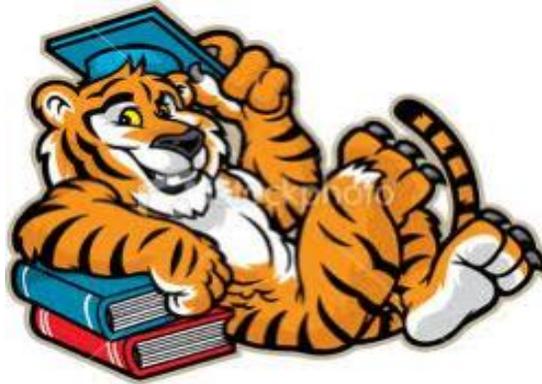


# Woodcrest Elementary School



## Public School Choice 4.0    October 31, 2012

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**Woodcrest Elementary School**

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**Woodcrest Elementary**  
**Public School Choice 4.0 Plan Outline**

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## **A. Vision and Instructional Philosophy**

### ***1. What is your school's vision for the children who will matriculate from your school?***

#### **Our Vision**

Woodcrest Elementary School is a professional learning community of parents, teachers, administrators, staff, and students, who believe each student can achieve proficiency in all content areas. Woodcrest is dedicated to providing a safe, nurturing, and academically challenging environment for all students, so they will be fully prepared to participate as lifelong learners in a competitive global society.

Upon matriculation from Woodcrest Elementary School, our highest priority is that all students will be able to:

- Meet or exceed proficiency in core subjects based on the Common Core State Standards
- Understand the importance of participating in and contributing to their community
- Use critical thinking skills for inquiry and investigation
- Develop complex reasoning and problem-solving skills to respond to challenging situations
- Use knowledge in flexible ways to communicate effectively both orally and in writing
- Demonstrate cultural sensitivity in and outside of the school environment
- Incorporate technology as a component of learning, communication, and assessment
- Evolve into reflective learners who are successful, college prepared, and career ready citizens

### ***2. What is the vision of the school that will help achieve the vision of the successful future graduate described above?***

Our vision of the successful future graduate of Woodcrest Elementary is based on our guiding principle that improving student learning and closing achievement gaps is a moral responsibility and an obtainable goal within the next two to five years. We are committed to the belief that it is neither socioeconomic status nor ethnic background that stands in the way of student achievement. We believe that by implementing effective school practices and policies, and by establishing a shared vision for our school, all students will meet or exceed the high expectations established in our vision. These expectations will be realized through the unwavering commitment of teachers and staff to our non-negotiable commitments as a professional learning community.

#### **Teacher and Staff Commitments**

*We are committed to developing a collaborative school that views parents as partners in the education of our students. We value and encourage parental involvement and see it as an integral part of our collective vision. We will create opportunities for parents and community members to engage in our learning community through, parent workshops, community meetings, school councils, and volunteering.*

*We are committed to high expectations for student achievement.* We will develop clear measurable goals for student success that are aligned to high academic standards and are consistently modeled and supported by school leadership. We believe that creating a culture of learning for all students that is supportive and engaging is an essential part of improving our student achievement.

*We are committed to establishing a learning environment centered on high quality teaching to address the needs of all our students.* We believe all students have the right to a rigorous instructional program that incorporates research-based strategies that promote critical thinking and problem solving skills.

*We are committed to data-driven collaborative inquiry.* We believe teachers construct their understanding of student-learning problems and develop solutions together through rigorous and frequent use of data and reflective dialogue. We believe that this will unleash the necessary resourcefulness and creativity to continuously improve instruction and student learning.

*We are committed to a school culture characterized by collective responsibility for student learning, commitment to equity, and trust in the foundation of our shared vision.* We believe in creating a safe, nurturing, and academically challenging environment that will support all students in the learning process.

*We are committed to improved teaching through the implementation of sound teaching practices grounded in cultural proficiency.* We understand the importance of respecting our students' cultures and cultivating a thorough understanding of the subject matter and effective strategies that will increase student engagement.

*We believe that leadership matters and in a collaborative school community every member can act as a leader.* We believe that parents, administrators, teachers and/or students may all provide valuable input. We are committed to building leadership capacity by staying focused on our goals, communicating ideas and beliefs, and actively engaging others in the decision making process. Based on our shared vision and the gains we have made in just one year of beginning this process, we are confident that we are on a trajectory of continued improvement for Woodcrest Elementary School.

***3. Describe the instructional philosophy that is connected to achieving the vision of the child/youth who will matriculate from your school and the overall vision of the school. Why do you believe this is the best approach?***

Our instructional philosophy is designed to fulfill our vision for our students. It is based on creating an environment that motivates and requires all students to meet defined grade level goals throughout the year in order to accomplish grade level proficiency outcomes. We will pursue this relentlessly because we know that all students, regardless of ethnicity, primary language, socioeconomic status, or gender, are capable of attaining proficiency in their learning. Our purpose is to advance and support all students and offer a full spectrum of opportunity. These core beliefs and established commitments are not just words on a page for the teachers and staff at Woodcrest Elementary School, but the result of a year-long endeavor into the process of transforming our school. We engaged our entire staff in the researched-based model of collaborative inquiry and data dialogue based on the comprehensive work of Research for Better Teaching, guided by their text, *The Data Coach's Guide to Improving the Learning for All Students*, by Love, Stiles, Mundry, and DiRanna. This proven systematic approach to improving learning for all students sets the foundation for our Theory of Action outlined below. It establishes key priorities that are meaningful and measurable and will translate our beliefs into successful student outcomes.

<b>Key Priorities</b>	<b>Instructional Strategies</b>	<b>Across All Classrooms Teachers Will:</b>	<b>Across All Classrooms Students Will:</b>
We will construct a rigorous, systematic, research-based curriculum of depth and scope which is based on the Common Core State Standards and the Teaching and Learning Framework. It will emphasize quality first teaching and utilize district adopted curricular materials such as Treasures, ELD Treasures, and enVision with fidelity.	AEMP Access Strategies SDAIE Strategies Accountable Talk Questioning Techniques Academic Vocabulary Development Higher Level Thinking Skills Thinking Maps	Design coherent instruction Reflect on practice Create clear instructional outcomes and objectives Backward plan Have clear and high expectations Focus on Reading Comprehension Skills	Pose questions and use resources to engage in self-directed learning Support and assist partners to accomplish learning goals Reflect on what was learned, how it was learned
We will use formative and summative benchmarks to determine whether students are meeting our goals of proficiency in alignment with our assessment plan.	CST DIBELS/LPA/Math Periodic Treasures Assessments enVision Math Assessment Teacher/Grade Level Created Assessments	Develop Action Plan Create SMART Goals Give feedback using rubrics, criteria charts, and writing conferences Analyze test results and student work to plan	Understand how to improve Understand what the grade represents Set personal academic goals and be aware of progress toward achievement benchmark Articulate the objective of the lesson
The use of collaborative data analysis will ensure that all student population (English Only - EO, Initial/Redesignated Fluent English Proficient – IFEP/RFEP, English Language Learner – ELL, Standard English Learner – SEL, Special Education and Gifted), will be addressed based on the Master Plan document.	SDAIE/ELD/MELD Data Driven Dialogue AEMP Access Strategies Vocabulary and Comprehension development through the Cognitive Content Dictionary strategy and graphic organizers such as, Thinking Maps	Analyze student work on a monthly basis Vertical articulation at the end of the year to set following year’s goal Connections to learning	Use the Personal Thesaurus Engage in peer discussions and cooperative activities Use manipulatives Use Standard English in appropriate situations
Implement a solid writing program that integrates technology, makes meaningful connections across the curriculum, and supports a balanced approach to literacy	Writers Workshop/ELD Writing Math Journals	Conduct Writers Workshop Participate in Peer Coaching Conference with students Collaborate with grade level	Maintain writing notebook Present their final writing piece Use reference charts and materials to independently

