



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

Central Region Middle School #7

Executive Summaries



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

Ánimo Central Middle School #1

Green Dot 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 21st Century.

Mission Statement

The mission of Ánimo Central Middle School #1 ("ACMS #1") is to prepare students in the South Los Angeles community for success in high school, college, leadership and life. ACMS #1 will achieve this mission by providing a small, college preparatory program where all stakeholders (administrators, teachers, parents, community) actively engage in the education process. We will create a student-centered environment that unifies the efforts of family, community and school to foster life-long learning, cross-cultural competency, social responsibility and academic excellence. The underlying belief at ACMS #1 is that all students can and may go to college.

Vision Statement

Green Dot Public Schools has an unwavering belief in all students' potential. We believe that schools should reflect the needs of the community and that all stakeholders including teachers, parents and students, should have a voice in shaping their school. Green Dot is proposing to operate small independent charter middle schools with an approximate enrollment of 400-500 students in each school. In its first year, ACMS #1 will serve all grade levels and students residing in the attendance area.

ACMS #1 students are "agents of change," individuals who will positively impact our community. The school will emphasize a student culture of self-confidence, self-discipline, success, and proactive leadership so that students will excel in high school, college, and beyond. Green Dot has identified four pillars that will define our students as "agents of change" and educated leaders of the 21st century:¹

- Students will be College-Directed Learners, those who think critically and analytically in order to understand complex concepts across the curriculum. All students will be expected to complete a course of study that prepares them for success in high school and college, even if college is not their ultimate educational goal.
- A Cultural Learner is an individual who is prepared to excel in today's diverse workplace. A cultural learner embraces diversity, is aware of cultural differences, unique group histories, and different perspectives.
- An Innovative Leader will be capable of contributing to the success of his/her community through service and the ability to communicate effectively in distinct situations.
- A Life-Long Learner is someone who continues to learn and improve long after his/her formal educational process is complete. We believe the hallmarks of life-long learners are those who are goal-oriented in all they pursue and able to leverage technology to help them succeed.

¹ "Taking Center Stage-Act II (TCSII): Ensuring Success and Closing the Achievement Gap for All of California's Middle Grades Students," California Department of Education, 21 July 2009
<http://pubs.cde.ca.gov/tcsii/recommendations.aspx>

- 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.***

ACMS #1 will serve all students residing in the attendance area. Green Dot Public Schools has opened 18 charter schools in the Los Angeles area and all these schools are successfully serving students, similar to those that will attend CRMS #7, and are achieving far greater results than comparable schools on all key performance metrics. Green Dot schools have produced outstanding results: 72% of our graduating seniors have been admitted to four-year universities. Another 20-25% of graduates go on to two-year colleges. On average, Green Dot schools scored 92 points higher than their neighborhood school.

Green Dot is a unique charter school management organization in that we have experience serving entire attendance boundaries through our operation of Alain Leroy Locke High School in Watts. In September 2008, Green Dot re-opened Locke High School as a family of eight small schools, broken down in order to increase our ability to recruit and retain all of the students in the school attendance boundary. Since that time, Green Dot has shown record-level improvement in retaining and increasing rigor. We have seen a 36% increase in retention and 54% increase in 10th grade students passing the CAHSEE.

While other charter schools have limited capacity and waitlists for students who exceed school capacity, Green Dot understands and is well-versed in providing services for every student in the attendance boundary, regardless of individual needs or challenges.

Green Dot is particularly familiar with the community surrounding Central Middle School #7 (CRMS #7). Since 2006, Green Dot has run *Ánimo* Ralph Bunche, *Ánimo* Jackie Robinson, and *Ánimo* Pat Brown, and in 2010, we opened *Ánimo* Jefferson Charter Middle School, which serves students that reside in the attendance boundary for CRMS #7.

Based on our experience at the four *Ánimo* high schools located in the area, we have observed the following major needs among our students that we will address at *Ánimo* Central Middle School #1: need for math and literacy intervention, need for safe haven for students after school, and writing intervention.

Based on our success serving a similar demographic group, Green Dot Public Schools will implement its successful model at *Ánimo* Central Middle School #1 because middle students in South Los Angeles deserve a quality education led by an organization with proven results.

- 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.***

ACMS #1 will follow implement the instructional strategies and practices that are effective in our 18 schools. ACMS #1 will be grounded in the belief that effective instruction is the most significant factor in achieving our mission. Teaching at Green Dot requires an ongoing commitment to student achievement, data driven-decision-making, professional growth, and collaboration to ensure all of the students we serve are prepared for success in college, leadership, and life. Effective teachers actively engage students, facilitate collaborative learning, create safe learning environments and understand that all students can learn.

ACMS #1 will draw from the following continuum of research-based practices:

- **Planning and Preparation:** based on the “Essential Elements of Effective Instruction” by Madeline Hunter
- **Assessment and Learning:** Based on “Understanding by Design: Backwards Design,” by Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins.
- **Instructional Techniques:** Based on “Teach Like a Champion” by Doug Lemov
- **Classroom Environment:** Based on Safe and Civil Schools, Randy Sprick.

Each strategy is discussed in greater detail in section 2.

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.

Most students learn best in a nurturing, supportive environment where they are known and treated as individuals, and where their background is honored. Accordingly, personal attention to individual students and sensitivity to their backgrounds will be a cornerstone of the school.² The small, personal nature of Ánimo Central Middle School #1 and the rigor of its academic program nurtures students and helps them develop a willingness to work hard to achieve an excellent education; these student characteristics are typically more difficult to foster in a large, traditional public middle school.³

Ánimo Central Middle School #1 will utilize the middle school model that Green Dot Public Schools has developed based on our experience operating successful schools. Green Dot’s school model has been created to ensure that the organization can consistently open high quality schools in which students are being prepared for college, leadership and life. The Six Tenets school model has resulted in 18 of urban Los Angeles’ most successful public schools. Green Dot schools have demonstrated that learning best occurs in schools that follow the Six Tenets of High Performing Schools.

The Six Tenets are a set of six core principles that all Green Dot schools (including Ánimo Central Middle School #1) must follow. They are:

- 1.) Small, Safe, Personalized Schools
- 2.) High Expectations for All Students
- 3.) Local Control with Extensive Professional Development and Accountability.
- 4.) Parent Participation
- 5.) Get Dollars into the Classroom
- 6.) Keep Schools Open Later

Each tenet is described in further detail in section 3.

Additionally, below are the key ingredients to Green Dot’s success that will be implemented at ACMS #1:

² “Taking Center Stage-Act II (TCSII): Ensuring Success and Closing the Achievement Gap for All of California’s Middle Grades Students,” California Department of Education, 21 July 2009
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³ Meier, Deborah, In Schools We Trust (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002).

- A firm commitment to serve all students, including the highest need
 - We do what it takes to prepare the highest need students for college, leadership and life, which makes us better at serving all students
- A culture of transparency, reflection and performance
- Pioneers of leading edge practices to develop highly effective teachers
 - We are part of a \$60M, 7-year grant from the Gates Foundation to raise teacher effectiveness
- Unparalleled focus on strong principal leaders

Each ingredient is discussed in further detail in section 3.

e. Accountability and Performance Goals. Briefly discuss how your organization will set and annually update targets for the indicators in the table below.

The assessment of student achievement will drive *Ánimo Central Middle School #1*'s program, discourse of evaluation and improvement, and the allocation and usage of resources. Student quarterly benchmark data in English, mathematics, science, and reading, student grade reports, and standardized testing scores in combination with student work discussion, and other assessment will be at the root of all decisions made on our campus.

The achievement of *Ánimo Central Middle School #1* will be measured in both growth and absolute measures. Growth in student achievement is the primary measure that will be used to determine whether the school is an academic success. For API, *Ánimo Central Middle School #1* shall maintain an API score above 600 and strive to meet all API growth targets. Under our leadership, the goal of for *Ánimo Central Middle School #1* is to reach an 800 API within 6 years, (which is a goal that we have set and are holding all Green Dot schools accountable to). Additionally, we will significantly increase the number of students who are advanced/proficient in both Math & ELA in the next five years. In order to monitor cultural indicators, we will strive to have 95% attendance rate to demonstrate increased student engagement and at least a 70% satisfaction rating on student and parent surveys. We are currently meeting these cultural metrics at all schools in our portfolio and are confident that ACMS #1 will achieve similar results.

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.

Ánimo Central Middle School #1 is located in a community where the neighborhood schools suffer from high dropout rates, low standardized test scores, and overcrowding and violence. This area is densely populated – 23,245.88 people per square mile – sector in Los Angeles County. The population in the 90011 zip code area alone is 101,214. The median household income (\$23,851) is significantly lower than the United State's average income (\$58,600), (Neighborhood Link). The demographics of this area is 85.3% Hispanic/Latino, 12.6% Black, 1% White, 0.4% Asian, 0.1% other, and 0.4% multiracial. Even though the University of Southern California (USC) is only 2.6 miles away and University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) is 16 miles away, the student population from the area who attend these universities is minimal. The educational achievement of people with a high school degree, some college, or Associate Degree is 25.1%; while people with a Bachelors degree or higher is 2.8% This

community has historically high levels of poverty and unemployment which have facilitated generational gang affiliations, crime, and violence. Providing a quality education to ACMS #1 students is the first critical step needed to not only dramatically improve student achievements but to transform an entire community. Please see section 8 for a detailed explanation of community assets.

Green Dot is currently engaging the South Los Angeles community through Back to School Nights, participating in community events such toy drives, community leader breakfasts and hosting community resource fairs.

Green Dot has a vested interest in the success of Central Region Middle School #7. This year we opened Ánimo Jefferson Middle School which is located less than a mile from CRMS #7. Based on assessment data from Northwest Evaluation Association (NEA), 75% of students are below grade-level in math and 80% of students are below grade-level in reading.

Additionally, our students who enter 9th grade at our high schools in this community perform far below grade level in all core subjects. We spend all four years of high school working hard to get our students to perform just up to grade level; if we had the opportunity to intervene in the 6th grade instead of the 9th grade, we would be able to address academic misconceptions and weaknesses earlier, and better prepare our students to graduate high school and go on to four year colleges.

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.

Green Dot has the track record and capacity to successfully perform all task required to lead Ánimo Central Middle School #1. Green Dot's leadership team has extensive knowledge of the following key areas: curriculum and leadership development, instructional strategies, data analysis, financial management and school culture.

Our governance structure is a reflection of our belief that students, staff members and parents are all collaborators in the educational process. Ánimo Central Middle School #1 will be an independent charter school and will be governed by Green Dot Public Schools, a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit benefit California Corporation. The structure of Ánimo Central Middle School #1's governance and its relationship to Green Dot's home office is outlined in Appendix A.

Ultimate responsibility for the governance of Ánimo Central Middle School #1 will rest with Green Dot's Board of Directors. Ánimo Central Middle School #1 is also governed by a School Advisory Board, comprised of teachers, students, parents and administrators. Its role is to ensure fair representation of diverse thoughts and oversight of the school.

The School Principal is responsible for the school's academic and financial results and has hiring and firing power over the entire staff. The hiring of the Ánimo Central Middle School #1 Principal will follow the standard Green Dot principal hiring process. The first step will be an interview with the Vice President of Education. Next, the candidate will participate in a panel interview that includes a team of cluster directors and campus leaders. At this panel interview, the candidate will model a professional development presentation, respond to a series of scenario questions, and produce an on-demand writing sample. Third, the candidate will watch a short video of a teacher's lesson and then debrief with the Cluster Director on feedback and next steps

for support to be given to that teacher. On the same day the candidate will spend a half-day shadowing a current Green Dot Principal and then write a reflection identifying school strengths and weaknesses in the following areas: instructional leadership, resource management, people management, problem solving, and community leadership.

