

## NETWORK PORTFOLIO AND PERFORMANCE

### **1: Portfolio of Schools**

#### **a. Number of school(s)/campus(es) and total number of students served**

MLA has a performance contract with LAUSD to operate two comprehensive high schools, West Adams Prep and Manual Arts High School through the iDesign Division. Through these two schools, MLA serves 6,200 students grades 9-12th.

#### **b. Cities or communities served**

MLA focuses its work in one geographic region: the enrollment zone that surrounds Manual Arts High School and West Adams Prep. The enrollment zone is 8.2 square miles and houses approximately 150,000 residents. (MLA and its partners call this zone “LA’s Promise Neighborhood”). As the main feeder to Manual Arts High School, John Muir Middle School sits squarely within MLA’s geographic focus. Boundaries of MLA’s zone are Olympic (North), Gage (South), Arlington (West) and the 110 freeway (East).

#### **c. Grade levels served**

MLA currently services students grades 9-12.

#### **d. Unique school themes or models in your organization**

MLA believes in creating highly personalized learning environments that work to support the unique needs (personal, emotional and academic) of each individual students, foster in all students a genuine love for learning, and celebrate a uniquely rich school culture.

Whether autonomous or semi-autonomous small schools, grade-level “houses,” or other models (e.g., adaptive or online learning models), MLA creates school environments that tailor learning to the unique needs of individual students. That means MLA schools include a high degree of personalization, regarding teaching, counseling, interventions and enrichment programs, but incorporate the diverse ideas of local stakeholders. At West Adams Prep, the school is organized into six small semi-autonomous schools. Each small school features a collegiate-style theme: (1) Education and International Studies, (2) Science and Technology (3) Invention, Design, Engineering and Architecture (IDEA), (4) Performing Arts and Literature, (5) Media, Film and Art and (6) Business and Enterprise. Each small school also features unique partnerships with organizations that are relevant to the small school theme. As a result, students are able to explore the themes through special electives and relevant programs. For example, through a partnership with the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship, students in the school of Business and Enterprise learn how to write business plans and compete with other high school students throughout the city. MLA developed these small school themes through focus groups with hundreds of parents, students and other stakeholders before the school was opened in the spring of 2007

Manual Arts High School features 9 SLCs. SLC themes include: (1) Performing and Applied Arts, (2) Business, Education, Specialized Arts and Technology, (3) College Prep Magnet, (4) Medical Sciences, Arts and Technology, (5) Communication and Global Awareness, (6) Arts, Leadership and Social Action, (7) Global Studies, (8) Environmental Studies and (9) Imaging Science and Technology. These SLC's were designed by teachers and implemented in accordance with LAUSD Bulletin 1600 in the summer of 2003. MLA is currently evaluating the effectiveness of these SLC's and is working with stakeholders to make necessary changes and adjustments to accelerate student learning through this model.

One such adjustment is the recent creation of the Freshman Prep Academy (FPA). In the summer of 2010, MLA and Manual stakeholders launched the FPA. FPA is a grade level school for every incoming freshman. All FPA students take classes all day in the same building, have a unique bell schedule, and participate in an advisory course that focuses on college preparation and relationship-building with their teachers and peers. Additionally, FPA has its own administrator, counseling staff and teachers. All teachers and staff in FPA went through a rigorous screening and selection process. FPA's small school design supports a more personalized learning environment and inspires student achievement through close connections with teachers, group learning and significant individual attention.

From its start, MLA has been known as an organization with a unique flare for creating a special school culture characterized by innovation and personalization.

**e. Types of schools in your portfolio**

MLA schools are Network Partner Schools.

## **2: Portfolio Growth**

**a. Proposed scope:** *Describe the organization’s proposed scope of growth over the next five years both in LAUSD and nationally*

Over the next five years, MLA will expand its family of schools within an area it calls LA’s Promise Neighborhood. LA’s Promise is an endeavor of MLA and its partners to prepare thousands of children from one South Los Angeles community for college and a healthier, more successful life. MLA’s goal is to go deep, not wide, by adopting the feeder schools and building a K-12 educational pipeline serving over 20,000 children. This pipeline will be built in stages, backwards from high school to middle school, then elementary school. MLA does not intend to expand to any other cities or geographic regions. Our goal is to see all the children of LA’s Promise Neighborhood ready for college and life.

In addition to expanding its portfolio of schools, MLA will also expand its acclaimed model of school-based support services. Using the schools as community hubs, MLA will expand the resources available to students and their families, including college access programs, school support services, health and wellness programs, and tenant and legal support, among others.

The following are critical milestones in MLA’s growth plan for the next five years, some of which are contingent on many factors, including effective parent mobilization, Superintendent support and majority school board votes:

### **Year One: September 1, 2010–August 30, 2011**

- Launch Freshman Prep Academy at Manual Arts High School
- Apply for John Muir Middle School through Public School Choice 2.0
- Launch LA’s Promise Online Directory for Manual Arts and West Adams Prep
- Finalize program design for integration of health services within school day

### **Year Two: September 1, 2011—August 30, 2012**

- Begin management of John Muir Middle School
- Apply for “High School No. 3” through Public School Choice 3.0
- Expand LA’s Promise Online Directory portal to include John Muir Middle School
- Finalize program design for integration of health services within school day

### **Year Three: September 1, 2012—August 30, 2013**

- Through iDesign contract provisions, adopt select middle school that feed West Adams Prep
- Launch medical clinic at West Adams Prep
- Begin management of High School No. 3

### **Year Four & Five: September 1, 2013—August 30, 2015**

- Integrate medical services at John Muir and other adopted middle schools

- Launch medical clinic at High School No. 3
- Design program for elementary school adoption

**b. Evidence of organization's capacity:** *Provide evidence of your organization's capacity to manage multiple schools/campuses.*

MLA has developed quickly since it was founded in 2003, responding to the need of its schools and school communities by becoming one of Los Angeles' first ever Educational Management Organization (EMO) focused on the operation of non-charter public schools. Over the last few years, MLA has significantly increased the capacity of its instructional team and has recruited top educational talent to fulfill the task at hand.

