, all three design teams believe that our campus must embrace the seven qualities identified by WestEd's Tipping Point School Turnaround Center as the characteristics of successful schools, and if chosen together, we intend to make these the foundation of our campus. These characteristics are:

- They have effective school leadership.
- They are staffed with committed, highly qualified teachers who use effective and equitable instructional practices.
- They provide a rigorous, standards-based curriculum and use a system of assessments to provide classroom and systemic interventions for students not meeting learning goals. (This includes the development of a culture of data use where teachers and administrators have regularly scheduled opportunities to analyze student data together.)
- They incorporate targeted, ongoing professional development to ensure instructional quality and share best practice. This includes strategies that address the unique needs of English language learners and students with disabilities. It also involves ongoing coaching and time for reflection.
- They create a safe school environment and a supportive climate of mutual trust and reciprocal accountability.
- They align all of their fiscal and human resources to support student achievement.
- They engage families to support the education of their children and to work in partnership with teachers, principals, and other administrators to ensure the effective implementation of education programs and services.

### **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 student population of CRHS#16 will no doubt mirror that of the other high schools in the immediate area--Santee, Jefferson, and Fremont--as such, the ethnic breakdown will be roughly 92% latino, 8% African-American. Poverty is a major problem for this population (81% eligible for NSLP). A significant number of our students are either English Learners (40%), or Standard English Learners (43%). We would also serve a sizeable number of Students with Disabilities (11%), and a small but significant population of GATE students (4%).

As teachers with a combined experience of over 60 years serving this population of students, both at Los Angeles Academy Middle School, and at other schools in the nearby South Los Angeles Area (Bethune, Fremont, etc.), we feel confident that we know how to teach the students we'd be serving at CRHS#16. Our proposed pedagogy and Instructional strategies are research-based and designed specifically to meet the needs of this population of students. We also have a community plan that includes significant wraparound services to help support the families of our students and help to transform CRHS#16 into a social services hub for the area.

### **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.*

Building upon our core foundational beliefs of Cognitive Engagement and Identity Investment, we have distilled our teaching philosophy into three distinct, equally important pillars:

1. Powerful literacy
2. The Teacher/Apprentice Instructional Model
3. Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education (CRRE)

We believe in the difference between a powerful literacy (a literacy that allows students to lead, and to speak truth to power) and functional literacy (a literacy which merely equips students to function in society as workers). [Literacy with an Attitude, Finn] We believe that our goal is to take our students beyond a functional literacy and provide them with a powerful literacy across the content areas so that they can become transformative leaders in their communities.

In its research-based Reading Apprenticeship framework, WestEd emphasizes the role of teachers as orchestrators of classroom learning environments, and the role of students as apprentices, and inquiry partners. By utilizing this very effective framework, The SJS embodies the idea that teachers are not the sole holders of knowledge in the classroom. Our teachers will be the master readers, writers, mathematicians, historians, scientists, and artists. The students will be the apprentices at these crafts.

If identity investment is to be a core, foundational principle of our schools, it must be embedded in not only our curriculum, but our pedagogy. Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education (CRRE) is the essence of identity investment. Our students are people with specific cultural backgrounds, strengths, and identities. Research shows that we need to target our teaching to our students in ways that not only challenge them, but inspire and validate. If we don't embed this philosophy into our work, our students won't buy-in, will have no chance of learning, and we will have lost the battle before we've begun.

In the Social Justice Schools: Fine Arts Academy, emphasis will be placed on creativity in all fields of study--including and especially math and sciences. Teachers will receive common planning time to develop creative ways to approach all curricular activities. We want our students to realize that their geometry class and their drama class are not mutually exclusive.

The SJS: Fine Arts Academy will be organized to ensure that students are enrolled in the A-G sequence of courses which establish eligibility for public, four-year postsecondary institutions in California. In addition we will adopt, across our schools, two WestEd research-based curricula that have proven remarkably successful in improving similar populations of students' abilities in math and reading, respectively: Aim for Algebra™, and the Reading Apprenticeship® Academic Literacy Course.