Any candidates who successfully move through these phases of the interview process will participate in a community panel made up of students, parents, teachers and classified staff members. The cluster director will facilitate the community panel. The panel will provide input into the process but Green Dot management will make the final decision on hiring. The timeline for recruiting and hiring is March-April. The Principal will need to be hired as soon as possible as they are responsible for selecting the rest of their staff.

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.

Green Dot Public Schools operates 18 successful charter schools including the Locke High School Transformation, a radical restructuring of a chronically failing school. All schools that Green Dot opens and operates are based on the school model that Green Dot has developed over the past ten years. Our school model has been created to ensure that Green Dot can consistently open high-quality schools in which students are being prepared for college, leadership and life.

Our independent charter school model, has given us the necessary flexibility and autonomy needed to tackle a legacy of neglect and transform Locke High School. Our student-focused strategy has 5 essential components. We will follow the same successful strategy to transform Ánimo Central Middle School #1. The strategy requires the following:

- Establish an early presence on the campus to manage the transition
 - Find and enlist student and teacher ambassadors to generate support for the new operator
- Assemble a high performing and aligned team by requiring all staff to reapply for their positions—teachers and classified employees
 - The single greatest success factor is getting a strong team in place- a turnaround operator must have the ability to choose its own staff
- Divide the campus into two small schools to increase personal attention and allow for accountability
 - Yet, also establish a structure that allows for collaboration and shared resources
- Establish a dramatically improved school climate and culture from day one
 - Create clear and consistent expectations for students and provide a safe, clean and respectful environment focused on learning
- Increase interventions for highest-need student populations.
 - Special education, English learners, credit deficient students, juvenile detention returnees, and foster care students



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

Ánimo Central Middle School #2

Green Dot 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 21st Century.

Mission Statement

The mission of *Ánimo Central Middle School #2* ("ACMS #2") is to prepare students in the South Los Angeles community for success in high school, college, leadership and life. ACMS #2 will achieve this mission by providing a small, college preparatory program where all stakeholders (administrators, teachers, parents, community) actively engage in the education process. We will create a student-centered environment that unifies the efforts of family, community and school to foster life-long learning, cross-cultural competency, social responsibility and academic excellence. The underlying belief at ACMS #2 is that all students can and may go to college.

Vision Statement

Green Dot Public Schools has an unwavering belief in all students' potential. We believe that schools should reflect the needs of the community and that all stakeholders including teachers, parents and students, should have a voice in shaping their school. Green Dot is proposing to operate small independent charter middle schools with an approximate enrollment of 400-500 students in each school. In its first year, ACMS #2 will serve all grade levels and students residing in the attendance area.

ACMS #2 students are "agents of change," individuals who will positively impact our community. The school will emphasize a student culture of self-confidence, self-discipline, success, and proactive leadership so that students will excel in high school, college, and beyond. Green Dot has identified four pillars that will define our students as "agents of change" and educated leaders of the 21st century:¹

- Students will be **College-Directed Learners**, those who think critically and analytically in order to understand complex concepts across the curriculum. All students will be expected to complete a course of study that prepares them for success in high school and college, even if college is not their ultimate educational goal.
- A **Cultural Learner** is an individual who is prepared to excel in today's diverse workplace. A cultural learner embraces diversity, is aware of cultural differences, unique group histories, and different perspectives.
- An **Innovative Leader** will be capable of contributing to the success of his/her community through service and the ability to communicate effectively in distinct situations.
- A **Life-Long Learner** is someone who continues to learn and improve long after his/her formal educational process is complete. We believe the hallmarks of life-long learners are those who are goal-oriented in all they pursue and able to leverage technology to help them succeed.

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<http://pubs.cde.ca.gov/tcsii/recommendations.aspx>

- 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.*

ACMS #2 will serve all students residing in the attendance area. Green Dot Public Schools has opened 18 charter schools in the Los Angeles area and all these schools are successfully serving students, similar to those that will attend CRMS #7, and are achieving far greater results than comparable schools on all key performance metrics. Green Dot schools have produced outstanding results: **72% of our graduating seniors** have been admitted to **four-year universities**. Another 20-25% of graduates go on to two-year colleges. On average, Green Dot schools scored 92 points higher than their neighborhood school.

Green Dot is a unique charter school management organization in that we have experience serving entire attendance boundaries through our operation of Alain Leroy Locke High School in Watts. In September 2008, Green Dot re-opened Locke High School as a family of eight small schools, broken down in order to increase our ability to recruit and retain all of the students in the school attendance boundary. Since that time, Green Dot has shown record-level improvement in retaining and increasing rigor. We have seen a 36% increase in retention and 54% increase in 10th grade students passing the CAHSEE.

While other charter schools have limited capacity and waitlists for students who exceed school capacity, Green Dot understands and is well-versed in providing services for every student in the attendance boundary, regardless of individual needs or challenges.

Green Dot is particularly familiar with the community surrounding Central Middle School #7 (CRMS #7). Since 2006, Green Dot has run *Ánimo* Ralph Bunche, *Ánimo* Jackie Robinson, and *Ánimo* Pat Brown, and in 2010, we opened *Ánimo* Jefferson Charter Middle School, which serves students that reside in the attendance boundary for CRMS #7.

Based on our experience at the four *Ánimo* high schools located in the area, we have observed the following major needs among our students that we will address at *Ánimo* Central Middle School #2: need for math and literacy intervention, need for safe haven for students after school, and writing intervention.

Based on our success serving a similar demographic group, Green Dot Public Schools will implement its successful model at *Ánimo* Central Middle School #2 because middle students in South Los Angeles deserve a quality education led by an organization with proven results.

- 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.*

ACMS #2 will follow implement the instructional strategies and practices that are effective in our 18 schools. ACMS #2 will be grounded in the belief that effective instruction is the most significant factor in achieving our mission. Teaching at Green Dot requires an ongoing commitment to student achievement, data driven-decision-making, professional growth, and collaboration to ensure all of the students we serve are ***prepared for success in college***,

leadership, and life. Effective teachers actively engage students, facilitate collaborative learning, create safe learning environments and understand that all students can learn.

ACMS #2 will draw from the following continuum of research-based practices:

- **Planning and Preparation:** based on the “Essential Elements of Effective Instruction” by Madeline Hunter
- **Assessment and Learning:** Based on “Understanding by Design: Backwards Design,” by Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins.
- **Instructional Techniques:** Based on “Teach Like a Champion” by Doug Lemov
- **Classroom Environment:** Based on Safe and Civil Schools, Randy Sprick.

Each strategy is discussed in greater detail in section 2.

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.

Most students learn best in a nurturing, supportive environment where they are known and treated as individuals, and where their background is honored. Accordingly, personal attention to individual students and sensitivity to their backgrounds will be a cornerstone of the school.² The small, personal nature of Ánimo Central Middle School #2 and the rigor of its academic program nurtures students and helps them develop a willingness to work hard to achieve an excellent education; these student characteristics are typically more difficult to foster in a large, traditional public middle school.³

Ánimo Central Middle School #2 will utilize the middle school model that Green Dot Public Schools has developed based our experience operating successful schools. Green Dot’s school model has been created to ensure that the organization can consistently open high quality schools in which students are being prepared for college, leadership and life. The Six Tenets school model has resulted in 18 of urban Los Angeles’ most successful public schools. Green Dot schools have demonstrated that learning best occurs in schools that follow the Six Tenets of High Performing Schools.

The Six Tenets are a set of six core principles that all Green Dot schools (including Ánimo Central Middle School #2) must follow. They are:

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Each tenet is described in further detail in section 3.

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³ Meier, Deborah, In Schools We Trust (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002).

Additionally, below are the key ingredients to Green Dot's success that will be implemented at ACMS #2:

- A firm commitment to serve all students, including the highest need
 - We do what it takes to prepare the highest need students for college, leadership and life, which makes us better at serving all students
- A culture of transparency, reflection and performance
- Pioneers of leading edge practices to develop highly effective teachers
 - We are part of a \$60M, 7-year grant from the Gates Foundation to raise teacher effectiveness
- Unparalleled focus on strong principal leaders

Each ingredient is discussed in further detail in section 3.

e. Accountability and Performance Goals. Briefly discuss how your organization will set and annually update targets for the indicators in the table below.

The assessment of student achievement will drive *Ánimo Central Middle School #2's* program, discourse of evaluation and improvement, and the allocation and usage of resources. Student quarterly benchmark data in English, mathematics, science, and reading, student grade reports, and standardized testing scores in combination with student work discussion, and other assessment will be at the root of all decisions made on our campus.

The achievement of *Ánimo Central Middle School #2* will be measured in both growth and absolute measures. Growth in student achievement is the primary measure that will be used to determine whether the school is an academic success. For API, *Ánimo Central Middle School #2* shall maintain an API score above 600 and strive to meet all API growth targets. Under our leadership, the goal of for *Ánimo Central Middle School #2* is to reach an 800 API within 6 years, (which is a goal that we have set and are holding all Green Dot schools accountable to). Additionally, we will significantly increase the number of students who are advanced/proficient in both Math & ELA in the next five years. In order to monitor cultural indicators, we will strive to have 95% attendance rate to demonstrate increased student engagement and at least a 70% satisfaction rating on student and parent surveys. We are currently meeting these cultural metrics at all schools in our portfolio and are confident that ACMS #2 will achieve similar results.

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.

Ánimo Central Middle School #2 is located in a community where the neighborhood schools suffer from high dropout rates, low standardized test scores, and overcrowding and violence. This area is densely populated – 23,245.88 people per square mile – sector in Los Angeles County. The population in the 90011 zip code area alone is 101,214. The median household income (\$23,851) is significantly lower than the United State's average income (\$58,600), (Neighborhood Link). The demographics of this area is 85.3% Hispanic/Latino, 12.6% Black, 1% White, 0.4% Asian, 0.1% other, and 0.4% multiracial. Even though the University of Southern California (USC) is only 2.6 miles away and University of California Los Angeles

(UCLA) is 16 miles away, the student population from the area who attend these universities is minimal. The educational achievement of people with a high school degree, some college, or Associate Degree is 25.1%; while people with a Bachelors degree or higher is 2.8% This community has historically high levels of poverty and unemployment which have facilitated generational gang affiliations, crime, and violence. Providing a quality education to ACMS #2 students is the first critical step needed to not only dramatically improve student achievements but to transform an entire community. Please see section 8 for a detailed explanation of community assets.

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Additionally, our students who enter 9th grade at our high schools in this community perform far below grade level in all core subjects. We spend all four years of high school working hard to get our students to perform just up to grade level; if we had the opportunity to intervene in the 6th grade instead of the 9th grade, we would be able to address academic misconceptions and weaknesses earlier, and better prepare our students to graduate high school and go on to four year colleges.

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.

Green Dot has the track record and capacity to successfully perform all task required to lead Ánimo Central Middle School #2. Green Dot's leadership team has extensive knowledge of the following key areas: curriculum and leadership development, instructional strategies, data analysis, financial management and school culture.

Our governance structure is a reflection of our belief that students, staff members and parents are all collaborators in the educational process. Ánimo Central Middle School #2 will be an independent charter school and will be governed by Green Dot Public Schools, a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit benefit California Corporation. The structure of Ánimo Central Middle School #2's governance and its relationship to Green Dot's home office is outlined in **Appendix A**.