MLA's leadership team consists of educational professionals with a history of success at low performing schools with similar demographic characteristics as Muir Middle School. Both at MLA and in their previous roles, members of the leadership team have a proven track record of successfully opening new schools, transforming low performing schools and accelerating student achievement. (Please see resumes and bios of MLA's leadership in the Appendix on page 188)

Additionally, MLA has developed a sophisticated approach to successfully managing change in public schools, an approach built around five factors:

- *Domain Expertise:* MLA integrates effective practices from both private sector enterprise and traditional public education. For instance, MLA leverages its relationship with Fortune 500 company Amgen to support areas like management training and strategic planning.
- *Project Management:* MLA has developed a project management methodology that moves school site stakeholders towards agreement, productivity and success. Our approach focuses on work planning, teamwork, and delivering small quick wins to engage skeptical stakeholder groups and break the hold of "endless planning."
- *Political Management:* MLA manages the politics of schools and districts, guiding projects through a series of school site governing body votes, engaging collective bargaining partners, and district/elected officials. We also leverage relationships with school stakeholders strategically, to jump start projects or accelerate stalling initiatives.
- *Capacity Building:* Although MLA is the contracted EMO, its staffing model is based on a capacity building approach rather than a traditional top down management model. For example, the majority of MLA employees work full time at specific school sites as part of the local leadership team, providing on-going direct support to school staff.
- *Accountability/Authority:* As an EMO, MLA operates with shared-authority over school leadership, and is accountable for school outcomes through a performance contract. This clear role as school site manager helps to propel initiatives where appropriate, align leadership teams to school-wide goals, and mitigate the intrusion of certain district politics or practices into school management.

### **3. Performance Data**

*a. Provide evidence of the organization’s successful management of academic and non-academic operations of schools/campuses in your portfolio (e.g., professional development, back-office support, facilities maintenance). Please include evidence from performance data assessments that measure student growth and achievement in math and English Language Arts. Include comparative local district data where available. For organizations that have not operated or managed a school before, but have run programs at schools, please speak to the impact of your programs on student achievement.*

The most important metrics for school achievement are grouped by MLA into three primary areas: School Retention, College-Readiness and College Matriculation.

#### *School Retention*

With regard to retention, MLA’s goal is to increase the number of students who graduate in 4-four years. This is measured by many factors, including transiency, daily attendance rate, “high” attendance rate (i.e., the number of students who attend school 96% of the time or more), student transiency and school safety. West Adams continues to demonstrate both a high attendance rate and year-by-year gains in attendance. At 93%, the West Adams’ attendance rate is one of the highest amongst LAUSD high schools, especially in Local District 7. More important is the percent of high attendance, 52.6% for West Adams, compared to 40% at similar schools according to preliminary report card data. Additionally, student transiency decreased 4.6%, from 34% to 29.4% during our most recent school year.

At Manual Arts High School, school attendance has increased to 90%, and students with 96% attendance skyrocketed from 35% to 46% in our most recent school year. Additionally that year, student transiency decreased from 49.1% to 44.3%. Fights and suspensions were reduced by 52%. With community support and input, MLA instituted a uniform policy at Manual Arts. More than 97% of students wear the uniform daily, and any non-compliant students receive increasing disciplinary consequences.

#### *College-Readiness*

MLA’s highest level goal is that every student within LA’s Promise Neighborhood will be ready for college. While not every student needs to obtain a college degree to be successful in life, every student should graduate high school with the skills necessary to perform at a college level. MLA measures college-readiness by overall school API, academic proficiency levels measured by the CST and CAHSEE, and other factors.

Over the past two years, West Adams Prep has increased its API by 62 points. This is more than double the LAUSD and state averages for a similar time period. West Adams also met its API targets for every subgroup with double-digit gains. Most notable is the 49 point increase for students with disabilities. Additionally, the percent of students

scoring advanced or proficient on ELA has grown 4% over the past two years, while the percent of students scoring BB or FBB has gone down by 9%. (LD7 students declined by 1%.) The percent of students scoring advanced or proficient in Math has grown by 4% and students scoring BB or FBB has declined by 5%. Tenth-grade students at West Adams also outpaced LD7 in Life Science. Scores at West Adams increased 8% over three years, whereas the district only grew 5%. A focused effort to analyze assessment results regularly led to an increase in scores on both history CSTs. West Adams students scoring proficient or advanced on World History increased by 13%, and US History by 11%, whereas the local district only grew by 6% total over three years. West Adams Prep is certainly making rapid gains in preparing its students for college.

Manual Arts completed its first year as an MLA school in June 2010. Its API increased three points that year. Students scoring advanced or proficient in English rose by 4% over the past three years, and students scoring BB or FBB declined by 8%. 11th grade students scoring advanced or proficient in English increased last year by 3%, whereas LD7 11th graders declined by 1% over the same time period. In Biology, the number of students scoring advanced on this test doubled.

Tenth grade students passing both parts of CAHSEE at West Adams Prep has increased by 12%, which is triple the growth of the district over the same time period. 10<sup>th</sup> Graders scoring proficient on CAHSEE in ELA rose 6%, and in math by 13.5% over three years. At Manual Arts, CAHSEE pass rates have been stagnant. This is a main area of focus for MLA. This past year, we saw minimal gains in ELA pass rates (2%), and a slight drop in math proficiency and pass rates (-2%). MLA has already implemented significant reforms in school design, student intervention strategies, and teacher support, observation and evaluation in order to drive more rapid academic gains.

### *College Matriculation*

College Matriculation regards the number of students who enroll in an accredited institute of higher learning. A key metric related to college-matriculation includes the percent of seniors accepted into four-year colleges. On this measure, MLA's work is proving very successful: 9% of the West Adams' senior class was accepted into a four-year college or university in 2008. The following year, that number tripled to 24%. Students enrolled in various four-year colleges and universities including California Institute of Tech (Cal Tech), Colgate University and University of California, Berkeley (UC Berkeley). We do not yet have accurate data on this point for Manual Arts.