<b>Key Priorities</b>	<b>Instructional Strategies</b>	<b>Across All Classrooms Teachers Will:</b>	<b>Across All Classrooms Students Will:</b>
Implement a comprehensive school-wide positive behavior plan.	School-wide celebration of student success and improvement  Faculty book study on classroom management strategies and approaches to meet student needs	Effective classroom management  Increased student engagement  Anti-bullying campaign  Emphasis on the 3 B's – Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful	Participate in Think Pair Share, small group/whole group discussions  Share knowledge with peers  Take personal responsibility for learning material
Involve parents and students as active partners in education.	Provide a unit syllabus including standards for parents	School-wide homework policy  Communicate positive as well as negative information  Create a systematic portfolio of student work to share with parents	Student led conferences  Set personal goals and share with parents  Add homework to a daily agenda

We believe this Theory of Action is achievable and attainable because it is research-based and has already led to the largest API one-year increase in Woodcrest history. Although we recognize that we still have a long way to go, our data shows we are headed in a positive direction. We will continue to stay focused on our key priorities and our vision.

## **B. School Data Profile/Analysis**

*1. Where is the school now? What does the data/information collected and analyzed tell you about the school?*

### **SCHOOL PROFILE**

Woodcrest Elementary is a single track school located in South Los Angeles near the junction of the 110 and the 105 freeways. It is nestled among single family homes and apartments and is bordered by the four major streets of Century Blvd, Vermont Avenue, Imperial Hwy, and Normandie Avenue. Founded 101 years ago, it serves an urban, multi-cultural student body of approximately 952 students in Pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade. We have a total of 39 classrooms with a teacher to student ratio of 24:1 in kindergarten through third grade and 28:1 for fourth and fifth grade. We have four Special Education classrooms and one Resource Specialist teacher to provide services to identified students. We are focusing on identifying additional GATE students. We have increased our GATE population from five students in 2010-2011 to thirty-two students in 2011-2012. The student population is currently 63% Hispanic and 37% African American. The median family income is 52% lower than the national average. In addition to being an extremely low income area, there is also a high rate of crime which is often violent in nature. Based upon recent trends and our current enrollment, 100% of our students are eligible to receive free and reduced lunch. The school's transiency rate is 31.71% which includes a significant homeless population. Our student attendance rate was 94.35% in 2011 and has been rising slowly for the past four years. Woodcrest is designated as a School-wide Title I School. A look at our student

population reveals that 8% of our students receive special education services; 46% are English Learners; and based on the free/reduced price lunch program, 96% are identified as economically disadvantaged.

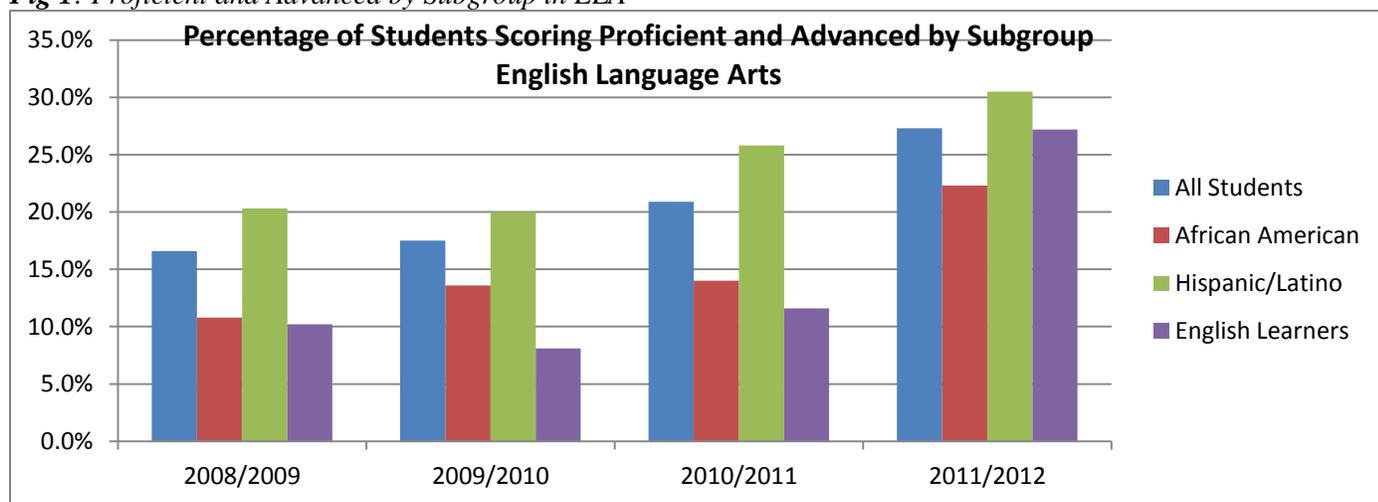
### **IN-DEPTH DATA ANALYSIS**

Woodcrest Elementary has had a history of underperformance, but driven by new leadership and a focus on data and with collaboration as a part of our Professional Learning Community, we are making significant gains. While we are aware that we are not meeting district and state performance benchmarks, we are using several forms of data to systematically identify strengths and weaknesses and target the causal factors that we have control over. Even though our scores are still low, this year our students showed more improvement than ever before. Based on this rapid improvement across all grade levels, we know that we are capable of turning around our school.

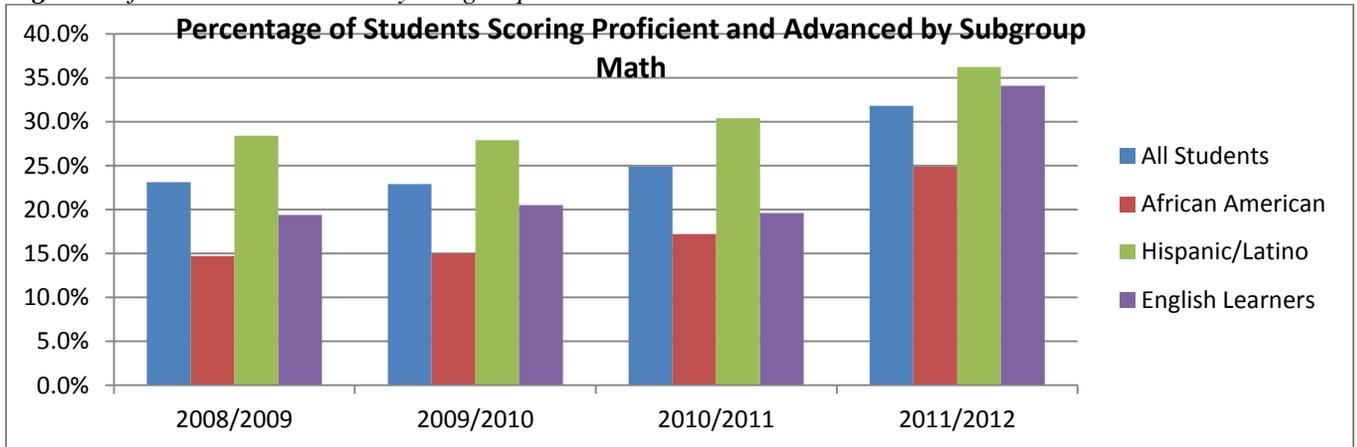
We understand the importance of progress monitoring and are using measures such as DIBELS, Math Periodic Assessments, and Language Periodic Assessments, which include a writing assessment. Teachers are using this formative data for collaboration and to inform their instruction. We understand how success in these measures affects CST performance, so we use this data to form quarterly achievement goals.