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The School Principal is responsible for the school's academic and financial results and has hiring and firing power over the entire staff. The hiring of the Ánimo Central Middle School #2 Principal will follow the standard Green Dot principal hiring process. The first step will be an interview with the Vice President of Education. Next, the candidate will participate in a panel interview that includes a team of cluster directors and campus leaders. At this panel interview, the candidate will model a professional development presentation, respond to a series of scenario

questions, and produce an on-demand writing sample. Third, the candidate will watch a short video of a teacher's lesson and then debrief with the Cluster Director on feedback and next steps for support to be given to that teacher. On the same day the candidate will spend a half-day shadowing a current Green Dot Principal and then write a reflection identifying school strengths and weaknesses in the following areas: instructional leadership, resource management, people management, problem solving, and community leadership.

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- Assemble a high performing and aligned team by requiring all staff to reapply for their positions—teachers and classified employees
 - The single greatest success factor is getting a strong team in place- a turnaround operator must have the ability to choose its own staff
- Divide the campus into two small schools to increase personal attention and allow for accountability
 - Yet, also establish a structure that allows for collaboration and shared resources
- Establish a dramatically improved school climate and culture from day one
 - Create clear and consistent expectations for students and provide a safe, clean and respectful environment focused on learning
- Increase interventions for highest-need student populations.
 - Special education, English learners, credit deficient students, juvenile detention returnees, and foster care students



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

Ánimo Central Middle School #3

Green Dot 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 21st Century.*

Mission Statement

The mission of Ánimo Central Middle School #3 (“ACMS #3”) is to prepare students in the South Los Angeles community for success in high school, college, leadership and life. ACMS #3 will achieve this mission by providing a small, college preparatory program where all stakeholders (administrators, teachers, parents, community) actively engage in the education process. We will create a student-centered environment that unifies the efforts of family, community and school to foster life-long learning, cross-cultural competency, social responsibility and academic excellence. The underlying belief at ACMS #3 is that **all** students can and may go to college.

Vision Statement

Green Dot Public Schools has an unwavering belief in all students’ potential. We believe that schools should reflect the needs of the community and that all stakeholders including teachers, parents and students, should have a voice in shaping their school. Green Dot is proposing to operate small independent charter middle schools with an approximate enrollment of 400-500 students in each school. In its first year, ACMS #3 will serve all grade levels and students residing in the attendance area.

ACMS #3 students are "agents of change," individuals who will positively impact our community. The school will emphasize a student culture of self-confidence, self-discipline, success, and proactive leadership so that students will excel in high school, college, and beyond. Green Dot has identified four pillars that will define our students as “agents of change” and educated leaders of the 21st century:¹

- Students will be **College-Directed Learners**, those who think critically and analytically in order to understand complex concepts across the curriculum. All students will be expected to complete a course of study that prepares them for success in high school and college, even if college is not their ultimate educational goal.
- A **Cultural Learner** is an individual who is prepared to excel in today’s diverse workplace. A cultural learner embraces diversity, is aware of cultural differences, unique group histories, and different perspectives.
- An **Innovative Leader** will be capable of contributing to the success of his/her community through service and the ability to communicate effectively in distinct situations.
- A **Life-Long Learner** is someone who continues to learn and improve long after his/her formal educational process is complete. We believe the hallmarks of life-long learners are those who are goal-oriented in all they pursue and able to leverage technology to help them succeed.

¹ “Taking Center Stage-Act II (TCSII): Ensuring Success and Closing the Achievement Gap for All of California’s Middle Grades Students,” California Department of Education, 21 July 2009
<<http://pubs.cde.ca.gov/tcsii/recommendations.aspx>>

- 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.*

ACMS #3 will serve all students residing in the attendance area. Green Dot Public Schools has opened 18 charter schools in the Los Angeles area and all these schools are successfully serving students, similar to those that will attend CRMS #7, and are achieving far greater results than comparable schools on all key performance metrics. Green Dot schools have produced outstanding results: **72% of our graduating seniors** have been admitted to **four-year universities**. Another 20-25% of graduates go on to two-year colleges. On average, Green Dot schools scored 92 points higher than their neighborhood school.

Green Dot is a unique charter school management organization in that we have experience serving entire attendance boundaries through our operation of Alain Leroy Locke High School in Watts. In September 2008, Green Dot re-opened Locke High School as a family of eight small schools, broken down in order to increase our ability to recruit and retain all of the students in the school attendance boundary. Since that time, Green Dot has shown record-level improvement in retaining and increasing rigor. We have seen a 36% increase in retention and 54% increase in 10th grade students passing the CAHSEE.

While other charter schools have limited capacity and waitlists for students who exceed school capacity, Green Dot understands and is well-versed in providing services for **every** student in the attendance boundary, regardless of individual needs or challenges.

Green Dot is particularly familiar with the community surrounding Central Middle School #7 (CRMS #7). Since 2006, Green Dot has run *Ánimo* Ralph Bunche, *Ánimo* Jackie Robinson, and *Ánimo* Pat Brown, and in 2010, we opened *Ánimo* Jefferson Charter Middle School, which serves students that reside in the attendance boundary for CRMS #7.

Based on our experience at the four *Ánimo* high schools located in the area, we have observed the following major needs among our students that we will address at *Ánimo* Central Middle School #3: need for math and literacy intervention, need for safe haven for students after school, and writing intervention.

Based on our success serving a similar demographic group, Green Dot Public Schools will implement its successful model at *Ánimo* Central Middle School #3 because middle students in South Los Angeles deserve a quality education led by an organization with proven results.

- 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.*

ACMS #3 will follow implement the instructional strategies and practices that are effective in our 18 schools. ACMS #3 will be grounded in the belief that effective instruction is the most significant factor in achieving our mission. Teaching at Green Dot requires an ongoing commitment to student achievement, data driven-decision-making, professional growth, and collaboration to ensure all of the students we serve are **prepared for success in college**,

leadership, and life. Effective teachers actively engage students, facilitate collaborative learning, create safe learning environments and understand that all students can learn.

ACMS #3 will draw from the following continuum of research-based practices:

- **Planning and Preparation:** based on the “Essential Elements of Effective Instruction” by Madeline Hunter
- **Assessment and Learning:** Based on “Understanding by Design: Backwards Design,” by Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins.
- **Instructional Techniques:** Based on “Teach Like a Champion” by Doug Lemov
- **Classroom Environment:** Based on Safe and Civil Schools, Randy Sprick.

Each strategy is discussed in greater detail in section 2.

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.

Most students learn best in a nurturing, supportive environment where they are known and treated as individuals, and where their background is honored. Accordingly, personal attention to individual students and sensitivity to their backgrounds will be a cornerstone of the school.² The small, personal nature of Ánimo Central Middle School #3 and the rigor of its academic program nurtures students and helps them develop a willingness to work hard to achieve an excellent education; these student characteristics are typically more difficult to foster in a large, traditional public middle school.³

Ánimo Central Middle School #3 will utilize the middle school model that Green Dot Public Schools has developed based on our experience operating successful schools. Green Dot’s school model has been created to ensure that the organization can consistently open high quality schools in which students are being prepared for college, leadership and life. The Six Tenets school model has resulted in 18 of urban Los Angeles’ most successful public schools. Green Dot schools have demonstrated that learning best occurs in schools that follow the Six Tenets of High Performing Schools.

The Six Tenets are a set of six core principles that all Green Dot schools (including Ánimo Central Middle School #3) must follow. They are:

- 1.) Small, Safe, Personalized Schools
- 2.) High Expectations for All Students
- 3.) Local Control with Extensive Professional Development and Accountability.
- 4.) Parent Participation
- 5.) Get Dollars into the Classroom
- 6.) Keep Schools Open Later

Each tenet is described in further detail in section 3.

Additionally, below are the key ingredients to Green Dot’s success that will be implemented at ACMS #3:

² “Taking Center Stage-Act II (TCSII): Ensuring Success and Closing the Achievement Gap for All of California’s Middle Grades Students,” California Department of Education, 21 July 2009
<<http://pubs.cde.ca.gov/tcsii/recommendations.aspx>>

³ Meier, Deborah, In Schools We Trust (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002).

- **A firm commitment to serve all students, including the highest need**
 - We do what it takes to prepare the highest need students for college, leadership and life, which makes us better at serving all students
- **A culture of transparency, reflection and performance**
- **Pioneers of leading edge practices to develop highly effective teachers**
 - We are part of a \$60M, 7-year grant from the Gates Foundation to raise teacher effectiveness
- **Unparalleled focus on strong principal leaders**

Each ingredient is discussed in further detail in section 3.

e. Accountability and Performance Goals. Briefly discuss how your organization will set and annually update targets for the indicators in the table below.

The assessment of student achievement will drive *Ánimo Central Middle School #3*'s program, discourse of evaluation and improvement, and the allocation and usage of resources. Student quarterly benchmark data in English, mathematics, science, and reading, student grade reports, and standardized testing scores in combination with student work discussion, and other assessment will be at the root of all decisions made on our campus.

The achievement of *Ánimo Central Middle School #3* will be measured in both growth and absolute measures. Growth in student achievement is the primary measure that will be used to determine whether the school is an academic success. For API, *Ánimo Central Middle School #3* shall maintain an API score above 600 and strive to meet all API growth targets. Under our leadership, the goal of for *Ánimo Central Middle School #3* is to reach an 800 API within 6 years, (which is a goal that we have set and are holding all Green Dot schools accountable to). Additionally, we will significantly increase the number of students who are advanced/proficient in both Math & ELA in the next five years. In order to monitor cultural indicators, we will strive to have 95% attendance rate to demonstrate increased student engagement and at least a 70% satisfaction rating on student and parent surveys. We are currently meeting these cultural metrics at all schools in our portfolio and are confident that ACMS #3 will achieve similar results.

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.

Ánimo Central Middle School #3 is located in a community where the neighborhood schools suffer from high dropout rates, low standardized test scores, and overcrowding and violence. This area is densely populated – 23,245.88 people per square mile – sector in Los Angeles County. The population in the 90011 zip code area alone is 101,214. The median household income (\$23,851) is significantly lower than the United State's average income (\$58,600), (Neighborhood Link). The demographics of this area is 85.3% Hispanic/Latino, 12.6% Black, 1% White, 0.4% Asian, 0.1% other, and 0.4% multiracial. Even though the University of Southern California (USC) is only 2.6 miles away and University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) is 16 miles away, the student population from the area who attend these universities is minimal. The educational achievement of people with a high school degree, some college, or Associate Degree is 25.1%; while people with a Bachelors degree or higher is 2.8% This community has historically high levels of poverty and unemployment which have facilitated generational gang affiliations, crime, and violence. Providing a quality education to ACMS #3 students is the first

critical step needed to not only dramatically improve student achievements but to transform an entire community. Please see section 8 for a detailed explanation of community assets.

Green Dot is currently engaging the South Los Angeles community through Back to School Nights, participating in community events such toy drives, community leader breakfasts and hosting community resource fairs.

Green Dot has a vested interest in the success of Central Region Middle School #7. This year we open Ánimo Jefferson Middle School which is located less than a mile from CRMS #7. Based on assessment data from Northwest Evaluation Association (NEA), 75% of students are below grade-level in math and 80% of students are below grade-level in reading.