At the SJS: Fine Arts Academy, the students will be able to choose four areas of focus for their studies:

- Visual Arts
- Music
- Film and Theatre
- Media Arts
- Dance

Finally, we will instill four, research-based instructional strategies in every classroom of both Social Justice School Academies, which have a proven track-record of success with our student population:

1. SDAIE
2. Interactive Notebooks
3. The Reading Apprenticeship Framework
4. Socratic Dialogue

#### **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.*

Social Justice Schools will model social justice for students so that they feel that they are valued individuals and so that the school fosters intellectual autonomy, respect, social competence and full academic potential.

A primary goal of the SJS: Fine Arts Academy is to make CRHS#16 an artistic hub in the South Park community. Based on research that shows that students produce their best work when “published,” or in this case produced, students will display their work regularly in a public art gallery, on film, video, online, and through continuous theater and music productions open to the public. We will have help in accomplishing this through partnerships with USC Fine Arts programs and the Banshee Theater group, as well as in partnerships we’re pursuing with Loyola Marymount University and Inner-City Arts.

The centerpiece of the school culture is that the pedagogy will match the services offered at the school. The pedagogy is student-centered and based on empowerment; services are provided at the school so that the school becomes an integral part of the community and a place where families can come to address their needs.

Several community organizations will operate at the school as part of our philosophy of Extended Day Learning. These include a Medical Legal Community Partnership, a Family Source Program, and

student and parent advocacy and training through Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE). The school will become a community hub of services and advocacy.

**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.*

*This Section 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.*

In this area around CRHS#16 (called ‘South Park’ by the L.A.Times Mapping L.A. Project) there were an estimated 32,851 people in a 1.4 square mile area; giving it a population per square mile of 21,638 persons. That makes it one of the most densely populated areas within the City and County of Los Angeles. This area, which was over 50% African-American in 1980, by 2008 was only approximately 19.2% African-American population, while the Latino population had increased to 78.6%. The median household income in 2008 was \$29,518, one of the lowest in the Los Angeles Area, with the majority of households earning \$20,000 or less. Only 3.4% of persons 25 years or older had attained a four-year degree from a college or university, while over 2/3 of residents 25 years or older had not completed high school (10,236). The average household size in the community is 3.9 persons per residence, of which 72.3% are renters. These numbers are pre-2009, and do not reflect the current housing crisis, which could only have increased the percentage of renters to owners. In 2008 approximately 1,607 families were headed by single parents, comprising 27.9% of the total population.

In spite of what may seem to be insurmountable obstacles, the community to be served by CRHS#16 is one that is resilient, determined, and surprisingly optimistic. The work ethic evidenced by the residents is enviable. In most two-parent families both parents hold full time jobs, while the single-parent families usually rely on the extended family to provide for the students. To a parent, if asked the question, "What do you want for your child?", the answer would simply be: "A better life". The depth of their convictions on this subject is demonstrated on a daily basis by their willingness to volunteer for whatever tasks are needed; even if performing that task is a personal inconvenience. There is tremendous untapped human potential in this neighborhood. We believe that the strong survival skills needed to thrive here are indicative of a resourcefulness that become an academic asset to students. If we access the existing knowledge in the community- about business, creative and careful use of resources and inventiveness, and the rich sense of history that the families in the community are steeped in, students can use this knowledge to unlock the secrets to academic success, provided an academic mentor who knows how to look for and build bridges.

As teachers working in South Los Angeles, we have been working regularly with our parents and community members. This is evident in our community outreach plan (section 9). The myriad of wraparound social services we are proposing demonstrates how we plan to tap the potential of both our students, and the community they live in.

### **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 SJS will have in place a SSC and an SDMC as governance structures which will oversee the successful fulfillment of the Mission and Vision of the schools. All stakeholders, including students, parents, community members, teachers, classified staff, and administrators, are represented on both of these councils. The Leadership Team will be comprised of: the Principal, UTLA Chair, Counselor, Department Chairs, Parent Representatives and Student Representatives.