An overall view of the CST data reveals that school-wide 27.3% of our students are scoring Proficient or Advanced in English Language Arts and 31.8% of our students are scoring Proficient or Advanced in Math. It is important to note that most of our Special Education students take the CST and their data is included in the analysis. The data shows that 29.9% of the Special Education students score proficient above in English-Language Arts, and 28.4% of the Special Education population score proficient and above in Math. As the graphs below indicate we've experienced a trend of growth for our entire student population in English Language Arts, Math, and Science with the highest increase in the 2011-2012 school year. When we disaggregate these results according to our significant subgroups, we see that all students are showing increased achievement as well. Our emphasis on the achievement level of English Learners in both Language Arts and Math is proving to be successful. The following three graphs illustrate our upward trend toward improved student achievement.

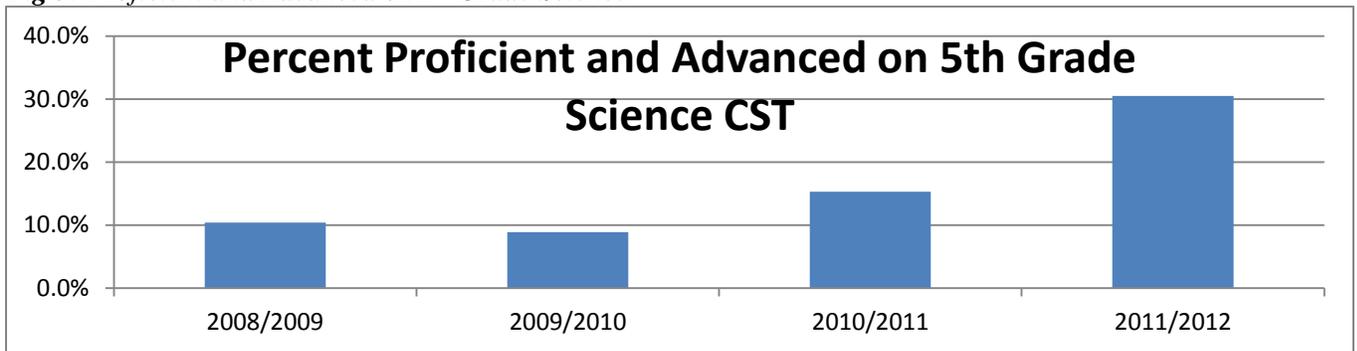
**Fig 1: Proficient and Advanced by Subgroup in ELA**



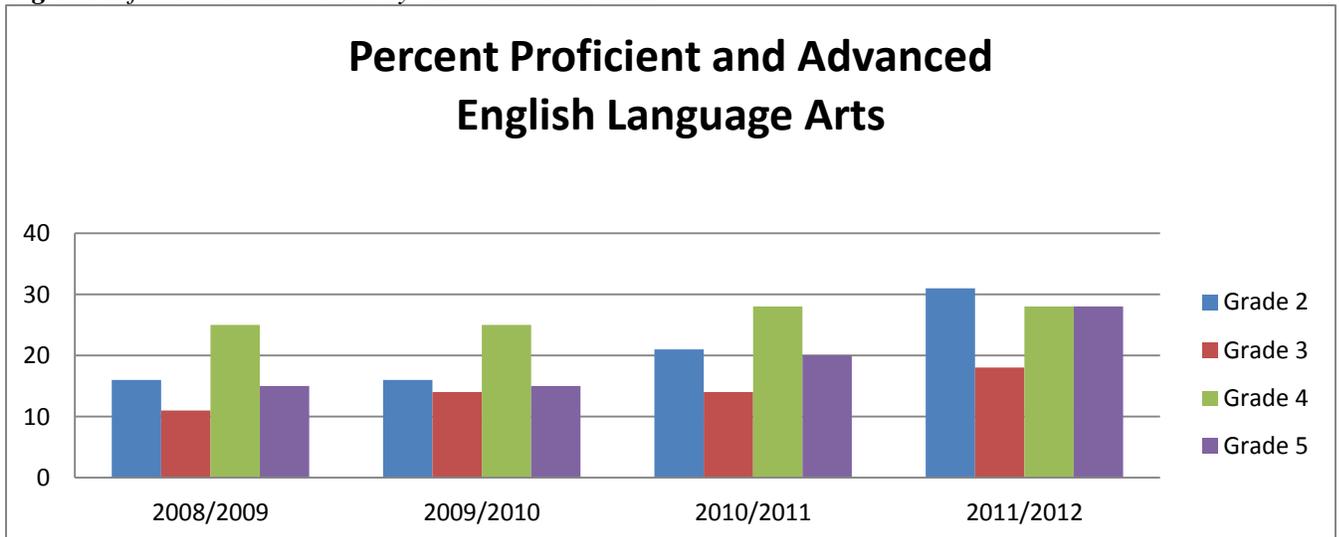
**Fig 2: Proficient and Advanced by Subgroup in Math**



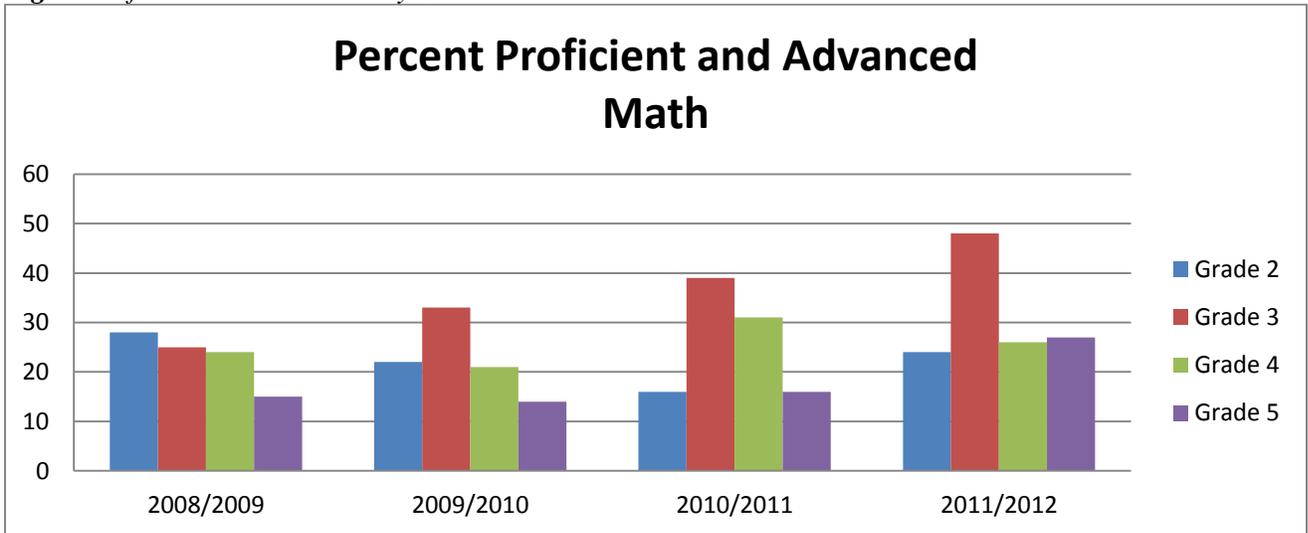
**Fig 3: Proficient and Advanced on 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Science**