*b. Identify the key areas for improvement within your portfolio of schools and discuss how these are being addressed network-wide. If your organization does not operate multiple schools or campuses, please indicate the areas of improvement for the school you operate.*

MLA is placing significant focus on accelerating student proficiency levels at both schools. To do this, MLA hired a highly accomplished Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Rupi Boyd. Dr. Boyd is a 17-year veteran of San Diego Unified, where she most recently served as an Area Superintendent. As a leader at Jackson Elementary, a high poverty school where 77% of students are English language learners, she increased the API by 204 points, and raised student proficiency levels in English and math five-fold, all within five years. Dr. Boyd will use her extensive experience as a leader in education reform to create a vertically aligned 6-12th grade curriculum and develop a comprehensive teacher support and evaluation system, among other key reforms.

MLA's main priority this year (2010-2011) is accelerating progress in both ELA and math at each high school, but especially Manual Arts. MLA launched the "Freshman Prep Academy" (FPA) at Manual Arts High School as a major step to accomplish this. FPA—a special ninth grade school—features an advisory program and a focus on intervention to ensure students are performing at grade level. Additionally, incoming 9th grade students from John Muir Middle School participated in a Summer Bridge program where they were able to meet their teachers and counselors and begin developing the skills needed to be successful in high school. To provide students additional support in math, Manual Arts High School partnered with the Algebra Project to implement a research-based curriculum which structures in review of basic skills (i.e., number lines, multiplication, etc.) while still working through Algebra standards.

At West Adams Prep, MLA increased the use of adaptive learning technologies (APEX) to design interventions to support students who need extra help. MLA also committed additional resources on getting our students college ready. West Adams Prep hired six additional counselors to cut counselor case loads in half and ensure that counselors are more equipped to provide essential support services to students, and aligned all counseling to a college-going expectation for all students. Over the summer, MLA launched a five-week Summer Bridge Program. Below Basic and Far Below Basic students were targeted during outreach, and students participated in ELA and Math remediation courses that were taught by West Adams Prep teachers.

## Organizational Capacity

### **1: Organizational Responsibilities and Goals**

*a. Describe the core functions of the organization in relation to the schools/campuses it operates or will operate both now and in five years.*

MLA manages and supports the day-to-day operations of its schools through both onsite and offsite teams. A four-member team works on-site at each school to support MLA’s programs and initiatives. The site-team works alongside of school personnel to support key areas including: instruction, data management, strategic planning, college access, academic intervention, school partnerships and community engagement. These five positions, which are full time school-based positions and serve as key partners to school stakeholders, include:

- *Site Director*– supervises the activities of all MLA site staff, oversees key programs and initiatives, and works directly with the principal to ensure the school is on track to meet its established targets. Each school’s Site Director report to MLA’s CAO.
- *Associate Director of Curriculum and Instruction*– ensures that the academic program of MLA schools is of the highest quality and that the professional staff receives the support and training they need to be successful. Specifically, the AD of Curriculum and Instruction works with lead faculty and Master Teachers<sup>1</sup> to develop coherent curriculum that is aligned vertically and to standards; designs large-scale intervention programs to get students to performance at grade level; and oversees the peer-driven professional development program.
- *Associate Director of Parent and Community Engagement*– creates extensive opportunities for parents to meet with teachers and administrators for detailed discussion of their children’s academic progress; creates volunteer opportunities for families; develops adult and family activities to be conducted at school; oversees school based partnerships and ensures that the school communicates frequently with families and neighborhood residents.
- *College Administrator*– works with students, teachers, the college counselor and counseling staff to ensure that all students have equal access to information, opportunities and support regarding college matriculation. This position develops and manages intervention programs that promote college awareness such as the annual Go for College Fair and local college visits for every student. Additionally, this person works to align existing college prep programs, partners and resources to ensure equal access for all students in MLA schools.

Because every school site is unique in its challenges and strengths, MLA works with

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<sup>1</sup> see section 12c of the primary application for more information on Master Teachers

school administrators to alter exact job descriptions to best meet the needs of the school community.

MLA has also formed a team to support delivery of non-academic services to school sites. Duties of the operations team include the brokering services in the areas of facilities, safety, technology and HR. The operations team ensures the school follows all applicable federal and state education laws and lobbies for the school locally and at the state and federal levels when it comes to resources, personnel issues, academic policies and out-of-the-box practices that support student achievement. This team includes:

- *Chief Operating Officer* – oversees the overall operations team. Specifically, the COO and his team are responsible for supporting activities regarding facilities, safety, technology, budgets and human resources.
- *Director of Budgets and Strategic Planning* – oversees school budget and allocation; works with school stakeholders to facilitate a collaborative, results-oriented strategic planning process for schools. Works with school leaders to develop performance targets, instructional strategies and resource allocations.
- *Director of Data*– manages school-site data, produces customized reports and dashboards for faculty members at all levels, and assists the District with improving its primary data systems.
- *Talent Development Director* – supports the COO by recruiting high quality school leadership and teachers, and ensuring they are well-trained. This person oversees and provides best practice guidance in the areas of employee relations, recruitment, performance management, training and development and compensation. Additionally, this position establishes partnerships with leading teacher training programs to develop a pipeline of educational leaders. MLA is currently hiring to fill this open position.

MLA also has a “wraparound services” department which focuses on leveraging high impact partnerships to address the needs of the whole child. This department is led by MLA’s Chief of Staff and is supported by Associate Directors of Parent and Community Engagement. MLA’s wraparound team screens and manages community partners with clear service agreements, leverages additional partnerships for the school site based on identified needs and facilitates the delivery of fundamental services to every student. For example, the wraparound team will work with LAUSD and its key health service providers to provide on-campus health clinics at its schools. Universal screenings are built into the school day, and every MLA student will receive a free annual physical and mental health assessment.

Please see MLA’s organizational chart in the Appendix on page 228.