Additionally, our students who enter 9th grade at our high schools in this community perform far below grade level in all core subjects. We spend all four years of high school working hard to get our students to perform just up to grade level; if we had the opportunity to intervene in the 6th grade instead of the 9th grade, we would be able to address academic misconceptions and weaknesses earlier, and better prepare our students to graduate high school and go on to four year colleges.

- 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.***

Green Dot has the track record and capacity to successfully perform all task required to lead Ánimo Central Middle School #3. Green Dot's leadership team has extensive knowledge of the following key areas: curriculum and leadership development, instructional strategies, data analysis, financial management and school culture.

Our governance structure is a reflection of our belief that students, staff members and parents are all collaborators in the educational process. Ánimo Central Middle School #3 will be an independent charter school and will be governed by Green Dot Public Schools, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit benefit California Corporation. The structure of Ánimo Central Middle School #3's governance and its relationship to Green Dot's home office is outlined in **Appendix A**.

Ultimate responsibility for the governance of Ánimo Central Middle School #3 will rest with Green Dot's Board of Directors. Ánimo Central Middle School #3 is also governed by a School Advisory Board, comprised of teachers, students, parents and administrators. Its role is to ensure fair representation of diverse thoughts and oversight of the school.

The School Principal is responsible for the school's academic and financial results and has hiring and firing power over the entire staff. The hiring of the Ánimo Central Middle School #3 Principal will follow the standard Green Dot principal hiring process. The first step will be an interview with the Vice President of Education. Next, the candidate will participate in a panel interview that includes a team of cluster directors and campus leaders. At this panel interview, the candidate will model a professional development presentation, respond to a series of scenario questions, and produce an on-demand writing sample. Third, the candidate will watch a short video of a teacher's lesson and then debrief with the Cluster Director on feedback and next steps for support to be given to that teacher. On the same day the candidate will spend a half-day shadowing a current Green Dot Principal and then write a reflection identifying school strengths

and weaknesses in the following areas: instructional leadership, resource management, people management, problem solving, and community leadership.

Any candidates who successfully move through these phases of the interview process will participate in a community panel made up of students, parents, teachers and classified staff members. The cluster director will facilitate the community panel. The panel will provide input into the process but Green Dot management will make the final decision on hiring. The timeline for recruiting and hiring is March-April. The Principal will need to be hired as soon as possible as they are responsible for selecting the rest of their staff.

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.

Green Dot Public Schools operates 18 successful charter schools including the Locke High School Transformation, a radical restructuring of a chronically failing school. All schools that Green Dot opens and operates are based on the school model that Green Dot has developed over the past ten years. Our school model has been created to ensure that Green Dot can consistently open high-quality schools in which students are being prepared for college, leadership and life.

Our independent charter school model, has given us the necessary flexibility and autonomy needed to tackle a legacy of neglect and transform Locke High School. Our **student-focused** strategy has 5 essential components. We will follow the same successful strategy to transform Ánimo Central Middle School #3. The strategy requires the following:

- Establish an **early presence** on the campus to manage the transition
 - Find and enlist student and teacher ambassadors to generate support for the new operator
- Assemble a **high performing and aligned team** by requiring all staff to reapply for their positions—teachers and classified employees
 - The single greatest success factor is getting a strong team in place- a turnaround operator must have the ability to choose its own staff
- Divide the campus into two **small schools** to increase personal attention and allow for accountability
 - Yet, also establish a structure that allows for collaboration and shared resources
- Establish a dramatically improved **school climate and culture** from day one
 - Create clear and consistent expectations for students and provide a safe, clean and respectful environment focused on learning
- Increase **interventions** for highest-need student populations.
 - Special education , English learners, credit deficient students, juvenile detention returnees, and foster care students



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

School of Arts and Culture

Local District 5 (Tommy Welch)

Executive Summary

Central Region Middle School #7A:
School of Arts and Culture
Pilot School

Section 1: Executive Summary

The CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture and CRMS#7 Business and Technology School are applying in partnership with Synergy Kinetic Academy, a charter school. Each of our teams hopes to operate one of three small learning communities on Central Region Middle School #7 (CRMS#7). If selected, we agree to work collaboratively to operate the entire campus so that all students at all three schools will attain high levels of academic success.

1a. Mission Statement

The mission of CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture is to nurture students who are intrinsically motivated to prepare themselves for college and their future careers. By integrating relevant thematic units and real world applications through an emphasis on the arts and cultural studies, students will understand civic responsibility and the impact they can make on the global network as genuine agents of change.

Designed as a community-based school, we will welcome all cultures and ethnicities, community stakeholders, and constructive ideas to help promote the success of the students and the establishment of a solid college-going culture. Educators will work collaboratively with each other and community partners to deliver locally designed and enhanced lessons, which utilize proven instructional strategies and theory. The success of the school will rely on the commitment and inspiring partnerships formed between the focused student body, passionate staff, skilled faculty, dedicated parents, and involved community members.

Vision Statement

By recognizing the importance of the middle school within the “pipeline” of schools, CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture has an overarching vision to connect the highly successful arts programs operating at the elementary and high school levels, to further enhance arts education, and to increase the retention rates of the neighborhood students in our local schools. Our teachers and school leadership will actively collaborate with the elementary school leaders who will prepare students in the years before matriculation to our middle school. We will also foster synergistic relationships with the lead teachers and administrators of the small learning communities of the local high school which our students will attend.

Additionally, the vision of CRMS #7 School of Arts and Culture places the individual child as the primary focus, where all stakeholders strive to help students to both articulate and achieve their learning goals. Teachers and school leadership will promote the highest expectations and success of all members of the school community to collectively develop the students into lifelong learners. Students will benefit from the personal learning environments fostered by the dedication of teachers who work cooperatively to promote academics across the curriculum through arts and humanities. Connecting the stakeholders of CRMS#7 to the network of local community resources, and elementary and high schools through authentic, meaningful interaction will help to establish this institution as the flagship educational complex and model of excellence for the Los Angeles Unified School District. Purposeful collaboration with teachers, parents, and school leadership from all the schools within the feeder pattern will provide a seamless transition for students as they progress from Pre-Kindergarten through high school graduation and beyond.

1b. Student Population

CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture is one of three independent small schools that will serve approximately 440 students of the 1320 total student population on the middle school campus. The complete educational complex of CRMS #7 is designed to primarily relieve the overcrowded, year-round student population of George Washington Carver Middle School, as well as slightly impacting the student population at Los Angeles Academy Middle School. Similar to the student population of the local middle schools being relieved by CRMS #7, 95% of students who will attend the school are of Hispanic background, with the remaining 5% being of African-American descent. Over 87% of students are classified as economically disadvantaged, and therefore CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture will participate as a school-wide Title One site with all students receiving free or reduced price lunches. Included with the incoming sixth graders and the relieved population of seventh and eighth graders are approximately 10% of the student population classified as eligible for services provided through Special Education. Additionally, special services will be required to meet the needs of the English Learner population, comprising 37% of the student body, as well as the approximately 5% of students designated as Gifted and Talented (see Attachments 2-3 for demographic information on the local middle schools).

1c. Instructional Program

One feature of the instructional program at CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture that will enhance student achievement across all subject areas is the focus on providing a phased in introduction to the secondary grade levels. The middle school will employ several multiplesubject credentialed teachers to service the needs of the sixth graders, as they make the dramatic switch from the self-contained classroom of the elementary school years. Sixth graders will be scheduled in two core classes that will not have a passing period. A teacher will be assigned to a group of students for two consecutive periods, teaching English Language Arts and Social Studies, or Mathematics and Science. Aside from Physical Education, the teachers who are assigned to the sixth graders for their core periods will also teach the same groups for their electives. In this model, a sixth grade student will only have three or four different teachers for the seven scheduled periods, further personalizing their instruction. The seventh and eighth grade schedules will still have the core period model for English Language Arts and Social Studies, and Mathematics and Science, but they will be exposed to a greater variety of teachers during the day, mimicking a high school schedule. Additionally, the opportunity to loop with core students from the seventh to eighth grade year in the core classes will be supported by the school leadership team.

The instructional program at CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture will embrace the arts as a vehicle to connect themes across all curricular areas. Through a partnership with the Music Center of Los Angeles, artists-in-residence will work collaboratively with teams of teachers to help introduce universal themes of art which are presented in the units of study across all subjects. Teams of teachers will work collaboratively with professional artists to align the pacing plan of lessons during the semester to optimize student achievement and understanding. The elective sequence of classes unique to the middle school will prepare students to enter a rigorous Visual and Performing Arts curriculum at the high school level.

Three strands of elective classes will directly connect to the programs at Thomas Jefferson High School's small learning community, Creative Arts and Expression. Students interested in the visual arts will explore three years of electives, beginning with a study of Art History and an introduction to visual arts in sixth grade. In seventh grade, the students will continue to explore the visual arts through different media, and in eighth grade students will focus on public art as they develop a service learning project to address a need in the community. Students who are interested in theater arts will follow a similar pathway through their elective sequence, with the

first two years focused on developing the craft and skill of the theater arts. These students will dedicate their eighth grade year to developing service learning projects and public performances at the local elementary schools and other community events. Finally, CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture intends to build an elective sequence in music that will feed directly into the historical music program of Thomas Jefferson High School and the innovative vision of director Edgar Torres.

1d. School Culture

CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture will emphasize a college-going culture which will be evident in the attitude of the students, the teaching philosophy, and the physical environment of the school. Through a weekly seminar class, scheduled during the Tuesday Flex period, teachers will be able to lay a foundation or enhance the students' understanding of preparing themselves for a college education. Students will reflect on how the actions they make today will eventually lead to their readiness for college and careers in the very near future. The teachers will plan with the end of the semester or year in mind when addressing the curricular or academic needs of the students; however, the teaching philosophy at the school will emphasize a much longer term range of educational goals. Infused within lessons will be opportunities to explore the services provided by the local universities and college students to increase the interactions the middle school students will have with institutions of higher education. For example, teachers will stack the standards presented in a Social Studies, English Language Arts, and Art History class by visiting a local university and participating in a student led tour of an art exhibit which may be aligned to a particular unit of study. Finally, the hallways, common areas, and classroom doors of CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture will be decorated with college themed posters and logos, reflecting not only the alma mater of the teachers, but of schools across the country.

Even though school uniforms will be adopted by each of the three schools on the CRMS#7 campus, students will participate in regularly scheduled college attire on Fridays to further promote the students' exposure to college life. Within the locally designed curriculum of the seminar class, students will be able to calculate their expected college graduation date, and then personally backward plan the steps they must fulfill to make this dream a reality. The middle school students will even begin to explore the options of majors and minors, based on their subjects or careers of interest. Just as students will be able to explain their current Grade Point Average to one another or a campus visitor with great confidence, they will be able to articulate their projected graduation year and degree with ease. Students at CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture will have a detailed understanding of the A through G high school graduation requirements prior to their culmination from eighth grade. Students will also meet with student leaders from each of the small learning communities at Thomas Jefferson High School to help them identify the sequence of classes to take when they leave middle school and develop a four year plan for their high school courses.

Establishing a school culture that is conducive to student and adult success will be a priority that cannot be overlooked in the first months of opening CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture. Actively engaging the teachers and other adult stakeholders in one-on-one conversations, as well as group vision and team building exercises will be critical. The instructional leadership team will embrace the organizing strategies of their principal community partner, One-LA, to help nurture this culture of understanding (see section 9). Emphasis will also be placed on creating traditions or embracing the activities unique to the school that will be celebrated as the history of the school develops.

1e. Accountability and Performance Goals

Although not required by PSC Request for Proposals, the CRMS #7 School of Arts and Culture decided to include their initial draft of this section.