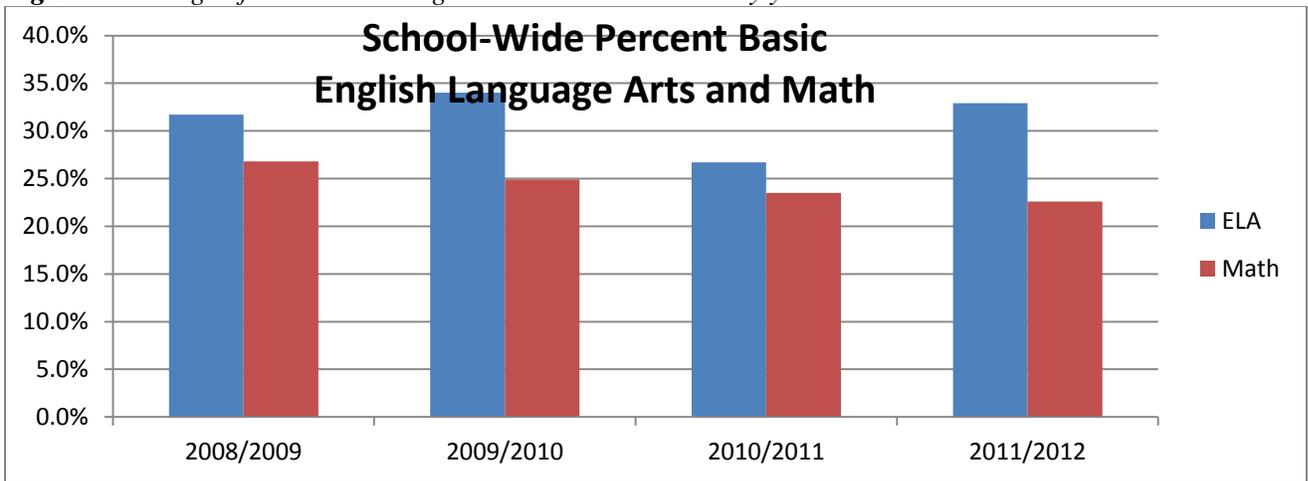
**Fig 4: Proficient and Advanced by Grade Level in ELA**



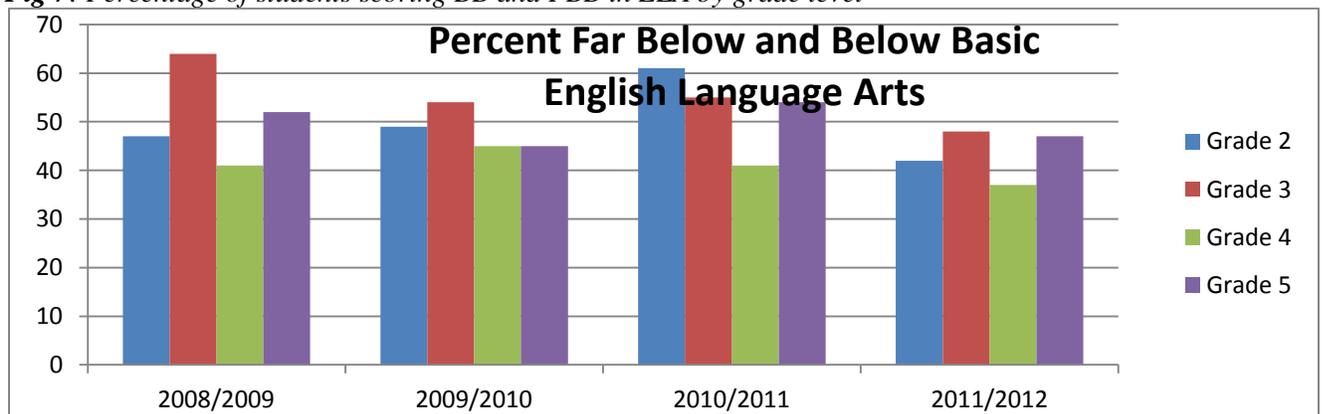
**Fig 5: Proficient and Advanced by Grade Level in Math**



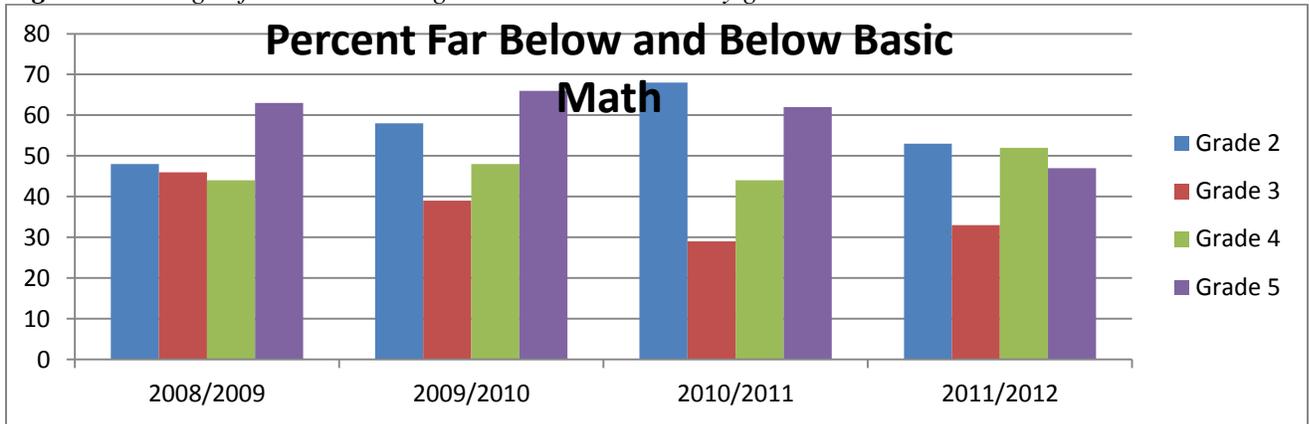
**Fig 6: Percentage of students scoring Basic in ELA and Math by year**



**Fig 7: Percentage of students scoring BB and FBB in ELA by grade level**



**Fig 8: Percentage of students scoring BB and FBB in Math by grade level**



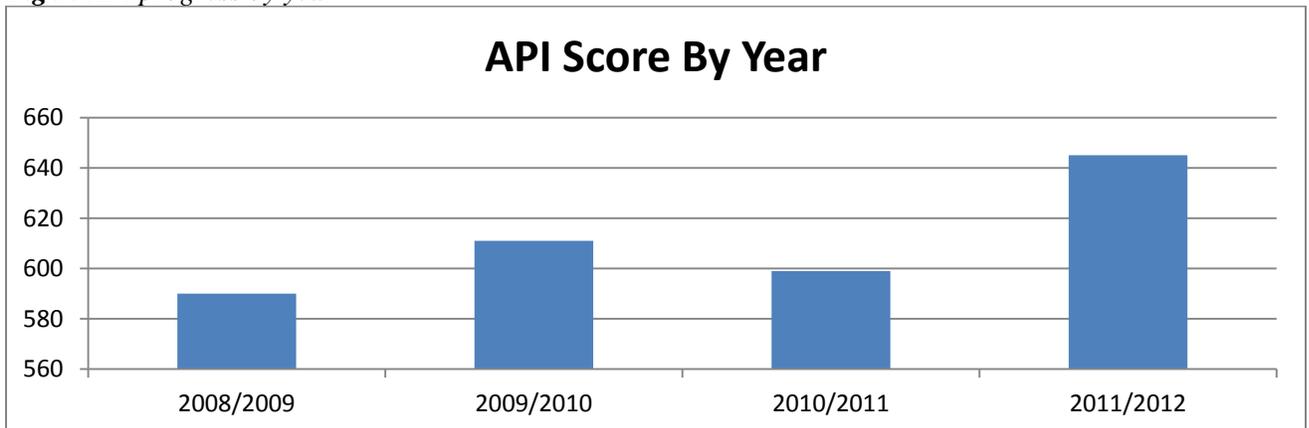
**Grade Level Trends**

- Each grade level increased the percentage of students scoring Proficient and Advanced in English Language Arts in 2011-2012. We attribute this trend to our focus on writing, in depth data analysis, and ample teacher collaboration.
- While the data indicated a slight, 3 percentage point decrease in 4th grade Math, all other grade levels increased the percentage of students scoring Proficient and Advanced in Math in 2011-2012. We attribute this trend to our focus on in depth data analysis, and ample teacher collaboration. Fourth grade will be a focus and will receive additional support in the area of Math.
- Third grade Math has shown a trend of steady growth over the last four years. We attribute this trend to the departmentalization strategies used at this grade level. Flexible grouping allows the teachers to address individual student needs.