*b. Describe the organization's short- and long-term academic, financial and operational goals.*

*Academic Goals:* MLA's long term academic goal is for every student who enters an MLA school in the 6th grade to graduate high school ready for college. This means having completed an A-G course-load with a C or better, having scored proficient or advanced on CSTs, passing math and ELA sections of the CSU EAP test, and scoring competitively on the SAT or ACT. While not every student needs to obtain a college degree to be successful in life, every student should graduate high school with the skills necessary to perform at a college level. In the short-term, MLA's goal is to make rapid gains in academic proficiency. In the 2010-2011 academic year, MLA's goal is to increase the Manual Arts' API score to 600. This 61 point jump in API would be triple the average API growth amongst LAUSD high schools. At West Adams Prep, we expect to see a 72 point increase, which will bring the school's API to over 650 and place West Adams squarely in line with some of its higher-performing counterparts nation wide. We are also setting ambitious goals to increase our CAHSEE proficiency and pass rates so our schools can meet federally defined safe harbor standards. We are working to achieve a ten percent increase in student proficiency on both parts of CAHSEE at both schools. It is our goal that long-term, 95% of our 10th graders will pass CAHSEE on their first try. Given that CAHSEE tests many of the standards taught in the middle grades, our success with this ambitious goal will be largely dependent on our success in establishing a high-quality middle school math and English program.

*Financial and Operational Goals:* MLA recently secured a \$4.5 million grant from the Amgen Foundation. Additionally, the organization has received funding commitments from the Carson Foundation and Weingart Foundation, which will be finalized this fiscal year. These financial commitments take care of the organization's short and intermediate financial outlook. In the long term, MLA's goal is to broaden it's base of charitable funders to fully realize LA's Promise Neighborhood. Within the next 12 months, MLA will launch a 5-year \$30 million fundraising campaign to enable the organization's further growth in South Los Angeles. As described in the previous section, our growth plans include supporting additional LAUSD schools (High School #3, Berendo Middle School, and feeder elementary schools). Operationally, MLA will continue to enhance the quality of support that it provides schools and increase the number of external social service partners providing direct service to our students. To accomplish this, we anticipate growing our staff approximately 20% in each of the next 5 years. Specifically, our plans call for added capacity in talent management, information technology, budget/fiscal services, and development as well as additional instructional and program management personnel.

*c. Discuss the organization's role in assessing overall performance at individual school (s)/campus(es), as well as the interventions the organization will use to promote continued improvement at each school/campus.*

MLA oversees the overall performance of its schools and is fully accountable to the Board of Education, the Superintendent and most importantly, to parents and students. To assess overall performance at its schools, MLA works closely with its school leadership team to review monthly and quarterly dashboards and develop relevant, data-driven interventions. MLA groups its metrics in three primary areas consistent with MLA's overall objectives, as discussed in sections above.

Using systems such as SIS, ISIS, and MyData, MLA currently tracks indicators including attendance, safety, pass/fail rates in core classes, and CAHSEE pass rates at both school sites. Data is sorted by SLC/Small School as well as by sub groups and put into dashboards which indicate growth towards goals. MLA then reviews the monthly and quarterly dashboards with the school leadership team and tracks movement on key metrics. This type of data analysis has been critical in assisting school-site staff decision-making as well as informing MLA about areas requiring support.

MLA is currently working with each of its schools to increase implementation of common formative assessments across every major content area and grade level. Both Manual Arts and West Adams high schools have begun using the Core K-12 assessment system—a web-based testing system that allows groups of teachers to create tests, process student score sheets, and review individual student performance. Concurrent with the implementation of Core K-12, both school sites will also implement LAUSD's ISIS grade book application, so that student assignment data will be up to date on a weekly basis. Standards-aligned, common formative assessments, together with more timely student grade data, will give teachers the ability to adjust teaching to ensure a greater number of students master the content.

This information, along with other key metrics already tracked by MLA, is critical for the school leadership team to make data driven decisions based on leading indicators. Teachers will be able to assess student progress at multiple periods within the quarter, adjusting instruction based on comprehension levels; counselors will be able to intervene with high need and "at-risk" students earlier by seeing the academic and social picture of a student's experience at the school, and school administrators will be able to design professional developments and systems of support for teachers based on the needs identified in the data.

2: Organizational Leadership

*a. Describe the organization’s leadership team and how reporting relationships in the organization will evolve with the addition of a new school(s)/campus(es). Describe any additional roles/positions that will be added to the organization to strengthen capacity to support school growth and reflect the school community you seek to serve. If you are an organization looking to operate schools for the first time, please discuss how your organization will staff up to support the new work.*

MLA is led by a President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Mike McGalliard. Reporting to the President/CEO is: a Chief Academic Officer (CAO) who supervises the personnel and overall academic program at MLA schools; a Chief Operating Officer (COO) who oversees MLA’s internal operations (e.g., HR, finance, IT) as well as supports the effective delivery of these and other services at MLA schools; a Vice President of Development, who oversees organizational fundraising efforts; and a Chief of Staff, who oversees MLA’s extensive network of social and health services. (Please see resumes and bios of MLA’s leadership in the Appendix on page 188)

MLA’s CAO is Dr. Rupi Boyd. Dr. Boyd leads and is accountable for the high performance of all MLA schools through the implementation of a progressive and dynamic instructional program. MLA school principals report directly to the CAO. All LAUSD staff members in MLA schools report to the school principal. Additionally, The CAO supervises MLA’s school site-based team, which specializes in critical areas including curriculum design, instructional practice, and various programs that accelerate student performance and college-readiness.

MLA’s operations team is led by the COO. In addition to managing MLA’s internal operations, the COO manages a school operations team. The school operations team works closely with key school site personnel including the Title 1 coordinator, Plant Manager and school administrators, and also works with District departments. The MLA school operations team provides key support (rather than management) for the successful delivery of a school’s non-academic services. Please see MLA’s organizational chart in the Appendix on page 228.