It is well known that the secondary schools in urban school districts and neighborhoods such as South Los Angeles have historically struggled to compete with other areas on the numerous testing and accountability measures. However, the school leadership of CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture whole-heartedly believes that the trend will stop at a school site which embraces the success that is occurring at the local feeder schools and inspires students to be driven to achieve in their future academic endeavors.

Within the feeder pattern of Jefferson schools, there is a dramatic decline in the accountability measures as students move from elementary school to high school. For example, at the local elementary schools the average percent proficient and advanced is 35.6% on the English Language Arts section of the CST, and 46.5% on the Mathematics section. At the local middle school, the same percentages fall to 15.5% and 15.6%. By the time the students enter high school, the percentage scoring proficient and advanced on the English Language Arts sections remains stable at 15.3%, while the percentage on the Mathematics sections drops to 2.1% (see Attachments 2-7). A goal of the staff at CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture will be to not only halt the downward trend of test scores as students enter the secondary level, but to build upon the student achievement that the elementary schools are experiencing.

Furthermore, as the school will strive to meet the Annual Yearly Progress goals established by No Child Left Behind, the instructional leaders also intend to exceed the District performance levels on accountability measures such as the CST, which is currently at 43.4% proficient and advanced on English Language Arts, and 48.0% on Mathematics. Other measurements of accountability include growth in student achievement on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT), periodic assessments, and locally designed summative assessments.

1f. Community Analysis and Context

CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture will serve a section of South Los Angeles located in a neighborhood just northeast of the historic Central Avenue Jazz District. The community holds onto a rich African-American tradition, even though dramatic demographic changes have occurred in the past three decades. Currently, more than 90% of the students in the local schools are of Latino descent, with the majority entering the school system classified as an English Language Learner. A major obstacle to the upward mobility of the residents of this community continues to be the level of education of the adult citizens. Those who work are almost exclusively generating their income from blue collar jobs in the nearby clothing factories or other service industries. A recent study by Healthycity.org shows that of the adults age 25 and older, nearly 75% did not finish high school, and less than 5% have a two- or four-year college degree.

The members of the writing team for CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture are deeply connected to the community through either being raised in the neighborhood, or having worked nearly exclusively at a variety of school levels in the immediate area. An area of focus for the writing team is to provide the youngsters who will attend the middle school with positive role models and exposure to a world beyond the confines of the 110, 10, 5, and 105 Freeways. Three of the team members were born and/or raised in the neighborhood surrounding the school, attending all local LAUSD schools. All of the other main contributors of this proposal have served the community in several capacities at a number of elementary and secondary schools within the

Jefferson cluster of schools. Needless to say, experience and desire to help the community are qualifications of all the team members.

Seeing the importance of connecting the energy and successful programs at the other schools within the feeder pattern of schools led the writing team to use the metaphor of a “pipeline” to describe the family of schools in the neighborhood. Using CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture as a hub of activity between the different levels of schools, the instructional leaders understand the value of exploring the programs succeeding at the elementary and high school level. It is imperative that the voices of educators, students, and parents are heard throughout the process of the proposal development. The members of this writing team have actively engaged with and participated in large and small group meetings, and individual discussions with parents, teachers, and administrators at nearly all the schools impacted by the opening of CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture. The concerns and wishes of the elementary level parents and teachers were of particular interest because many students within the local area choose to not attend the public middle schools. They opt for the charter or private school alternatives. The writing team intends to put the programs that the constituents want in a school in place at CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture, giving parents an incentive to keep their children in our school system. 8

1g. Leadership

The leadership team of CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture will look more like the Round Table of Camelot, where all have equal voice, as opposed to a top down model which is traditionally adopted by many business and school models. In the center of any of the leadership team’s decisions, all stakeholders will place the students first, avoiding all adult-based agenda policies to be initiated. Key stakeholders will include the voices of the parents, via the English Learner and Compensatory Education Advisory Councils (ELAC and CEAC). Parents and community members will also be part of the decision-making process as members of the School Site Council and School Governance Councils. Teachers who are hired to work at CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture will be asked to participate on at least two support teams or councils, taking a leadership role in at least one. The teams that have been established at this time include the Safety Team, Language Appraisal Team (LAT), Coordination of Services Team (COST), Students with Disabilities Team (SWD), Data Team, and Instructional Leadership Team (see Attachment 8). Additionally, the Principal, Counselor, and other support staff will participate in a variety of leadership roles, as needed.

The instructional leader who has been identified to be the principal of CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture is Mr. Thomas Welch. An extensive list of experience in the local neighborhood, credentials, education, high recommendations, and history working with community partners makes Mr. Welch the ideal candidate to introduce the middle school to the district. His vision for a successful school in South Los Angeles, and the support network of highly qualified teachers, influential community leaders, dedicated parents, and university students will provide an additional intangible positive impact on the new middle school. Nine years of experience at the elementary school level has allowed Mr. Welch to build excellent relationships with the elementary school leadership and teachers in the neighborhood. Furthermore, his three years of experience working at Thomas Jefferson High School as the Bilingual Coordinator has opened the potential for numerous symbiotic relationships with the administrators, teachers, and students.

1h. School Governance Model

The leadership team of CRMS #7 School of Arts and Culture has selected to write a proposal following the Pilot school model primarily due to the increased autonomy of staffing teachers and administrators. As mentioned in a famous quote by American cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change

the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” By embracing the ideals of this great American, the leadership team recognizes the unique opportunity of writing a plan and opening a school with a small group of individuals dedicated to transforming the educational landscape of their community. The provisions delineated within the Pilot school model will enable the leadership team and teachers to overcome some of the historical barriers to establishing a highly successful school, such as the issues of “must-place” teachers and the adoption of culturally “irrelevant” curriculum. The structures within the Pilot school model that will promote the true transformation of a middle school in South Los Angeles include, but are not limited to, the complete autonomy over staffing, budget, curriculum selection, assessment development, school governance, and scheduling.

In exchange for the increased autonomy provided by the Pilot school model, the leadership team also understands that the Los Angeles Unified School District will demand a higher level of accountability and expectations of student performance on the Annual Measurable Accountability Objectives (AMAOs). However, by being able to organically create a school leadership team and meticulously hire the educators who make the perfect fit for the vision of the CRMS #7 School of Arts and Culture, the principal will not need to train the adults to construct a relational culture. Inviting educators who already embrace the ideals of the school to join the family of teachers and students at the middle school will enhance the collaborative nature of this small school model. By working together and building upon the authentic relationships between all stakeholders at the middle school, meeting the increased accountability measures will be an attainable goal.



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

Business and Technology School

Local District 5 (Tommy Welch)

Executive Summary

Central Region Middle School #7B:
Business and Technology School
Pilot School

Section 1: Executive Summary

The CRMS#7 School of Arts and Culture and CRMS#7 Business and Technology School are applying in partnership with Synergy Kinetic Academy, a charter school. Each of our teams hopes to operate one of three small learning communities on Central Region Middle School #7 (CRMS#7). If selected, we agree to work collaboratively to operate the entire campus so that all students at all three schools will attain high levels of academic success.

1a. Mission Statement

The mission of CRMS#7 Business and Technology School is to nurture students who are intrinsically motivated to prepare themselves for college and their future careers. By integrating relevant thematic units and real world applications through an emphasis on business and technology, students will understand civic responsibility and the impact they can make on the global network as genuine agents of change.

Designed as a community-based school, we will welcome all cultures and ethnicities, community stakeholders, and constructive ideas to help promote the success of the students and the establishment of a solid college-going culture. Educators will work collaboratively with each other and community partners to deliver locally designed and enhanced lessons, which utilize proven instructional strategies and theory. The success of the school will rely on the commitment and inspiring partnerships formed between the focused student body, passionate staff, skilled faculty, dedicated parents, and involved community members.

Vision Statement

By recognizing the importance of the middle school within the “pipeline” of schools, CRMS#7 Business and Technology School has an overarching vision to connect the elements of technological and economic programs operating at the elementary and high school levels, to further enhance arts education, and to increase the retention rates of the neighborhood students in our local schools. Our teachers and school leadership will actively collaborate with the elementary school leaders who will prepare students in the years before matriculation to our middle school. We will also foster synergistic relationships with the lead teachers and administrators of the small learning communities of the local high school which our students will attend.

Additionally, the vision of CRMS #7 Business and Technology School places the individual child as the primary focus, where all stakeholders strive to help students to both articulate and achieve 5 their learning goals. Teachers and school leadership will promote the highest expectations and success of all members of the school community to collectively develop the students into lifelong learners. Students will benefit from the personal learning environments fostered by the dedication of teachers who work cooperatively to promote academics across the curriculum through business and technology. Connecting the stakeholders of CRMS#7 to the network of local community resources, and elementary and high schools through authentic, meaningful interaction will help to establish this institution as the flagship educational complex and model of excellence for the Los Angeles Unified School District. Purposeful collaboration with teachers, parents, and school leadership from all the schools within the feeder pattern will

provide a seamless transition for students as they progress from Pre-Kindergarten through high school graduation and beyond.

1b. Student Population

CRMS#7 Business and Technology School is one of three independent small schools that will serve approximately 440 students of the 1320 total student population on the middle school campus. The complete educational complex of CRMS #7 is designed to primarily relieve the overcrowded, year-round student population of George Washington Carver Middle School, as well as slightly impacting the student population at Los Angeles Academy Middle School. Similar to the student population of the local middle schools being relieved by CRMS #7, 95% of students who will attend the school are of Hispanic background, with the remaining 5% being of African-American descent. Over 87% of students are classified as economically disadvantaged, and therefore CRMS#7 Business and Technology School will participate as a school-wide Title One site with all students receiving free or reduced price lunches. Included with the incoming sixth graders and the relieved population of seventh and eighth graders are approximately 10% of the student population classified as eligible for services provided through Special Education. Additionally, special services will be required to meet the needs of the English Learner population, comprising 37% of the student body, as well as the approximately 5% of students designated as Gifted and Talented (see Attachments 2-3 for demographic information on the local middle schools).

1c. Instructional Program

One feature of the instructional program at CRMS#7 Business and Technology School that will enhance student achievement across all subject areas is the focus on providing a phased in introduction to the secondary grade levels. The middle school will employ several multiple subject credentialed teachers to service the needs of the sixth graders, as they make the dramatic switch from the self-contained classroom of the elementary school years. Sixth graders will be scheduled in two core classes that will not have a passing period. A teacher will be assigned to a group of students for two consecutive periods, teaching English Language Arts and Social Studies, or Mathematics and Science. Aside from Physical Education, the teachers who are assigned to the sixth graders for their core periods will also teach the same groups for their electives. In this model, a sixth grade student will only have three or four different teachers for the seven scheduled periods, further personalizing their instruction. The seventh and eighth grade schedules will still have the core period model for English Language Arts and Social Studies, and Mathematics and Science, but they will be exposed to a greater variety of teachers during the day, mimicking a high school schedule. Additionally, the opportunity to loop with core students from the seventh to eighth grade year in the core classes will be supported by the school leadership team.

The instructional program at CRMS#7 Business and Technology School will embrace the business and technology as a vehicle to connect themes across all curricular areas. Through partnerships with the local businesses of Los Angeles, they will work collaboratively with teams of teachers to help introduce universal themes of business and technology which are presented in the units of study across all subjects. Teams of teachers will work collaboratively with entrepreneurs to align the pacing plan of lessons during the semester to optimize student achievement and understanding. Through the use of technology, with its varied aspects and applications, each student will have the opportunities and challenges that will allow them to successfully prepare for their future. In the 21st century, understanding, creating, and utilizing technology will be an integral part of virtually every aspect of daily life. The elective sequence

of classes unique to the middle school will prepare students to enter a rigorous curriculum at the high school level.