**Areas of Strength**

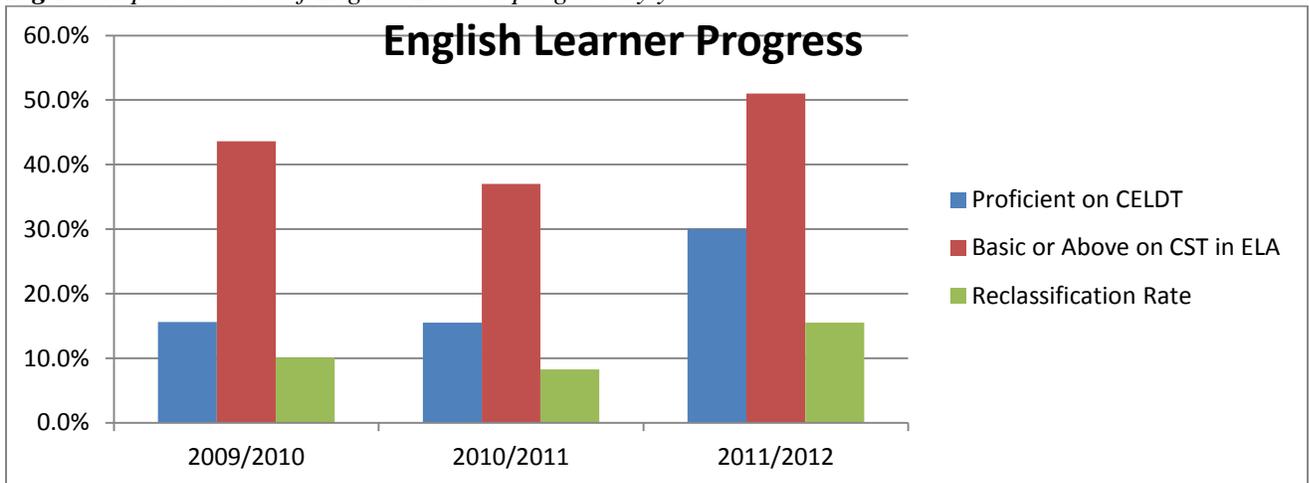
- **Academic Performance Index, (API) Growth** - Our CST scores have been on the rise for the past several years. In 2012 we tested 100% of our students in grades 2-5. We made our API state goal by gaining 46 points, moving from 599 to 645. We did not make our Adequate Yearly Progress, (AYP) but did meet 15 of the 21 criteria. This year’s target for English Language Arts is 78.4%. Our school-wide score was 27.3%. The target for Math is 79.0%, our score was 31.8. We face a significant challenge to improve the achievement of our students and we have and will continue to embrace that challenge.

**Fig 9: API progress by year**



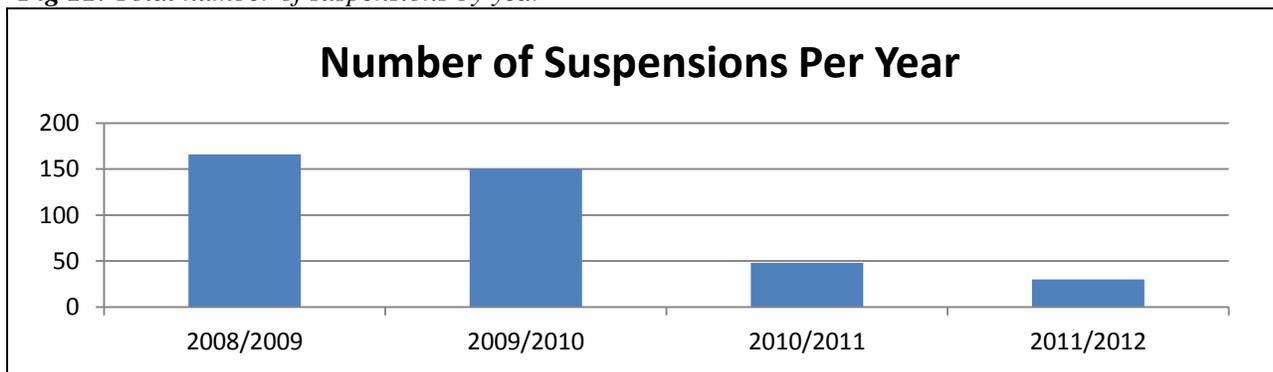
- English Learner Progress** – We are proud of the accomplishments of the English Learners. The number of students scoring proficient on the CELDT exam has increased, which has resulted in the increase of the number of English Learners scoring proficient and above on the CST in English Language Arts. In addition, the Reclassification Rate has also increased and contributed to the overall achievement level of English Learners. We recognize the importance of monitoring our English Learner program and strive to ensure that we do not have Long Term English Learners, (students who have not redesignated within five years of ELD instruction). Also, we continue to monitor students who have redesignated to ensure their progress and provide continued support. We attribute this growth to our laser focus on providing time for English Language Development and the use of SDIAE strategies. Our professional development has supported this focus.

*Fig 10: Representation of English Learner progress by year*



- Suspension Rates** – Over the last three years, Woodcrest has significantly reduced the number of suspensions due to its implementation of a school-wide positive behavior program in conjunction with the parents, community, and staff. We have utilized every effort to use suspension as a last resort. Across the campus, we promote the three B’s – Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible and implement our progressive discipline plan, (which will be explained in more detail in the School Turnaround section), before suspension is considered. The following chart highlights our reduction.

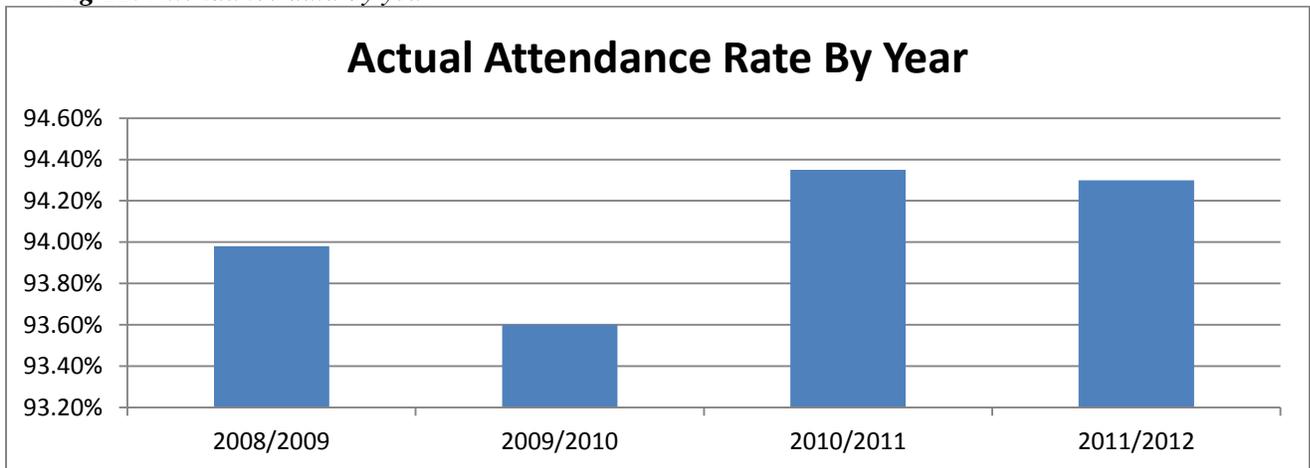
*Fig 11: Total number of suspensions by year*