*b-d. b. Board Role: Describe the roles and responsibilities of the Governing Board, including how often it will meet. In addition to legal and compliance considerations, please describe what contributions the Board will make to the long-term success and sustainability of the school, such as how it will monitor academic and operational aspects of the school. c. Board Structure: Describe the structure of the Governing Board at the proposed school, and identify any proposed Board committees and their roles. d. Board Development: Identify the composition of the Governing Board, including key skills and constituencies that will be represented. If you are a new organization, provide a plan for recruiting a Governing Board representing a diverse skill set required for*

*school oversight. Attach resumes of any Governing Board members who have already been identified. Label each resume as “Governing Board member.”*

MLA is led by a 12-member Board of Directors which is responsible for sound fiscal management, fundraising, networking on behalf of the organization, administering institutional policy, and ultimately overseeing the work of the President/CEO and the success of MLA schools. Trustees serve for three years, with the option for additional renewable three-year terms. The board meets four times a year to review academic, operational and fiscal progress of the schools. These meetings are open to the public to ensure transparency in decision making and to ensure that community voices are heard.

The Executive Committee of the Board includes:

- *Megan Chernin* is the chair of the board of MLA. As a strong advocate for the welfare and education of children, Ms. Chernin leads MLA’s fundraising efforts and works directly with the CEO to drive MLA’s overall performance and growth.
- *Elizabeth Mann* is a partner in Mayer Brown’s Los Angeles law office. As secretary of the board, Ms. Mann oversees policy and legal compliance for MLA, as well as helps MLA secure critical legal services when/if needed.
- *John H. Kissick* is a founding partner of Ares Management. As treasurer of the board, Mr. Kissick oversees the overall financial health of the organization, sound fiscal management and a clean yearly audit of the organization’s finances.
- *Brian McNamee* is senior vice president of global human resources for Amgen. Brian plays a key role in building the capacity of MLA’s leadership and ensuring highly effective management of the overall organization and its schools.
- *Tom Vander Ark* is a partner in Revolution Learning and previously served as the Executive Director of Education for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation where he developed and implemented more than \$3.5 billion in scholarship and grant programs. Prior to that, Tom was a public school district superintendent. Tom guides the instructional design and policy development for MLA and its schools.

**Please see Appendix on page 264 for a full list of board members and their biographies. Additionally, please see Appendix X on page 230 for the By-laws, Articles of Incorporation and proof of MLA’s 501(c)3 status.**

In addition to its Board of Directors, MLA is forming a Community Advisory Board to help drive the organization’s work and vision. The Community Advisory Board is comprised of key partners, parents, teachers and other stakeholders, who will serve rotating terms. This board will meet quarterly. As representatives of the neighborhood, the parents and community stakeholders on this board are expected to assess the needs of our families and advise on the design of the MLA’s service continuum, the service delivery model, and community outreach efforts. Additionally, members are expected to advocate for the needs of students and families and ensure that our work is aligned with the greatest challenges impeding our families.

## Instructional Program

**1. Curriculum:** Describe the organization’s role in developing curricula for the school (s)/campus(es) in your portfolio. Describe how the curriculum is or is not aligned across schools/campuses. If your organization is not currently operating or managing schools, please define what this process will look like.

Led by MLA’s Chief Academic Officer (CAO), MLA is developing a vertically aligned curriculum from 6th through 12th grade. MLA believes that in order for students to be college-ready, they must first be high school ready. MLA is developing a cohesive instructional program connecting high schools and their feeder middle schools. See the figure below for an overview of MLA’s Instructional Model.

### Overview of the MLA Instructional Model

<b>Rigorous Standards-based curriculum with extensive interventions</b>	<i>Mapped to the essential skills necessary for continued success in high school and college. Key features: <u>8th Grade Algebra Proficiency</u>, <u>Expanded Interventions</u>, and <u>School-wide Focus on Instructional Scaffolding</u>.</i>
<b>Holistic, personalized and data-driven supports</b>	<i>Tiered system of supports to ensure the full-range of needs are met for each child. System begins with <u>AVID Advisory</u>, with “<u>Data-Driven Counseling</u>,” and <u>External Partnerships for Intensive Support</u>.</i>
<b>Highly effective, well-trained educators and staff</b>	<i>A true professional learning community based on: <u>Outstanding Professional Development</u>, <u>Performance Management Aligned with the TETF</u>, and <u>Embedded Structures for Support</u>.</i>
<b>A transformed school culture for all stakeholders</b>	<i>A college-going culture for ALL stakeholders is developed by: creating a <u>Safe and Welcoming Campus</u>, focusing on <u>Parental Engagement</u>, and increasing student participation in <u>Enrichment Programs</u>.</i>

### ***Rigorous Standards-based Curriculum with Extensive Interventions***

Based on MLA’s experience working with Manual Arts and West Adams Prep, it has identified the essential skills that students must possess to succeed in high school and eventually college. These outcome skills include effective: Critical thinking and analysis; Oral and written communication; Problem solving; Collaboration; Cross Cultural literacy; and New media/technology fluency. MLA will work with 6-12th grade teachers to develop a core curriculum that addresses these skills, design appropriate interventions to support skill building, and ensure that the every classroom is rigorous. See section 2 of primary application for more information.

### ***Holistic, Personalized, Data-driven Interventions***

MLA will implement a tiered system of student support at all of its schools to ensure students have their social, emotional, physical and mental health needs met. We call this

a system of “holistic, personalized, data-driven student supports.” The tiered system of interventions begins with an AVID Advisory class—where every student will have a deep, meaningful relationship with a certificated adult on campus. The second tier is data driven counseling. Counselors and advisory teachers will meet bi-weekly to review student data and identify students needing additional attention. Finally, for student support needs that go beyond that the school itself can offer, external partners will provide intensive student support. MLA has built a network of over 50 partners that serve MLA students and, in addition, has created an online referral system that greatly improves access to services. This tiered system of interventions will be built into every MLA school, to ensure that students are supported throughout their academic career. See section 2 of primary application for more information.

***Highly Effective, Well-Trained Educators and Staff***

To create a high performing school, where all adults are working together to not only prepare students for college, but respond to each student’s holistic needs, extensive training and capacity building is required. A cornerstone of MLA’s partnership is its commitment to building the capacity of all school site staff through implementation of holistic performance management aligned with the recommendations of LAUSD’s Teacher Effectiveness Task Force (TETF). See section 2 of primary application for more information.