These strands of elective classes will directly connect to the programs at Thomas Jefferson High School's small learning community, Academy of Business and Communication (ABC). Students interested in business and technology will explore three years of electives, beginning with a study of global economy and an introduction to technology in sixth grade. In seventh grade, the students will continue to explore the national economy through different media and in eighth grade students will focus on local economy as they develop a service learning project to address a need in the community. Students who are interested in technology will follow a similar pathway through their elective sequence, which will provide opportunities for students to master basic and advanced technical, academic, and job-related skills. The utilization of technology will provide innovative methods to utilize higher thinking and problem solving skills. This will foster innovative critical thinking through the acquisition of research and development skills. This will provide for the acquisition of evolving computer/technology proficiencies. These students will dedicate their eighth grade year to developing service learning projects in local elementary schools and in the community. Finally, CRMS#7 Business and Technology School intends to build an elective sequence that will feed directly into the Academy of Business and Communication of Thomas Jefferson High School.

1d. School Culture

CRMS#7 Business and Technology School will emphasize a college-going culture which will be evident in the attitude of the students, the teaching philosophy, and the physical environment of the school. Through a weekly seminar class, scheduled during the Tuesday Flex period, teachers will be able to lay a foundation or enhance the students' understanding of preparing themselves for a college education. Students will reflect on how the actions they make today will eventually lead to their readiness for college and careers in the very near future. The teachers will plan with the end of the semester or year in mind when addressing the curricular or academic needs of the students; however, the teaching philosophy at the school will emphasize a much longer term range of educational goals. Infused within lessons will be opportunities to explore the services provided by the local universities and college students to increase the interactions the middle 7 school students will have with institutions of higher education. For example, teachers will stack the standards presented in a Social Studies, English Language Arts, and Economics class by visiting a local business and participating in an employee led tour of a component of the business which may be aligned to a particular unit of study. Finally, the hallways, common areas, and classroom doors of CRMS#7 Business and Technology School will be decorated with college themed posters and logos, reflecting not only the alma mater of the teachers, but of schools across the country.

Even though school uniforms will be adopted by each of the three schools on the CRMS#7 campus, students will participate in regularly scheduled college attire on Fridays to further promote the students' exposure to college life. Within the locally designed curriculum of the seminar class, students will be able to calculate their expected college graduation date, and then personally backward plan the steps they must fulfill to make this dream a reality. The middle school students will even begin to explore the options of majors and minors, based on their subjects or careers of interest. Just as students will be able to explain their current Grade Point Average to one another or a campus visitor with great confidence, they will be able to articulate their projected graduation year and degree with ease. Students at CRMS#7 Business and Technology School will have a detailed understanding of the A through G high school graduation requirements prior to their culmination from eighth grade. Students will also meet with student leaders from each of the small learning communities at Thomas Jefferson High

School to help them identify the sequence of classes to take when they leave middle school and develop a four year plan for their high school courses.

Establishing a school culture that is conducive to student and adult success will be a priority that cannot be overlooked in the first months of opening CRMS#7 Business and Technology School. Actively engaging the teachers and other adult stakeholders in one-on-one conversations, as well as group vision and team building exercises will be critical. The instructional leadership team will embrace the organizing strategies of their principal community partner, One-LA, to help nurture this culture of understanding (see section 9). Emphasis will also be placed on creating traditions or embracing the activities unique to the school that will be celebrated as the history of the school develops.

1e. Accountability and Performance Goals

Although not required by PSC Request for Proposals, the CRMS #7 Business and Technology School decided to include their initial draft of this section.

It is well known that the secondary schools in urban school districts and neighborhoods such as South Los Angeles have historically struggled to compete with other areas on the numerous testing and accountability measures. However, the school leadership of CRMS#7 Business and Technology School whole-heartedly believes that the trend will stop at a school site which embraces the success that is occurring at the local feeder schools and inspires students to be driven to achieve in their future academic endeavors.

Within the feeder pattern of Jefferson schools, there is a dramatic decline in the accountability measures as students move from elementary school to high school. For example, at the local elementary schools the average percent proficient and advanced is 35.6% on the English8 Language Arts section of the CST, and 46.5% on the Mathematics section. At the local middle school, the same percentages fall to 15.5% and 15.6%. By the time the students enter high school, the percentage scoring proficient and advanced on the English Language Arts sections remains stable at 15.3%, while the percentage on the Mathematics sections drops to 2.1% (see Attachments 2-7). A goal of the staff at CRMS#7 Business and Technology School will be to not only halt the downward trend of test scores as students enter the secondary level, but to build upon the student achievement that the elementary schools are experiencing.

Furthermore, as the school will strive to meet the Annual Yearly Progress goals established by No Child Left Behind, the instructional leaders also intend to exceed the District performance levels on accountability measures such as the CST, which is currently at 43.4% proficient and advanced on English Language Arts, and 48.0% on Mathematics. Other measurements of accountability include growth in student achievement on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT), periodic assessments, and locally designed summative assessments.

1f. Community Analysis and Context

CRMS#7 Business and Technology School will serve a section of South Los Angeles located in a neighborhood just northeast of the historic Central Avenue Jazz District. The community holds onto a rich African-American tradition, even though dramatic demographic changes have occurred in the past three decades. Currently, more than 90% of the students in the local schools are of Latino descent, with the majority entering the school system classified as an English Language Learner. A major obstacle to the upward mobility of the residents of this community continues to be the level of education of the adult citizens. Those who work are almost

exclusively generating their income from blue collar jobs in the nearby clothing factories or other service industries. A recent study by Healthycity.org shows that of the adults age 25 and older, nearly 75% did not finish high school, and less than 5% have a two- or four-year college degree.

The members of the writing team for CRMS#7 Business and Technology School are deeply connected to the community through either being raised in the neighborhood, or having worked nearly exclusively at a variety of school levels in the immediate area. An area of focus for the writing team is to provide the youngsters who will attend the middle school with positive role models and exposure to a world beyond the confines of the 110, 10, 5, and 105 Freeways. Three of the team members were born and/or raised in the neighborhood surrounding the school, attending all local LAUSD schools. All of the other main contributors of this proposal have served the community in several capacities at a number of elementary and secondary schools within the Jefferson cluster of schools. Needless to say, experience and desire to help the community are qualifications of all the team members.

Seeing the importance of connecting the energy and successful programs at the other schools within the feeder pattern of schools led the writing team to use the metaphor of a “pipeline” to describe the family of schools in the neighborhood. Using CRMS#7 Business and Technology School as a hub of activity between the different levels of schools, the instructional leaders understand the value of exploring the programs succeeding at the elementary and high school level. It is imperative that the voices of educators, students, and parents are heard throughout the process of the proposal development. The members of this writing team have actively engaged with and participated in large and small group meetings, and individual discussions with parents, teachers, and administrators at nearly all the schools impacted by the opening of CRMS#7 Business and Technology School. The concerns and wishes of the elementary level parents and teachers were of particular interest because many students within the local area choose to not attend the public middle schools. They opt for the charter or private school alternatives. The writing team intends to put the programs that the constituents want in a school in place at CRMS#7 Business and Technology School, giving parents an incentive to keep their children in our school system.

1g. Leadership

The leadership team of CRMS#7 Business and Technology School will look more like the Round Table of Camelot, where all have equal voice, as opposed to a top down model which is traditionally adopted by many business and school models. In the center of any of the leadership team’s decisions, all stakeholders will place the students first, avoiding all adult-based agenda policies to be initiated. Key stakeholders will include the voices of the parents, via the English Learner and Compensatory Education Advisory Councils (ELAC and CEAC). Parents and community members will also be part of the decision-making process as members of the School Site Council and School Governance Councils. Teachers who are hired to work at CRMS#7 Business and Technology School will be asked to participate on at least two support teams or councils, taking a leadership role in at least one. The teams that have been established at this time include the Safety Team, Language Appraisal Team (LAT), Coordination of Services Team (COST), Students with Disabilities Team (SWD), Data Team, and Instructional Leadership Team (see Attachment 8). Additionally, the Principal, Counselor, and other support staff will participate in a variety of leadership roles, as needed.

The instructional leader who has been identified to be the principal of CRMS#7 is Mr. Hugo Carlos. An extensive list of experience in the local neighborhood, credentials, education, high recommendations, and history working with community partners makes Hugo Carlos the ideal candidate to introduce the middle school to the district. Mr. Carlos was born and raised in South

Los Angeles, just blocks away from the school site of CRMS#7. He attended local elementary schools, including 32nd Street School, Trinity Street School, and 28th Street School. Mr. Carlos began teaching elementary grades at Hoover Elementary School in 1996, commuting from his original South Los Angeles neighborhood where he bought his first home. After teaching for six years, at Hoover Street School, he became the math coach and English Learner Coordinator. His first administrative job was at Harmony Elementary School in 2005 as the Assistant Principal, Elementary Instructional Specialist (APEIS). After two years, he transitioned to Grant Elementary School as the Categorical Programs Coordinator. He subsequently returned as APEIS and Intervention Support Coordinator at Ninth Street Elementary School. Mr. Carlos has experience working with secondary students through his participation in Thomas Jefferson High School's 8th grade Summer Bridge Program in 2010. Currently, he is the Elementary Access to Core Expert at Local District 6. Mr. Carlos has the experience and credentials to lead a successful school in his home neighborhood. His vision for a successful school in South Los Angeles, and the support network of highly qualified teachers, influential community leaders, dedicated parents, and university students will provide an additional intangible positive impact on the new middle school.

1h. School Governance Model

The leadership team of CRMS #7 Business and Technology School has selected to write a proposal following the Pilot school model primarily due to the increased autonomy of staffing teachers and administrators. As mentioned in a famous quote by American cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." By embracing the ideals of this great American, the leadership team recognizes the unique opportunity of writing a plan and opening a school with a small group of individuals dedicated to transforming the educational landscape of their community. The provisions delineated within the Pilot school model will enable the leadership team and teachers to overcome some of the historical barriers to establishing a highly successful school, such as the issues of "must-place" teachers and the adoption of culturally "irrelevant" curriculum. The structures within the Pilot school model that will promote the true transformation of a middle school in South Los Angeles include, but are not limited to, the complete autonomy over staffing, budget, curriculum selection, assessment development, school governance, and scheduling.

In exchange for the increased autonomy provided by the Pilot school model, the leadership team also understands that the Los Angeles Unified School District will demand a higher level of accountability and expectations of student performance on the Annual Measurable Accountability Objectives (AMAOs). However, by being able to organically create a school leadership team and meticulously hire the educators who make the perfect fit for the vision of the CRMS #7 Business and Technology School, the principal will not need to train the adults to construct a relational culture. Inviting educators who already embrace the ideals of the school to join the family of teachers and students at the middle school will enhance the collaborative nature of this small school model. By working together and building upon the authentic relationships between all stakeholders at the middle school, meeting the increased accountability measures will be an attainable goal.



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE MOTION

Synergy Kinetic Academy

Synergy Academies

Executive Summary

LAUSD Public School Choice 2.0 Proposal for
Synergy Kinetic Academy
for Central Region Middle School (CRMS) #7

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Executive Summary

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 Kinetic Academy is applying in partnership with the CRMS #7 School of Arts and Culture and CRMS #7 Business and Technology School. Each of our teams hopes to operate one of three small learning communities on Central Region Middle School #7 (CRMS#7). If selected, we agree to work collaboratively to operate the entire campus so that all students at all three schools will attain high levels of academic success.