Areas of Concern

- **Low Student Achievement in Core Content Areas** – While we are improving, the fact remains that our students continue to perform far below the district and state performance guidelines. It is our top priority to improve student achievement. We believe that through our comprehensive instructional plan, which we have already begun to implement, we will continue to see growth and we are committed to seeing our vision realized. Based on our in-depth data analysis, we have created obtainable goals and we are confident that we can be successful in meeting the needs of our students. In our implementation section, we have set out the specific methods we will use in math, ELA, writing, ELD, and MELD to address this area of concern. Through a targeted focus on the Common Core State Standards, we will use the data driven dialogue process to guide our improvement. All teachers have been trained in this structured, collaborative data analysis process which looks at student work and develops a clear action to achieve results.
- **Disproportionate Achievement Among Subgroups** – As stated earlier, our achievement is low, but on the rise. However, our data shows that our African American students are achieving at a significantly lower rate than Hispanic/Latino and English Learner subgroups. This disparity brings to light the importance of the implementation of the Academic English Mastery Program, (AEMP), which focuses on specific strategies to meet the needs of our Standard English Learners, (SEL). The research based access strategies that are used through the AEMP program will be imbedded in our plan and implemented through solid MELD instruction. Refer to Figures 1 and 2 which show disaggregated data for student subgroups.
- **Attendance** – Attendance has been a high priority for Woodcrest Elementary and for LAUSD. The district has supported our efforts in increasing attendance by providing a PSA attendance counselor to focus on improving our kindergarten attendance. In addition to district support, we have purchased one day of PSA services to help support school-wide attendance.

Fig 12: Attendance data by year



- **School-Wide Behavior** – While our suspension rate has been lowered significantly, it is still above the district average. We are working to lower it further through the continued refinement of our positive behavior management plan. A decrease in lost instructional minutes due to office referrals will result in an increase in student engagement and improved student outcomes. We

have developed a comprehensive behavior plan that will be discussed in more detail in the Turnaround portion of our plan.

Teachers will utilize the progressive discipline plan in which behaviors are rated by severity and most infractions are handled within the classroom. Students are only sent to the office after several classroom interventions have been attempted. Suspension is only used as a last resort.

In addition to the district provided Second Step violence prevention program, we will be launching an anti-bullying campaign led by our Wellness Facilitator and our Psychiatric Social Worker.

***2. Based on your analysis, please identify the most central and urgent issues/challenges that are hindering the school from improving student learning and achieving the vision of the successful future graduate and the school articulated above? What is the supporting evidence that leads you to identify the items listed above as high priorities?***

Based on the analysis of our data, we have identified the key instructional, behavioral, and operational priorities that are central to improving our student achievement: an emphasis on key content areas; Reading, Writing and Mathematics, a comprehensive School-wide Positive Behavior Plan, and improved school-wide attendance. We believe that these three key areas will significantly improve our school based on the research of many of the accepted models of school turnaround. Specifically, the WestEd School Turnaround Center describes, “Beating The Odds Schools”. Their research cites six characteristics of these transformational schools. They are:

1. Effective school leadership, 2. High quality committed teachers, 3. Rigorous, standards based curriculum driven by formative assessments that guide instruction, 4. Incorporate targeted ongoing professional development to ensure instructional quality, 5. Safe and supportive school environment that included parents and the community, and 6. Fiscal and human resources aligned to support student achievement. These six essential characteristics are the foundation for the development of our school Turnaround Plan.

### **C. School Turnaround**

***1. Building on the priority areas identified above as central to turning around your school, what specific strategies, practices, programs, policies, etc. must be employed to address each priority area? What do you expect will change as a result of implementing these strategies, practices, programs, policies, etc? What is the underlying theory/research that supports why you believe the strategies, practices, programs, policies, etc. identified above will dramatically improve student learning at your school?***

Based on our data, our priority areas are student achievement, school-wide behavior, and attendance. We have outlined the policies, programs, strategies, and practices that will allow us to continue to make progress towards our vision for all students. Under the leadership of our principal, we have already begun to turn our school around as evidenced by our API growth. We believe that by remaining focused on these key priorities, we will continue to improve student achievement quickly over the next few years.

### **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

#### ***Policies***

- Los Angeles Unified School district sets forth many policies that we feel are important to student achievement but need a deeper focus at Woodcrest. One of our continued goals will be on

Language support per the Master Plan through English Language Development, (ELD) or Mainstream English Language Development, (MELD) for all of our students. We group our students according to the Master Plan. Our large number of struggling EL's makes reclassification through strong ELD instruction and appropriate SDAIE strategies a top priority for our school.

- Our English Learners are our largest subgroup and are in need of specific strategies to help them access their grade level content. Through the support of our English Learner (EL) Coordinator and Access to Core Instructional Coach, teachers will receive training and support for both ELD and ELA.
- Thinking Maps and Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English, (SDAIE) strategies will continue to be utilized with individual support provided by the Instructional Coach as needed. We are committed to providing Standard English instruction using Academic English Mastery Program, (AEMP) strategies to all of our subgroups.
- Primary to our goal of increasing student achievement is our school-wide policy of adhering to our instructional schedules. One of our goals this year is to make sure that all students receive access to quality first teaching and appropriate intervention. Teachers are also receiving support in being well-planned in advance to limit the amount of instructional time lost during transitions between activities.
- All students need comprehensive instruction in vocabulary development and reading comprehension. These are two areas where data shows that our students face a significant level of difficulty. Treasures provides a procedure for vocabulary instruction. In addition to this suggested strategy, we will also use the Cognitive Content Dictionary as well as Thinking Maps across the grade levels. We will specifically address reading comprehension through our shift to the Common Core State Standards. Students will spend more time reading informational text. Teachers will focus on using text features, graphic organizers, and higher level/open ended questioning to increase student's reading comprehension.

Woodcrest currently uses standards based instructional materials designated by the district. We use California Treasures for ELA and ELD, enVision for Math, and FOSS Kits and Science Resource books for Science. Scott Foresman provides our Social Studies materials and Macmillan McGraw Hill's, Health and Wellness, is our Health text. We utilize and will strengthen the use of Second Step as our anti-violence program. We plan to utilize the above research based programs with fidelity as a means of increasing student achievement. In order to increase rigor and begin implementation of the Common Core State Standards, Woodcrest teachers have researched and are incorporating additional supplemental programs to meet student needs.