***A Transformed School Culture for All***

Before any academic improvements can take root, the school culture must be transformed, every adult must be aligned to the same goals, and every student held to the same high standards. To promote a calm, effective learning environment for all students and create culture where a student’s path towards college drives every decision, MLA relies upon a handful of key strategies: creating a safe and welcoming campus, engaging strong parent partnerships, and extending the school day with expanded enrichment opportunities. See section 2 of primary application for more information.

**2. School Culture and Climate:** *Describe how the organization will transition the culture of the existing school(s)/campus(es) to the proposed new school(s)/campus(es). How will the organization leverage current expertise within existing school(s)/campus(es) to accomplish this transition?*

MLA is an organization with a strong sense of internal culture and values. MLA's corporate values are five focal points to consistently calibrate the relevance of our work and programs. The five focal points - aka "what matters most" - are:

- Results Matter- our bottom line is student achievement.
- Urgency Matters- every moment we postpone doing what's best for children, we send another class into an uncertain future.
- Neighborhood Matters - schools and neighborhoods rely on each other. What happens outside of school is intimately connected to what happens inside, and good school have the power to revitalize communities.
- People Matter- the people currently working at our schools are a valuable resource that needs to be developed, strengthened and utilized.
- Pedagogy Matters- we must deconstruct and apply a "critical consciousness" to help people not only understand the conditions surrounding them, but to take action to change them.

In its transition to leadership at any school with a preexisting staff and student body, MLA will erect policy and practice to instill similar values as those listed above. Of primary importance is an environment where collaboration and collegiality are the norm, and a high sense of mutual accountability is a daily driver of individual productivity.

MLA's first and primary goal is to establish alignment between MLA, the principal, key administrators, and leading teachers along with leading parents and students. The goal is to have stakeholder leaders at all levels embrace core values and practices. The principal becomes, without question or exception, the primary campus leader to model these core values and practices every day.

MLA will meet with every teacher, counselor, administrator and faculty member at John Muir Middle School to understand their role, their needs and their vision for students. This process is critical to ensure that all staff members are aligned in the school's mission, vision, values and goals. Prior to the start of the 2011-2012 school year and in order to align all Muir staff members, MLA will utilize an "Intent to Return" (ITR) agreement so that staff can make an informed decision about whether they want to return to Muir and commit to the school's new goals. (For more information on the Intent to Return agreement, see 12c of the primary application.)

Because MLA knows that a key component of a smooth transition for Muir is clear and consistent communication, throughout each school year, MLA will lead Muir

stakeholders to evaluate primary school goals, ensuring they are measurable, specific, time-bound and most importantly, focused on student learning. MLA will also hold regular meetings with stakeholder groups – teachers, certificated staff, counselors, coordinators and others - to discuss the school’s key strategies and academic and operational progress. These meetings will be critical in establishing a collaborative culture where groups are working together on a single vision for the school community.

Parents will play one of the most important roles in the successful transition of Muir Middle School. MLA has already established positive relationships with hundreds of Muir parents and community members. In October 2010, MLA launched a massive, grassroots parent outreach campaign to inform Muir parents about MLA and Public School Choice. Volunteers knocked on over 1,030 doors through regular community walks. Over 300 parents and community members have already attended MLA’s weekly meetings. (See community meetings sign-in sheets in the Appendix on page 158.) These parents and other community members will be critical in mobilizing additional parents and have already provided MLA a strong foundation in the local community immediately surrounding Muir. Through targeted and consistent outreach, MLA will continue its weekly community meetings especially during the school’s transition, working with parents to discuss the school plans and progress on key initiatives to improve student outcomes.

**3. Data-Driven Instruction:** *Describe the organization’s role in reviewing performance data, and describe how this data is used to drive improvement at the school-, campus-, and network-levels. If your organization is not currently operating or managing schools, please define what this process will look like.*

MLA takes full accountability for school academic performance. MLA tracks numerous metrics, across all school sites, to assess student and school progress. MLA groups its metrics in three primary areas consistent with MLA’s overall objectives: Retention, College-Readiness and College Matriculation.

MLA believes that accurate, timely data provides the foundation for performance management at MLA schools. MLA hired a FTE position to manages school-site data, produces reports and dashboards, and assists the district with improving their data system. Under the guidance of MLA’s Chief Academic Officer, this position will study data across school sites, and continuously evolve how MLA and its schools use data to drive improvement.

During the 2009 – 2010 school year, MLA began systematizing management dashboards for school leadership to review school progress. Version 1.0 of MLA’s school dashboards provided very granular views of key frequently reported metrics (attendance, truancy, discipline, etc.) for monthly review by school administrators and teacher leaders (see below). Data is aggregated manually by extracting information from LAUSD legacy information systems and then formatting the information in Excel spreadsheets.

Over the next two school years, significant changes will be made to both the type of data available for review as well as the process by which data will be acted upon. In response to the district’s request for specific reporting of key data points, all the current dashboards have been updated to reflect district-requested data across SLCs, grades, and subgroups.

To provide ongoing data about student academic performance, MLA is working with school sites to increase implementation of common formative assessments across every major content area and grade level. To accomplish this, both Manual Arts and West Adams high schools began using the Core K-12 assessment system - a web-based testing system that allows groups of teachers to create tests, process student score sheets, and review individual student performance. MLA’s Chief Academic Officer and MLA school site personnel are currently facilitating the implementation of this system across school departments. Concurrent with the implementation of Core K-12, both school sites will also implement LAUSD’s ISIS grade book application, so that student assignment data will be up to date on a weekly basis.

With common formative assessments and weekly grade data, school leadership will track the leading indicators for student performance. Also, timely grade data will be combined with current attendance and student discipline data to provide greater case management

for individual students. This will allow counselors to intervene in a timely way to support high need students. MLA will implement Core K-12 and LAUSD's ISIS grade book application at all schools to ensure that the school leadership team has leading indicators of student performance. Of particular importance is the 8th grade student data from Muir that will be shared with 9th grade teachers and counselors to better prepare for the individual student needs of the incoming class.