Synergy Kinetic Academy follows in the instructional footsteps of its predecessor school, 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 prestigious 2010 National Blue Ribbon Award. This is the highest honor that an American public school can earn, and Synergy Charter Academy is the first elementary school in the history of South Los Angeles to ever 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.

Like its successful elementary school predecessor, Synergy Kinetic Academy's 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 teaches a complete, rigorous, standards-based, college-preparatory curriculum, and has an emphasis on STEM education (science, technology, engineering, and math).

Synergy Kinetic 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 Kinetic Academy helps its inner city middle school students gain educational KINETIC energy as they make the move towards college.

1a. Prompt #2. 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.

Synergy Kinetic 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 Kinetic Academy serves 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 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 is the same team founded Synergy Kinetic 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 cofounded Synergy Kinetic Academy and currently serves as the Principal. CAO 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 of both campuses. Russell Lawton is a former Literacy Coach for LAUSD. He is currently the Assistant Principal at

Synergy Charter Academy, and he will be the new Principal for Synergy Kinetic Academy in 2011.

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.

The deceptively simple diagram to the right by Richard Mayer in Applying the Science of Learning elegantly captures Synergy Kinetic 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 Kinetic Academy will mostly use existing, commercially available curriculum, and it places a high value on developing master teachers to deliver that curriculum. Synergy Kinetic 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. Briefly explain the research base that demonstrates that the identified strategies will be successful in improving academic achievement for the 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 middle school and 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 Kinetic 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 Kinetic 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 Kinetic Academy creates a culture in which academic achievement is valued and celebrated, and students are taught about college. For example, a tradition at Synergy Kinetic Academy 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 Kinetic Academy motivates 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 in 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 Kinetic Academy values 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 promotes a safe campus in which interactions between and among students and adults demonstrate a high level of respect. The school promotes 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 Kinetic 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 Kinetic 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 Kinetic 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 Kinetic 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 Kinetic 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 ScienCenter are located within one mile, and students have been to theatres such as the Ahmanson Theatre and Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

Programs: Synergy Kinetic 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 Kinetic 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 Kinetic 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 Kinetic Academy serves in the same neighborhood and intends to uphold the tradition established by its predecessor.

Synergy believes that when community members are fully informed, they are as fully empowered as anyone else to do good. Therefore, Synergy Kinetic Academy has already participated in community outreach activities, including those organized by LAUSD and those the Synergy has initiated on its own. Meetings were held on October 25 and November 23.

If Synergy Kinetic 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. Provide an overview of the proposed school's governance structure and leadership team.

As a charter school, Synergy Kinetic Academy is 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. If a leader has not been identified, speak to the key attributes the potential leader should possess.

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.

Russell Lawton joined Synergy Academies in the summer of 2007 as a first grade teacher and is now the Assistant Principal. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education. Russell began his teaching career as a teacher in LAUSD and also served as a Literacy Coach with LAUSD.

Russell Lawton has already been identified as the principal for Synergy Kinetic Academy. Mr. Lawton is well qualified to lead the school because of his 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 Charters 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

Youth Policy Institute

Executive Summary

Public School Choice

11. Executive Summary

The Youth Policy Institute is proposing to open a small community-driven middle school at the Central Middle School #7 site. This Network Partner school will serve approximately 450 grade 6-8 students and will open in September 2011. The middle school is located near the Full-Service Community Schools program led by the Youth Policy Institute, which also includes one of YPI's direct-funded charter middle schools - Monsenor Oscar Romero Charter Middle School. YPI received one of only 10 grants awarded nationwide by the U.S. Department of Education in 2008 to implement a full-service community schools model in this community. The small middle school will benefit from additional funding and resources that YPI and partners bring to the school and community. YPI is also partnering with multimedia experts like Marco Torres, professional development experts, a wide range of community-based agencies for wrap-around services, and experienced middle school administrators and teachers. Please see the case study below for an example of YPI support for a Round I Public School Choice school awarded in 2010. YPI currently operates two charter middle schools and partners with LAUSD in operating the pilot middle school below.

Case Study: YPI and Public School Choice

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) selected the Youth Policy Institute (YPI) to partner in operating the San Fernando Institute for Applied Media (SFiAM) in the first round of Public School Choice. YPI then worked with parents, teachers, and the community to bring in resources. Since being selected in February 2010, YPI has raised **\$1.46 million** in funding specifically targeted to the school.

- YPI received one of only 21 planning grants awarded by the U.S. Department of Education for a **Promise Neighborhood** providing cradle-to-career resources for SFiAM families.
- A Carol M. White Physical Education Program grant from the U.S. Department of Education will provide **fitness and nutrition** activities over the next three years for SFiAM families.
- A **Full-Service Community Schools** grant from the U.S. Department of Education will target SFiAM with comprehensive wrap-around services over the next five years.
- YPI received \$5.6 million in September 2010 to open 80 **public computer centers**. Funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce, this initiative will provide SFiAM with a state-of-the-art school computer lab, high speed broadband access and educational technology services.
- YPI opened a center for our **Health Careers job training program** just blocks from the school. YPI works to prepare parents at SFiAM for high-wage health career jobs.
- The **SFiAM Bridge Program** operated by YPI during summer 2010 for 100 students offered academic support in the morning and enrichment services in the afternoon for students.
- YPI is operating an **afterschool program** for 80 students daily at SFiAM that provides tutoring, enrichment, and recreation services for students and families.
- With support from Time Warner Cable, YPI opened a **neighborhood computer lab and community center** for SFiAM families at the nearby Library Plaza.
- YPI's **Family Technology Project** is providing computer literacy and home computers for all sixth-grade SFiAM families.

a. State the mission, vision and core beliefs of the proposed school as well as the school's values

The vision for Central Middle School #7 is to create a place of learning that empowers students to become functional and prepared communicators for the demanding global requirements of the future. YPI will build on all that has been learned at Bert Corona Charter Middle School, Monsenor Oscar Romero Charter Middle School, and the San Fernando Institute for Applied Media pilot middle school, as well as at the many middle schools YPI partners with through its myriad of programs. The middle school will provide

a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which every member will develop communications, technological, and leadership skills to foster self-confidence and personal growth. Emphasis will be placed on challenging students to develop problem-solving and interpersonal skills to succeed in the 21st Century through a multimedia focus to this small middle school. This will link with the strong technology resources provided by the Youth Policy Institute for families in the target community.

The school will equip urban students in grades 6-8 for academic success and active community participation. The school is located in Central Los Angeles, an area fraught with poverty and academically struggling students. The majority of students attending schools in this area come from predominantly Latino families where Spanish is spoken in the home, and includes a substantial number of Central American immigrants. A very high number of area public school students are eligible for federal free or reduced meals, indicative of the high poverty levels in the area. The middle school seeks to close the achievement gap for these students by providing clear and high expectations for all students in a personalized and supportive learning environment that recognizes students' accomplishments, family school-community partnerships and service, and integrated technology in the classroom.

The mission of Central Middle School #7 is to prepare students for academic success in middle school while preparing them for high school and post-secondary education. The school seeks to prepare students to be responsible and active participants in their community, and enable students to become lifelong learners. Students at the middle school will become active citizens characterized by the ideals of a diverse and democratic society. Our students will provide service to their community, take responsibility for their own learning, and develop the habits of mind that will empower them to be successful in middle school, while preparing for high school and college.

b. Describe the student population that your school will serve

Based on average data from Central Middle School #7's two relieved schools (George Washington Carver Middle School and Los Angeles Academy Middle School), the school will include predominantly Latino student population (93%) with a small population of African American (7%) students. The majority will be economically disadvantaged (89% that qualify for the federal free and reduced price meal program, a leading indicator of family poverty). 12% will be special education students, and 37% will be English learners.

Mathematics is a challenging subject for students at the two relieved schools. On average, only 2% of the 8th grade students who took the General Mathematics exam passed at proficient and advanced levels. No student in either school scored at the advanced level in this subject. 8th grade students at Carver struggled in math with only 7% scoring proficient and advanced in Algebra I and 8% scoring at these levels in Geometry. On average, 84.10% of students scored below basic and far below basic on the General Mathematics exam last year. History and Social Science are also subjects of improvement for students from the two relieved schools. At Carver, only 8% of 8th grade students scored at proficient and advanced levels in History/Social Science.

The African American and Latino subgroups are representative of the larger school population, and the issues that have been identified are the same as the ones for all students. On average, only 9.5% of African American students in 6th grade scored proficient and advanced in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. Only 1.5% of African American 8th graders scored proficient and advanced in General Mathematics. At Carver, less than 10% of this student subgroup scored at these levels in ELA in each grade. 8.5% of African American students in 8th grade at the two schools scored proficient and advanced in History/Social Science. At Carver, only 5% scored at these levels in this subject and in science. The majority of students in the two relieved schools are Latino. Only 2% of Latino students in 8th grade scored proficient and advanced in General Mathematics. At Carver, less than 10% of this Latino subgroup scored at proficient and advanced levels in Algebra I, Geometry and History.

Few students with disabilities scored at proficient and advanced levels in all subjects across both relieved schools. Less than 5% of students with disabilities in grades 6, 7 and 8 scored at these levels in all subjects. On average, the percentage of all identified gifted students (including African American and

Latino) slightly decreased by less than one percentage point from the previous year, a trend that must be reversed as YPI opens and operates the small middle school.

The majority of students at this new school are projected to be economically disadvantaged, and math is a subject area with few economically disadvantaged students scoring at proficient and advanced levels. On average, only 1.5% of 8th graders in this subgroup at the two relieved schools scored at these levels in General Mathematics. Less than 10% of the economically disadvantaged 8th grade students at Carver attained proficient and advanced results in Algebra I, Geometry, and History.

Few English Learner students scored at proficient and advanced levels in all subjects at the relieved middle schools. On average, less than 5% of English Learner students in grades 6, 7 and 8 scored at these levels in all subjects: English Language Arts, Mathematics, General Mathematics, Algebra I, History and Science. No 8th grade English Learner at either school scored proficient and advanced in History. On average, the number of English Learners who scored proficient and advanced in English Language Arts slightly decreased one percentage point over the last five years (2005-2010). Less than 1% of students between the two relieved schools scored at these levels in this subject.

Based on these results, YPI expects and anticipates implementing with full support from the school community and neighborhood a community school that provides additional academic support in all subjects, but with particular focus on English Language Arts and Mathematics. The school will also provide broad support for families through "a comprehensive student and family plan regularly updated with needed services through the efforts of Case Managers and a broad community support system.

c. Provide an overview of the instructional program of the school

Central Middle School #7 will offer students an academically rich program incorporating the following characteristics:

- **Standards-Based Curriculum:** a rigorous education for all students in line with the California State Standards.
- **Family-Community-School Partnerships:** Central Middle School #7 actively engages families and the community in the life of the school, and students engage in community service.
- **Technology Integration:** By implementing technology with the curriculum, Central Middle School #7 ensures that students learn computer skills while pursuing academic goals.
- **Small Learning Communities:** Students are given the opportunity to work in small cohort groups throughout their three years at school, thereby increasing teacher-student interaction.
- **Interdisciplinary, Project-Based Curriculum:** Students will understand how subjects relate to each other while achieving proficiency in all core subjects and becoming critical thinkers. Teachers engage students by organizing curricula around central ideas, building on students' prior knowledge, and connecting learning to students' lives.
- **Culturally-Relevant Instruction:** Culturally relevant instruction is integrated into the instructional experience to increase the relevance of school in students' lives.