The strengths of the Leadership Team is defined by its composition. All stakeholders are represented in the Team, which means every member of the school community is represented and able to voice their concerns. Another strength of the Leadership Team is that each department is represented. This allows for each department to develop their Instructional Program and establish goals for themselves. This is key to a strong Leadership Team--when teachers are able to authentically develop, implement and evaluate the Instructional Program they designed they will truly feel empowered.

### **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.*

As teachers who believe in the UTLA contract, and who are proud to be working in collaboration with both UTLA and Local District Five, we intend to operate as a traditional small school with autonomies. We believe we can prove that teachers, students, administrators, and the local district can run a very successful school while adhering to the UTLA/LAUSD contract. After a year in the new school, with a full complement of teachers, we will give our faculty the option to vote on whether they would like to remain traditional, or change to a Pilot or ESBMM governance model.



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

# PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

## Social Justice Schools: Global Issues Academy

Melissa Naponelli & Joseph Zeccola, Robert  
Lee (Local District 5), and United Teachers  
Los Angeles (UTLA)

Executive Summary

## 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 21st Century.*

The job of an educator is to teach students to see vitality in themselves.  
—Joseph Campbell

The mission of the Social Justice Schools: Global Issues Academy (heretofore known as the SJS: Global Issues Academy) is to invest young adults in developing personally and intellectually to forge a path toward graduation and a Bachelor's degree so that they emerge as leaders who can help to transform their community.

The vision of the SJS: Global Issues Academy (in concert with its proposed sister school, The SJS: Fine Arts Academy) is to produce college graduates who use their academic foundation in the arts and sciences to become transformative leaders in their own lives, their communities, and their world.

The core beliefs for the SJS: Global Issues Academy (and its sister school) begin with the simple, yet sublime, quote from Joseph Campbell above, and develops that by embracing two principles asserted by Jim Cummins regarding the most effective way to teach language learners:

1. Cognitive Engagement
2. Identity Investment

These two core, foundational beliefs will be embodied by every teacher in every classroom, as well as embedded in the school culture.

This means that we intend to give our students a curriculum that excites them, challenges them, is relevant and responsive to them, and makes them think about their world and their relationship to it. It also means that we do not believe our instruction will be effective unless we show our students--every day, in every class, and in our relationship to them, that we value them for who they are, where they come from, and for who they are capable of becoming.

Further, we are believers in the concept of educación: educating the whole person. As Lisa Delpit points out, "When we strip away a focus on developing the humanity of our children, we are left with programmed, mechanistic strategies designed to achieve the programmed, mechanistic goal of raising test scores." (Other People's Children: xv) We do not believe that our students are products to which we merely add knowledge. We intend to provide a rich, well-rounded educational experience so our students can both maximize their potential and actualize their ambitions.

## **Collaborative Campus Agreement and Partnership with WestEd**

In order to make sure that we are creating the best possible school to accomplish our vision, the Social Justice Schools have entered into a collaborative partnership with the design teams for the Synergy Quantum Academy and the Academy of the Sun College and Career Ready High School to govern CRHS#16. If chosen together, we will work in collaboration to oversee all shared aspects of the campus, and to share high-level resources for our students benefit, as indicated throughout our proposals.

All three design teams have also entered into a partnership with WestEd, the nationally recognized nonprofit education research agency, to advise us and help us to effectively run our schools. WestEd intends to make CRHS #16 a model school for its successful schools philosophy (see below) and as such will be aggressively pursuing grant funding for our professional development, as well as for many of the key supports. All three teams feel that WestEd can bring a wealth of resources to bear to help us create a successful school, solve problems as they present themselves, and ultimately succeed in our respective missions. (Please see the letters of agreement between WestEd and our schools in the appendices.)