An additional area of significant expansion in the collection and use of data regarding teacher observation. MLA is investing in observation software that allows for the automated capture of teacher classroom observations. The McRel Power Walkthrough enables MLA to address multiple issues related to observations. First, it allows MLA to standardize the protocols and focus areas for teacher observations. Second, it eliminates the administrative/clerical burden of teacher observations that frustrates principals. Third, it provides trending and data analysis capabilities that enable MLA to better calibrate principals and assistant principals to a specific bar of performance. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the increased observations allows MLA to prioritize teacher supports to improve teacher practice.

#### 4. **Professional Development**

*a. Discuss the role of the organization in providing professional development for schools/campuses across the portfolio.*

Led by the Chief Academic Officer, MLA provides frequent and relevant professional development for all MLA schools. MLA manages professional development on two levels; first, by providing direct, individual professional development for staff based on specific needs (accurately assessed by improved protocols and increased frequency of teacher observation - see section 3 above - and through MLA's improved/expanded teacher evaluation process - see section 12c in the primary application); second, by managing a coherent overall professional development plan by department and by Small School/SLC/PLE.

Professional development for teachers and school site leaders that focuses on reflective practice, collaboration and use of meaningful data, is a critical component of MLA's school program. Scheduled into the daily routine at MLA schools, professional development opportunities provide teachers time to inquire about practice, study individual and group student data, develop best practices, and ensure accountability for school-wide goals. Specific professional development activities that MLA uses to support the diverse needs of teachers include:

- *1:1 Coaching.* The leadership team at MLA schools will dedicate several hours daily towards observing and working directly with teachers, students and support staff. Admin staff are also supplemented by MLA's site staff (e.g., its Site Director or Associate Director of Teacher Development) who also may work directly with teachers on request to support specific need areas identified by the teacher him/herself.
- *Common Planning Time.* MLA will implement a master schedule at all of its schools that will enable teachers within departments common prep periods to plan together.
- *"Teacher Partner" Observations.* Additional sub coverage will be built into the school's budget to enable every teacher to be released to visit high performing classrooms (either on campus or at partner schools).
- *A Master Teacher Cohort:* This utilizes exemplary teachers to mentor less experience or accomplished teachers.

Additionally, a critical component of MLA's professional development plan will be the establishment of a program between high school teachers and feeder middle school teachers. Facilitated by MLA's CAO, select 6-12th grade teachers will spearhead the creation of an aligned 6-12 curriculum in English, math, science and social studies. As a result of this common design, Muir and Manual teachers will use a shared language and implement similar techniques in classrooms across all grade levels at both schools.

*b. Describe how the organization will promote best practice sharing across the network.*

MLA promotes best practice at both the school leadership level as well as the teacher level. This is accomplished by aligning key job roles and responsibilities across sites and creating common planning and professional enrichment opportunities. For example, the leadership teams of Manual Arts and West Adams Preparatory high schools participated in several conferences this year to study the most effective education reform models nationwide. Every conference includes a briefing and debrief (including reflection questions) facilitated by MLA's CAO and school Site Directors.

Administrators at both school sites also work together on implementing key MLA initiatives. For example, the administrators overseeing professional development meet regularly to share ideas and feedback on a new classroom observation system. Administrators conduct focused site visits of each others schools, share ideas and improve practices.

Collaboration and sharing of instructional practices occurs among teachers through structured MLA events, classroom observations within the same department and through the use of technology. MLA hosts a monthly Teachers' Lounge event. Through this event, teachers are connected to each other and to a larger network of educators. Each month the event features the work of an enterprising teacher, a community-based organization or other leaders in education reform. Teachers' Lounge is a nontraditional forum for teachers to discuss ideas, support each other, and network. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to visit other MLA schools and observe classrooms in the same department. For example, science teachers at Manual Arts High School and West Adams Prep meet together to plan and support implementation of the Amgen biotech program and an award winning robotics program.

Technology has also been a powerful tool for collaboration between MLA teachers. MLA launched a teacher networking website at West Adams Prep using an online platform called "Ning." Teachers post and rate Advisory curriculum, syllabi and lesson plans. The website also features a discussion board for teachers to ask questions, provide feedback and share ideas. MLA will expand its use of technology to ensure collaboration and sharing of best practices across school sites.

## **Finances**

**1. Financial Impact of Additional Schools/Campuses:** *If you are adding schools to your existing portfolio of schools, describe how the organization’s revenue and cost structure will be impacted.*

MLA expects to provide approximately \$1 million in personnel and direct support to Muir. MLA is well positioned to financially support Muir Middle School through its continued successful fundraising activities.

MLA will hire a site-based team to support stakeholders at the school. The MLA site team generally consists of 4 individuals, including an MLA site director, who supports the principal and the school leadership team directly by helping project manage key instructional initiatives. Additionally, MLA site teams also include an associate director of parent & community engagement (supports the parent center, community partnerships and the 7-to-7 program), associate director of teacher development (provides direct support and coaching to teachers), and a college access administrator (who coordinates Go For College). Along with site-based personnel, MLA provides financial resources directly to the school through its Teacher Innovation Grant program and other programs. The cost of support personnel and programs, combined with a pro-rata share of MLA overhead, the organization estimates it invests over \$1 million in additional resources per school site.

One-hundred percent of MLA’s work, personnel and the supports it will provide Muir are philanthropically supported. MLA recently announced a \$4.5 million donation from the Amgen Foundation to fund its work Muir. Excluding the recent Amgen gift, MLA has raised \$8.97 million dollars since its inception from philanthropic sources to fund its operations. MLA enjoys broad-based support from hundreds of individual contributors to large philanthropic foundations such as the Carson Foundation, Drown Foundation, and Weingart Foundation. With the Amgen Foundation grant, a successful annual fundraising gala that generates nearly \$1 million, and a growing internal fundraising/development team, MLA is well positioned to financially to support Muir Middle School.