The state and national, and eventually the common core, standards for each core subject area provide a basic framework for instruction at the middle school. From this baseline, students will expand their knowledge, skills, and analysis through in-depth inquiry and exhibition projects. All students will be expected to create digital portfolios that demonstrate essential skills, critical thinking, and problem solving across disciplines. It is not enough that students obtain and retain factual knowledge. They must also develop the analytic skills and intellectual curiosity that will help create lifelong learners. Towards this end, students will develop strong "habits of mind." Throughout the curriculum, students will consider questions of evidence (how do we know what we know?); viewpoint (who is speaking?); connections and patterns (how are events/people/places connected?); supposition (what if? how might things have been different?); and meaning (why does this event, theory, or practice matter?).

The curriculum will continue to be guided by state and national standards. The guiding principles from the *Curriculum Frameworks for California Public Schools: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve*

(California Department of Education, 1994-2003) are incorporated by each of the core content areas. Course curricula will meet the objectives outlined in the *Content Standards/or California Public Schools: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve* (California Department of Education, 2001).

The ends will be learning goals enumerated in the California state standards as well as school designed outcomes. Curriculum, materials, and instructional activities considered primary resources are aligned to state standards. They are compatible with the school's emphasis on active learning strategies that reflect cognitive science research on developing conceptual understanding, and multiple assessments.

The curriculum for the first years of the school will include the following

- SOCIAL STUDIES: History Alive! from Teachers' Curriculum Institute
- MATHEMATICS: Pearson, Prentice Hall: Connected Math grades 6-8 and Algebra I
- SCIENCE: Science Education for Public Understanding Program, Lab Aids Inc.
- SPANISH: Holt, Rinehart & Winston: Adelante Level 1, En Camino Level 1B, Ven Conmigo Level 1
- LANGUAGE ARTS: Authentic literature choices; Holt, Rinehart & Winston's grammar books: English Workshop, 1st, 2nd & 3rd Courses; Houghton Mifflin Co., Great Source, vocabulary texts: Vocabulary for Achievement, 2nd and 3rd Course; Sadlier-Oxford's vocabulary texts: Vocabulary Workshop, Level F & G. The research-based reading program Success for All: Reading Edge will be used by all students each morning.

In addition, the school instructional program will provide technology integration, as well as instruction in art and art appreciation. Students and teachers will have ample access to technology for use in student learning, classroom instruction, data management, and communication with real-time access to student progress data for teachers, students, and their parents.

A reading support program for all students will be provided through the Reading Edge. A research-based program to meet the needs of young adolescent readers, this will be used during the first period of each day. All students are assessed and placed into a reading elective block based on their instructional level. If a 6th grade student with special learning needs or an English Language Learner is reading at the 3rd reading level based on the Gates-MacGinitie normed reference test he or she is assigned to a certificated teacher that is responsible for teaching reading at this level. If there is a 6th grade gifted student that is reading at the 9th grade reading level based on the Gates-MacGinitie, then he or she will have the opportunity to participate in an elective 9th grade Reading Edge Course.

d. Describe the school culture that your team envisions for the proposed school

YPI's vision for Central Middle School #7 is to prepare students for college and careers by providing saturation services based on the Full-Service Community Schools and Promise Neighborhood model so successfully implemented in programs such as the Harlem Children's Zone in New York as well as by YPI in communities that include Pico Union/Westlake and Pacoima. The school will provide youth with intellectual tools necessary to become successful students and active citizens. Through clear and high expectations for all students, a rigorous curriculum, a personalized learning environment, and family~school-community partnerships, YPI will help students overcome traditional barriers and empower them to succeed in middle school, while preparing them for high school and college. This will be done within the framework of a community model that provides services for all students and families at the school while working in close cooperation with other community and City partners to provide critical resources for students and families.

The middle school will embrace Culturally Relevant and Responsive Education (CRRE) in educating students. Defined as adjusting how we teach to the needs and experiences of students, it uses the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of students to make learning encounters more relevant and effective for them. This is a strong fit for the community school model YPI and partners will implement working with families. Research affirms that culture, teaching, and learning are interconnected and that school achievement increases to the extent that teaching employs the cultural referents of the students to whom it is directed (Gay, 2000).

YFI will partner with teachers and families to provide choice and culturally relevant instruction. The school will be small (serving 450 students in grades 6-8) with a technological vision to create a place of learning that empowers students to become functional and prepared communicators for the demanding global requirements of the future.

e. Discuss how your organization will set and annually update targets for the indicators in table below.

This information is to be provided by the Youth Policy Institute in the post-approval phase of the Public School Choice process, as determined by the Los Angeles Unified School District.

f. Describe the community that your proposed school will serve.

According to U.S. Census data (Nielsen Claritas 2010 Estimates) the zip code targeted by the school has 22% of the population making less than \$15,000 per year, compared to 15.95% in the City of Los Angeles. The median household income is \$32,919. 31.5% of all families living here are below the poverty line (compared to 15.6% for the City). 89.3% of the population is Hispanic, while 68.2% of the population 25 or older lacks even a high school diploma. 82.7% of residents speak a language other than English at home (predominantly Spanish, as is the case in 81% of these homes).

The school strongly needs the full-service community schools model YFI and partners will operate, which includes resources for family health and adult education. There are only .12 nonprofit organizations serving this area per one thousand people according to IRS submitted 990 forms (2006), much lower than is the norm for Los Angeles. Nearly a fifth of all pregnant women (19.6%) either do not get any pre-natal care or get it in the second trimester or later. 14,351 residents enroll in the Woman, Infants & Children (WIC) program. 83.5% of these WIC participants are below the federal poverty level. (PHFE WIC Data Mining Project, LA County WIC Data March 2010). 8.86% of all residents suffer from asthma and 20.9% of residents have been diagnosed with Diabetes. 57% of residents do not consume the recommend 5 helpings of fruit and vegetables per day needed for a healthy diet. 58.7% are overweight or obese (2005 California Health Interview Survey). 88.4% of children age 0-5 lack a licensed child care space (2009 California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division).

YFI has extensive experience with large human services projects serving Los Angeles and the targeted neighborhood. YFI operates 18 different programs and partners with 70 schools with support from city, state, private, and federal funders in Los Angeles. YFI's annual budget is \$35 million and the agency has more than 1,200 staff at 125 sites. YFI has administered nine grants from the U. S. Departments of Education, Labor, Health and Human Services, and HUD over the last eight years, while receiving federal funding through the State for programs like 21st Century afterschool. In just the last five years, YFI has raised \$90 million for its work with schools in L.A., not including the general funds budgets of its own charter and pilot schools. YFI is the largest afterschool provider for charter schools in the nation and the largest high school afterschool provider in the state. The agency is also providing intensive tutoring to over 2,500 students this academic year.

YFI is an affiliate of the National Council of La Raza, and is the Lead Agency for a Full-Service Community Schools program funded by the U.S. Department of Education for Central Los Angeles. This provides wrap-around services for families at Gratts and Esperanza Elementary, John Liechty Middle School, and Monsenor Oscar Romero Charter Middle School, including 15 academic, enrichment, nutrition, parent education, family literacy and leadership development services for 1496 students in 2009-10. YFI is also the founder and operator of two charter middle schools located in Central Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley that have demonstrated exceptional academic achievement using the YFI model as described in this narrative.

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

The School Leadership Team, including the Executive Director of YFI Schools, will work with the Principal of the school, the teachers, other staff, and parents. Teachers, staff, parents and other community residents

will be involved in the ownership of the school through their active participation in the Standing and Advisory Boards and Subcommittees. The *School Site Council* is a Decision-Making Committee that will review and provide specific recommendations for the school Single Plan for School Achievement (School Plan) and will gather and summarize all recommendations from the school advisory subcommittees. The *School Leadership Council* is a Decision-Making Committee that works to develop and implement the staff development program, guidelines for student discipline, the use of school equipment, the scheduling of activities at the school, and allocations in the school budget.

The *Student Education Advisory Committee* works to develop and implement programs targeted to the needs of disadvantaged students at the school. The *English Learner Advisory Committee* works with staff to develop, implement, and evaluate the school English Learner Master Plan. The *Curriculum Advisory Committee* will make recommendations regarding teacher professional development, instructional materials and technology, assessments, and targeted methodology to improve student achievement at the school. *Parent and Student Advisory Committees* are open to parents and middle school students enrolled and make recommendations regarding student, parental, and community involvement to improve student achievement at the middle school. The *Community Advisory Committee* will coordinate services and information. The *Budget Advisory Committee* will make specific recommendations for the school budget process, including the allocation of program and service funding.

The YPI Leadership team includes Dixon Slingerland, who is the Executive Director of YPI since 1996. He is President of the Board of YPI Charter Schools. Maria Reza is a long-time teacher and Principal in LAUSD with experience as former Cluster Administrator for the Operations and Academic Achievement of San Fernando High School and the 19 schools in the feeder pattern. Gene Straub is the YPI Chief Financial Officer and Vice-Chair of the Board for Larchmont Charter School. Gene served as Senior Vice President-Studio Operations for Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, and was responsible for an \$85 million operating budget. Yvette King-Berg is the Executive Director of YPI Schools. She has previously worked as Vice President, Southern California for the California Charter School Association, and a long-time administrator, teacher, and trainer with Project GRAD and Fenton Avenue Charter School. Nick Vasquez is Principal of YPI's Monsenor Romero Charter Middle School and former long-time Principal of Morningside Elementary in LAUSD. Ruben Duenas is Principal of Bert Corona Charter School. Prior to this he served as Assistant Principal at Belvedere Middle School. Iris Zuniga-Corona is the YPI Chief of Staff responsible for program implementation and will work with the YPI Executive Director of Public Schools and the Principal to coordinate YPI programs and services. Prior to taking this role, she ran YPI's afterschool programs at 56 schools. Stan Saunders is the YPI Director of Development and has led YPI fundraising over eight years that raised over \$130 million for education and training services in Los Angeles. He will lead the Development Team in efforts to bring outside funding to the school. Fidel Ramirez is the former Principal of Community Charter Early College High School in the San Fernando Valley. Marco Torres is a multimedia and educational technology expert who has worked with numerous schools, including the YPI San Fernando Institute for Applied Media Pilot School, to develop a strong foundation for student technological skills.

h. Briefly explain the rationale for your choice of school type.

The Network Partner model offers the most promising model for leveraging education and community services provided by YPI and partners into the full service community schools vision for the middle school. The Network Partner model also allows YPI to deliver charter-like innovations through an in-district model, and to better share best practices. To succeed, students and parents must have access to a wide range of supportive services in and out of school. The Network Partner partnership with LAUSD offers flexibility to braid existing and new services provided by the District and YPI.

YPI selected the Network Partner model for autonomy and accountability. The middle school will incorporate the small school approach to give students access to much needed resources and a personalized learning environment (to empower students to experience a richer and relevant curriculum). The focus of the middle school is on education technology that will enable students to access unlimited learning resources. It

will also assist students in organizing, presenting, and creating valuable information. Since the world has become interconnected, our students will need a bridge to bring them closer to the rest of the global community. Integrated technology (hardware, software, connectivity, community involvement, and professional development) will help by providing that trestle our students need to connect with themselves, with their community, and with the rest of the world.