In order to be successful, all three design teams believe that our campus must embrace the seven qualities identified by WestEd's Tipping Point School Turnaround Center as the characteristics of successful schools, and if chosen together, we intend to make these the foundation of our campus. These characteristics are:

- They have effective school leadership.
- They are staffed with committed, highly qualified teachers who use effective and equitable instructional practices.
- They provide a rigorous, standards-based curriculum and use a system of assessments to provide classroom and systemic interventions for students not meeting learning goals. (This includes the development of a culture of data use where teachers and administrators have regularly scheduled opportunities to analyze student data together.)
- They incorporate targeted, ongoing professional development to ensure instructional quality and share best practice. This includes strategies that address the unique needs of English language learners and students with disabilities. It also involves ongoing coaching and time for reflection.
- They create a safe school environment and a supportive climate of mutual trust and reciprocal accountability.
- They align all of their fiscal and human resources to support student achievement.
- They engage families to support the education of their children and to work in partnership with teachers, principals, and other administrators to ensure the effective implementation of education programs and services.

### **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 student population of CRHS#16 will no doubt mirror that of the other high schools in the immediate area--Santee, Jefferson, and Fremont--as such, the ethnic breakdown will be roughly

92% Latino, 8% African-American. Poverty is a major problem for this population (81% eligible for NSLP). A significant number of our students are either English Learners (40%), or Standard English Learners (43%). We would also serve a sizeable number of Students with Disabilities (11%), and a small but significant population of GATE students (4%).

As teachers with a combined experience of over 60 years serving this population of students, both at Los Angeles Academy Middle School, and at other schools in the nearby South Los Angeles Area (Bethune, Fremont, etc.), we feel confident that we know how to teach the students we'd be serving at CRHS#16. Our proposed pedagogy and Instructional strategies are research-based and designed specifically to meet the needs of this population of students. We also have a community plan that includes significant wraparound services to help support the families of our students and help to transform CRHS#16 into a social services hub for the area.

### **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.*

Building upon our core foundational beliefs of Cognitive Engagement and Identity Investment, we have distilled our teaching philosophy into three distinct, equally important pillars:

1. Powerful literacy
2. The Teacher/Apprentice Instructional Model
3. Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education (CRRE)

We believe in the difference between a powerful literacy (a literacy that allows students to lead, and to speak truth to power) and functional literacy (a literacy which merely equips students to function in society as workers). [Literacy with an Attitude, Finn] We believe that our goal is to take our students beyond a functional literacy and provide them with a powerful literacy across the content areas so that they can become transformative leaders in their communities.

In its research-based Reading Apprenticeship framework, WestEd emphasizes the role of teachers as orchestrators of classroom learning environments, and the role of students as apprentices, and inquiry partners. By utilizing this very effective framework, The SJS embodies the idea that teachers are not the sole holders of knowledge in the classroom. Our teachers will be the master readers, writers, mathematicians, historians, scientists, and artists. The students will be the apprentices at these crafts.

If identity investment is to be a core, foundational principle of our schools, it must be embedded in not only our curriculum, but our pedagogy. Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education (CRRE) is the essence of identity investment. Our students are people with specific cultural backgrounds, strengths, and identities. Research shows that we need to target our teaching to our students in ways that not only challenge them, but inspire and validate. If we don't embed this philosophy into our work, our students won't buy-in, will have no chance of learning, and we will have lost the battle before we've begun.

In the Social Justice Schools: Global Issues Academy, emphasis will be placed on interdisciplinary approaches to studying global problems. Teachers will receive common planning time to develop themes that will be explored for roughly two months. These themes include environmental destruction, the recession, global conflicts, and budget priorities.

The SJS: Global Issues Academy will be organized to ensure that students are enrolled in the A-G sequence of courses which establish eligibility for public, four-year postsecondary institutions in California. In addition we will adopt, across our schools, two WestEd research-based curricula that have proven remarkably successful in improving similar populations of students' abilities in math and reading, respectively: Aim for Algebra<sup>TM</sup>, and the Reading Apprenticeship® Academic Literacy Course.

At the SJS: Global Issues Academy, the students will be able to choose four areas of focus for their studies:

- Transformative Leadership
- Environmental Studies
- Journalism and Media
- Humanities (Literature, history, culture)

Finally, we will instill four, research-based instructional strategies in every classroom of both Social Justice School Academies, which have a proven track-record of success with our student population:

1. SDAIE
2. Interactive Notebooks
3. The Reading Apprenticeship Framework
4. Socratic Dialogue

#### **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.*

Social Justice Schools will model social justice for students so that they feel that they are valued individuals and so that the school fosters intellectual autonomy, respect, social competence and full academic potential.