**2. Fundraising:** *Discuss how the organization is equipped to reach any associated fundraising goals related to operating a school(s)/campus(es).*

MLA has built a successful development department focused on raising funds to support MLA’s schools. MLA will reach its fundraising goals through: (1) support from foundations (2) an annual gala event (3) board-driven major gifts program.

*Foundations:* 100% of MLA’s work, personnel and the supports it will provide Muir, are philanthropically supported. MLA recently announced a \$4.5 million donation from the Amgen Foundation to fund the expansion of its work. Excluding the recent Amgen gift,

MLA has raised \$8.97 million dollars since its inception. MLA enjoys broad-based support, from hundreds of individual contributors to large philanthropic foundations such as the Carson Foundation, Drown Foundation, and Weingart Foundation.

*Annual Gala Event:* As a result of strong private sector support and MLA’s committed Board of Directors, MLA’s annual gala event (called LA’s Promise Gala) has been critical in reaching MLA’s yearly fundraising goals. This year’s LA’s Promise gala raised \$1.2 million (in line with previous galas despite the weakened economy) for MLA schools. With the continued success of LA’s Promise Neighborhood and MLA’s schools, we believe our annual gala will grow to raise close to \$2 million each year.

*Board-driven Major Gifts Program:* MLA has a 12-seat Board of Directors who is committed to reaching MLA’s fundraising goals. Representing top private sector companies including Fox, Amgen and Ares Management, MLA’s Board of Directors have the political and financial capital to ensure MLA achieves its financial goals.

**3. Audited Financial Statements:** *If applicable, provide the last two years of audited financial statements for the organization.*

Please see MLA’s audit report in the Appendix on page 269.

**4. Profit and Losses/Revenue Sources:** *Specify overall profits and losses for the organization over the last three years and identify how revenue sources support the general organization. Demonstrate the percentage of revenue used to support the central organization in comparison to the percentage used to support individual schools/campuses in the organization’s portfolio.*

MLA is 100% philanthropically supported. Historically, the organization has two primary sources of revenue, foundation grants and proceeds from its annual gala dinner. Figure X shows MLA’s overall revenue and net income/net loss for its last three fiscal years. Losses in FY2010 and FY2009 reflect the fact that all the revenue from a 3-year, \$4 million dollar capacity grant from the Amgen Foundation was booked in early FY2008, instead of spread out evenly over the 3-year grant term. In August 2010, MLA received another 3-year grant from the Amgen Foundation for \$4.5 million, which will be recorded in FY2011 and thus not shown in Figure X below. MLA’s annual gala generates, on average \$1 million in net proceeds. All the revenue sources are used to support school sites directly, to enable MLA to continue to raise philanthropic funds, and to sustain the organization’s central office. Program expenses, funds used to directly support Manual Arts and West Adams Preparatory High Schools were, on average, 81% of total organization expenses for the last three fiscal years. Central organization and fundraising expenses represent 19% of expenses.

*Figure X. MLA Revenue and Net Income/-Loss, FY2008 - FY2010*

	<b>FY2010</b>	<b>FY2009</b>	<b>FY2008</b>
Revenue	\$948,013	\$1,633,356	\$4,227,008
Program Expenses	\$2,201,982	\$2,076,982	\$1,574,399
Management/ General	\$367,909	\$380,950	\$219,675
Fundraising	\$252,114	\$91,216	\$32,760
Total Expenses	\$2,822,005	\$2,549,148	\$1,826,834
Net Income/- Loss	-\$1,873,992	-\$915,792	\$2,400,174
% Program Expenses	78%	81%	86%

**5. Internal Financial Controls:** *Describe plans to ensure fiscal soundness and legal compliance for the proposed school. Specifically, address the financial monitoring process that will be used. Specify what financial reports will be generated and with what frequency, and identify the party responsible for generating these reports and his/her qualifications.*

Several layers of fiscal and legal compliance control will be in place for Muir. First, as Muir remains an LAUSD school, it will continue to operate using LAUSD standard financial and compliance operating procedures. This includes support from Local District 7 and various LAUSD central office departments including iDesign, the Federal and State Education Programs Branch, the Language Acquisition Branch, and many others. With MLA, there will be no disruption to the policies, procedures or services the school already receives from LAUSD. MLA provides an additional layer of direct support to Muir’s financial manager, Title 1 and bilingual coordinators. In addition, MLA actively supports the various governing bodies at the school with increased training and transparent budget information, which enhances the capacity of those bodies to provide oversight. All budgetary reports for Muir will be generated with LAUSD internal systems, including, FRDB, School Front End, BTS and other systems. Reports will be generated according to the existing District schedule and protocol, and on an ad-hoc basis as requested by various LAUSD departments. Muir’s existing fiscal staff and LAUSD fiscal and compliance staff, all of whom are experienced, qualified and well trained in LAUSD, state and federal protocols and systems, will be responsible for creating reports.

MLA's support staff brings similar financial and management expertise. MLA's Chief Operating Officer has a Masters in Business Administration and is a former investment banker. MLA's Chief Academic Officer has nearly 20 years of experience at the San Diego Unified School District and provides additional expertise in state and federal compliance. MLA's board of directors, and especially its audit committee, has several finance professionals who are actively engaged in providing guidance and oversight of MLA's operations. MLA also contracts with AFJ Consulting, an accounting firm that specializes in serving non-profit organizations. AFJ Consulting provides general ledger, accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll and budgeting services to MLA. Financial reports for MLA are generated and reviewed every month. On a quarterly basis, these reports are also reviewed by the audit committee of MLA's board of directors. Each year, the board of directors retains an independent audit firm to audit the organization's financial reporting and internal controls. We are proud of our record of sound fiscal management, as demonstrated by our audits over the last three years. Internal MLA financial controls are detailed in its accounting manual, which is available upon request.

The party responsible for generating these reports is MLA's Chief Operating Officer. Please see the Appendix on page 188 for a copy of the COO's resume and qualification.