### ***Programs/ Practices***

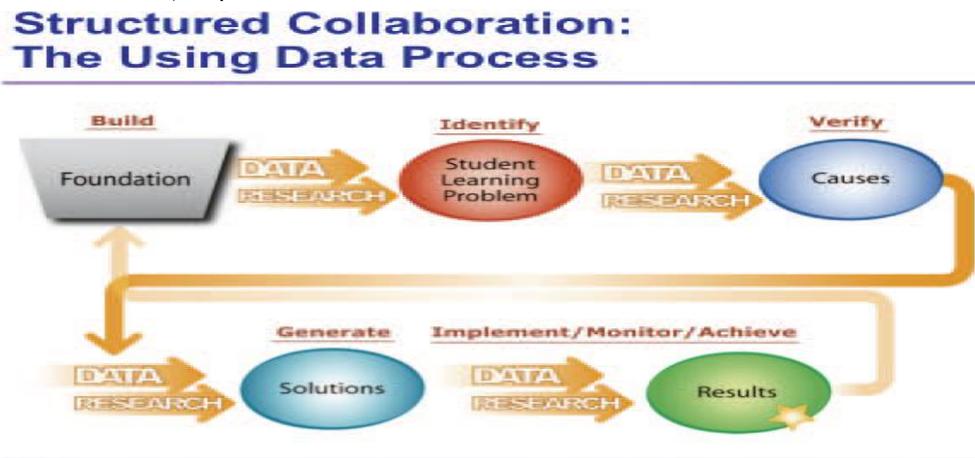
Over the years, many programs were purchased and implemented, but may have been incongruent with the core and were often discontinued after only a minimal period of use. Based on our first-year implementation of targeted new programs, staff collaboratively reflected and agreed on continuing the most effective ones. We are focused on our vision and long term goals. Over half of the staff has attended professional development on their own time to deepen their understanding and better serve their students. Woodcrest is committed to the specific programs which we feel are instrumental in increasing our student achievement. Teachers are now refining their implementation of the following.

- Last year, we engaged in the Data Driven Dialogue process with the Research For Better Teaching organization. Our grade level chairs and administrative team learned the process of collaborative inquiry which involves scrutinizing data, highlighting trends, and surmising causal factors. Participants then became data coaches for each grade level and the process was implemented school-wide. There is a focus on analyzing student work to locate misconceptions

and then teaching or re-teaching appropriate skills. When used in conjunction with Lesson Study, which involves teachers using data to create, observe, and refine a lesson, we believe we will make a tremendous impact on student achievement. The skills taught through the Data Driven Dialogue and Lesson Study processes will influence the culture of the school to be one in which data is used continuously, collaboratively, and effectively to improve teaching and learning.

This program encompasses the strategies of data literacy, facilitation, leadership for sustainability, and cultural proficiency. This process can be used on multiple data sources such as formative and summative assessments and student work samples. Grade level data teams undergo cycles of planning, implementing, and monitoring instructional improvement. This process provides opportunities to reflect on instructional practices, student grouping, and differentiation for diverse students.

*Fig 13: Data analysis process*



The policy regarding implementation of the Data Driven Dialogue process will be the framework for how we approach reflective inquiry, collaboration, and data analysis. This program was implemented across the grade levels and will continue to be used as a structure for grade level collaboration time to increase student achievement.

- The Growing Educators program focuses on the Writers Workshop model based on the work of Lucy Calkins. The strategies include a mini lesson on a specific strategy, followed by peer collaboration, independent writing, and reflection. Think Pair Share, graphic organizers, and co-created reference charts foster independence as well as provide support for English Learners, Standard English Learners, and Special Education Students.

In addition to students becoming self-directed writers, we have found students are producing a greater volume of high quality writing. This will prepare them for the switch to the Common Core State Standards with their heavy focus on writing. The program also includes a peer coaching model that provides teachers with real-time classroom management techniques and immediate feedback. In addition to Writers Workshop, the Growing Educators consultants will also begin guiding Woodcrest through the process of Shared Reading and Readers Workshop this year.

Our policy regarding Growing Educators Writers Workshop is that it will be implemented in all classrooms daily. Teachers will collaborate as grade levels to analyze writing samples in order to

inform instruction and create small group differentiation. The forty-five minute Writers Workshop block has been delineated on the instructional schedule and each grade level has a developed a year-long pacing plan to address the genres required by the state writing standards. We attribute a large portion of our increase in English Language Arts on the CST to the inclusion of this program. As the teachers grow in their level of use and familiarity with the program, we believe the scores will continue to rise. In these tough budgetary times, we prioritized our funding resources to include this invaluable program to continue our rewarding work around writing.

- In our current and future global society, we recognize the importance of being able to use technology. To meet this need, we have funded the purchase of thirty laptops for our new computer lab. Students will rotate through the lab to work on math, literacy, writing, and computer literacy. We have also provided laptops, document camera, and LCD projectors to bring technology to our instruction. We are in the process of providing SMARTBoards for all classrooms and our implementation is near completion. Our literacy and math programs, Treasures and enVision, have digital components which our teachers are able to present to students. Teachers in kindergarten through third grade have iPads for use with DIBELS assessments, but are also able to use the technology for instruction. Our technology committee continues to provide training for teachers and explores new ways that teachers can use technology in the classroom.
- Another program that was engaging and motivating for the students was the STAR hands-on science program for 5<sup>th</sup> grade. STAR Education is a nonprofit enrichment program which has been selected as a model program by the US Department of Education. Students received abstract science concepts in a student-friendly science lab delivered by a professional science instructor. The program also had a project based afterschool science program. Our 5<sup>th</sup> grade students rotated bi-weekly through a series of experiments designed to strengthen their core science knowledge. Teachers reported a deeper understanding of scientific concepts by themselves and their students. These lessons supported the students in the process of inquiry and exploration while meeting the State Standards for science. Teachers also shared that observing the STAR Science lessons improved their practice by providing a framework for teaching hands-on constructivist lessons in all curricular areas. Inspired by the STAR lessons, 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers began to collaborate around better use of resources such as the FOSS Kit. As shown in Figure 3, we saw a drastic increase in our 5<sup>th</sup> grade science scores as a direct result of the concepts learned.
- A key policy which supports the implementation of our programs and practices is our work on Instructional Rounds with our director, Ileana Davalos. As she guides the administrative team through observing the components of the Teaching and Learning Framework, teachers receive direct feedback on improving their practice. During our walk-throughs with the director, we monitor student to student and student to teacher interaction to insure that our EL's are well supported. Teachers have reported that the specific feedback has been very helpful in improving instruction. The administrative team has also grown from this process. Reviewing the Framework, observing and scripting a lesson, and then debriefing allows the team to calibrate their definitions of what to look for when observing a classroom. This walk-through cycle of observation, feedback, and accountability for recommendations occurs at least twice a month and is slated to continue throughout the school year. As we further deepen our knowledge of this process, we will begin including teachers on the visits so that teachers begin peer observation and become able to identify quality instruction.

- Many of our students are extremely far below grade level and require more intense support to catch up. Each member of the administrative team also engages in small group intervention. First grade is supported by an intervention teacher who spends two hours a day with the three lowest performing classes based on DIBELS data. The teacher is in class and pulls a small group of intensive students for targeted work on the grade level skills the students are missing. Second and third grade are served by the Instructional Coach who does an intense reteaching of vital grade level skills. This intervention had a large impact on our second grade scores. Due to our lack of funding, we were unable to continue the *Language!* reading program for entire classes of our older non-readers. Therefore, our Title I Coordinator is seeing a group of fourth grade struggling readers daily and giving them the *Language!* program. Fifth grade is supported by the Access to Core Instructional Coach. Teachers receive targeted support on strategies to help students with language needs access their grade level content. The coach also models comprehension and vocabulary activities with small groups. In essence, each grade level is supporting the needs of students through beneficial whole group and small group strategies.

Another program that was cited as being beneficial for our students was our CST Bootcamp Tutoring. We conducted six week tutoring sessions during the months before the CST. Our strategy was to begin a six week session with the BB and FBB students to reinforce reading comprehension and vocabulary development strategies. Using the same strategies, we then targeted the Basic and borderline Proficient students during the final session six weeks before the CST. There was a final round of tutoring during which teachers chose students from their classes to work with after school in preparation for the CST. A similar model will be followed this year.