The centerpiece of the school culture is that the pedagogy will match the services offered at the school. The pedagogy is student-centered and based on empowerment; services are provided at the school so that the school becomes an integral part of the community and a place where families can come to address their needs.

Several community organizations will operate at the school as part of our philosophy of Extended Day Learning. These include a Medical Legal Community Partnership, a Family Source Program, and student and parent advocacy and training through Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE). The school will become a community hub of services and advocacy.

#### **e. Accountability and Performance Goals.**

Social Justice Schools: Global Issues Academy Proposal

*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.*

## **This Section 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.*

In this area around CRHS#16 (called 'South Park' by the L.A. Times Mapping L.A. Project) there were an estimated 32,851 people in a 1.4 square mile area; giving it a population per square mile of 21,638 persons. That makes it one of the most densely populated areas within the City and County of Los Angeles. This area, which was over 50% African-American in 1980, by 2008 was only approximately 19.2% African-American population, while the Latino population had increased to 78.6%. The median household income in 2008 was \$29,518, one of the lowest in the Los Angeles Area, with the majority of households earning \$20,000 or less. Only 3.4% of persons 25 years or older had attained a four-year degree from a college or university, while over 2/3 of residents 25 years or older had not completed high school (10,236). The average household size in the community is 3.9 persons per residence, of which 72.3% are renters. These numbers are pre-2009, and do not reflect the current housing crisis, which could only have increased the percentage of renters to owners. In 2008 approximately 1,607 families were headed by single parents, comprising 27.9% of the total population.

In spite of what may seem to be insurmountable obstacles, the community to be served by CRHS#16 is one that is resilient, determined, and surprisingly optimistic. The work ethic evidenced by the residents is enviable. In most two-parent families both parents hold full time jobs, while the single-parent families usually rely on the extended family to provide for the students. To a parent, if asked the question, "What do you want for your child?", the answer would simply be: "A better life". The depth of their convictions on this subject is demonstrated on a daily basis by their willingness to volunteer for whatever tasks are needed; even if performing that task is a personal inconvenience. There is tremendous untapped human potential in this neighborhood. We believe that the strong survival skills needed to thrive here are indicative of a resourcefulness that become an academic asset to students. If we access the existing knowledge in the community- about business, creative and careful use of resources and inventiveness, and the rich sense of history that the families in the community are steeped in, students can use this knowledge to unlock the secrets to academic success, provided an academic mentor who knows how to look for and build bridges.

As teachers working in South Los Angeles, we have been working regularly with our parents and community members. This is evident in our community outreach plan (section 9). The myriad of wraparound social services we are proposing demonstrates how we plan to tap the potential of both our students, and the community they live in.

### **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 SJS will have in place a SSC and an SDMC as governance structures which will oversee the successful fulfillment of the Mission and Vision of the schools. All stakeholders, including students, parents, community members, teachers, classified staff, and administrators, are represented on both of these councils. The Leadership Team will be comprised of: the Principal, UTLA Chair, Counselor, Department Chairs, Parent Representatives and Student Representatives.

The strengths of the Leadership Team is defined by its composition. All stakeholders are represented in the Team, which means every member of the school community is represented and able to voice their concerns. Another strength of the Leadership Team is that each department is represented. This allows for each department to develop their Instructional Program and establish goals for themselves. This is key to a strong Leadership Team--when teachers are able to authentically develop, implement and evaluate the Instructional Program they designed they will truly feel empowered.

#### **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.*

As teachers who believe in the UTLA contract, and who are proud to be working in collaboration with both UTLA and Local District Five, we intend to operate as a traditional small school with autonomies. We believe we can prove that teachers, students, administrators, and the local district can run a very successful school while adhering to the UTLA/LAUSD contract. After a year in the new school, with a full complement of teachers, we will give our faculty the option to vote on whether they would like to remain traditional, or change to a Pilot or ESBMM governance model.