### Strategies

- In support of this comprehensive list of programs, practices, and policies we have adopted, there are many strategies we have put in place to support our priority areas. We will continue our implementation of the SMART, (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound) Goals process. During this process, our teachers look at their assessment data and design a plan of action for each student. These goals are turned in to the principal and teachers are supported by the principal in the implementation of the goals. This support includes data conferences between the principal and teacher, classroom visitations to observe instructional delivery related to goals, and grade level collaboration to adjust and design strategies for meeting the SMART Goals.
- Though our students are growing in their knowledge, as evidenced by our improving test scores, we remain significantly below our targets in math as well as ELA. In math, our focus will be a school-wide system of reinforcing the basic facts and engaging in rigorous problem solving. The focus will also be on quality first teaching. Students will use manipulatives to gain a concrete understanding of grade level skills and will engage in conversations around math. The book, Classroom Discussions, by Chapin, O'Connor, and Anderson, is the model our teachers will use to increase our students' conversations around math. When students have to defend their reasoning or critique the reasoning of a classmate, they will gain a deeper understanding of the concepts they are learning. Defending one's reasoning is also a part of district's first wave of Common Core State Standards implementation.
- Differentiation is a strategy that will be enhanced school-wide. It is impossible to meet the needs of every student if instruction is only delivered whole group. The administrative team will guide the teachers in implementing small group differentiation across all grade levels in reading, writing, and math. The Instructional Coaches will plan the small group instruction with their

grade levels and then model delivery of the lessons as needed. Coaches will also create professional development sessions on how to plan, organize, and manage small group instruction.

**SCHOOL-WIDE BEHAVIOR**

**Policy**

Woodcrest Elementary follows the Los Angeles Unified School District Discipline Foundation Policy. It is based on the philosophy that “every student has the right to be educated in a safe, respectful and welcoming environment. Every educator has the right to teach in an atmosphere free from disruption and obstacles that impede learning. It includes teaching school rules and social emotional skills; reinforcing appropriate student behavior, using effective classroom management and positive behavior support strategies by providing early intervention for misconduct and appropriate use of consequences.”

Our goals are to create consistencies throughout our school and that administrators, teachers, staff, students, and parents understand the policy and take responsibility for their own roles at the school. Student Study Teams and Grade Level Teams will be responsible for analyzing behavior and recommending appropriate discipline that is both progressive and effective. All staff will be required to monitor, reinforce and acknowledge appropriate behavior. Part of our policy is that the Local School Leadership Council will work together with parents, students and teachers to ensure the successful implementation of the plan.

A focus will be on prevention and intervention strategies. At-risk students will be identified and strategies will be developed to prevent loss of instruction due to behavior. We will be using the Guiding Principles for the School Community: Respect, Responsibility, Appreciation of Differences, Honesty, Safety and Life-Long Learning. Based on these Guiding Principles we have developed three student expectations: Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible. These simple but effective student expectations will be visible throughout the school; they will be talked about at assemblies. They are part of our classroom expectations and our school-wide procedures.

*Fig 14: The 3 B's of student behavior*

<b>Our School Rules:</b>	<b>Be Safe</b>	<b>Be Responsible</b>	<b>Be Respectful</b>
Cafeteria/Breakfast in the Classroom  Auditorium  (Rainy Day)	☆ Walk ☆ Sit at your assigned table ☆ Keep food to yourself	☆ Wait patiently in line until you're served ☆ Clean up all trash ☆ Stay seated until dismissed	☆ Use quiet voices ☆ Follow directions
Playground	☆ Stay in assigned area ☆ Walk to and from area ☆ Keep hands and feet to yourself	☆ Use bathroom and get water before the bell when the red flag is raised ☆ Follow the rules of the game	☆ Share equipment ☆ Play fairly ☆ Everyone can play
Bathroom	☆ Flush toilet and wash your hands ☆ One person to a stall	☆ Use the bathroom and then leave ☆ Return to your classroom promptly ☆ Conserve supplies (toilet paper, water, soap)	☆ Give people privacy ☆ Keep bathrooms clean

Hallways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☆ Walk in the hallways</li> <li>☆ Walk up and down stairs holding the handrail</li> <li>☆ Watch for opening doors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☆ Enjoy the bulletin boards and respect work of others</li> <li>☆ Stay out of the hallways unless you need to be there</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☆ Use quiet voices</li> <li>☆ Hold the door for people behind you</li> </ul>
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We will continue to use the program Second Step to teach conflict resolution, empathy, and anger management among our students. In addition to Second Step, we also have the benefit of a student leadership program coming to our campus this year. Selected students will be trained to empower Woodcrest’s students by bringing their concerns to the administration, being role models for their fellow students, and helping to mediate conflicts between their peers.

One of the important components that we will be launching is our Anti-Bullying Campaign. Bullying includes aggressive behavior, real or perceived. Typically it is repeated and includes hurtful words and actions. We will involve stakeholders, including parents, students, teachers, administrators and community members to understand what bullying is and to feel safe reporting it as soon as possible. We will be providing lessons, professional development and parent education with the goal of decreasing the amount of bullying at our school. Our Wellness Facilitator will lead this important work.

***Strategies***

We know that positive reinforcement is a key in developing a positive school culture. At Woodcrest Elementary we believe that every student is a scholar, and when students achieve their academic goals we want to recognize their accomplishments. Students will be given certificates and incentives for achievement in Language Arts, Math, and Attendance. We believe that good attendance is essential for academic success and students will be rewarded for being at school. Students who receive recognition will have their photographs posted on the Woodcrest ES Website.

In addition to individual accomplishments, we want to promote unity and a team spirit at our school. We will reinforce this school-wide positive behavior and community spirit through our Excellence Dollars Incentive Program. Classes earn dollars for exemplary behavior and can exchange their Dollars for various incentives such as classroom parties at lunch.

At Woodcrest Elementary, we recognize that good citizenship and hard work deserves to be rewarded. Each month teachers will recognize one student that has shown notable improvement or excellence in academics or behavior. Students will be presented with a certificate and Student of the Month Decal during our Monday Morning Assembly. Parents will be notified when their child will be receiving this prestigious award.

The Caught Being Good program rewards individual students for the Three B’s: Be Safe, Be Responsible and Be Respectful. A prize drawing will be held monthly during the Monday Morning Assembly.

In an effort to improve the classroom management and student engagement, we plan to read as a staff, Teach Like A Champion, by Doug Lemov. This book is comprised of comprehensive classroom management techniques that have been proven to increase engagement and decrease the loss of instructional minutes due to classroom disruption. Another book we will study is, Teaching With Poverty In Mind, by Eric Jensen which will help our teachers strengthen relationships with parents, students and the community.

## ATTENDANCE

Woodcrest Elementary builds upon the LAUSD District-Wide Student Attendance Policy. We emphasize the importance of school attendance for students, staff and teachers. To help achieve this goal we have developed an Attendance Review Team comprised of the Principal, EL Coordinator, School Administrative Assistant, APEIS, PSA Counselor and the Intervention Coordinator.

The team uses a tiered approach to identify specific strategies to improve attendance. Attendance policies and expectations are reviewed for all students. We provide students with incentives for coming to school daily and on time. We utilize visual aids around the school site to reinforce the importance of coming to school.

We monitor our attendance daily and we identify students that have more than seven absences, or are close to having seven absences as At Risk. We schedule a meeting with the students and parents to review the attendance policy and discuss the reasons for their absences. If students continue to have chronic absences we provide additional intervention and monitoring, and develop an individual contract/plan for students and their parents. For students who have chronic absences and tardies, we hold a Student Study Team Meeting with parents, students, and teachers. We revisit and revise the individual contract/plan for students and their parents. If necessary, we refer the student to the Student Attendance Review Board (SARB).

School employees are also encouraged to have improved attendance. It is our goal to maximize teacher time in class with students. We encourage teachers to maintain regular attendance and also minimize time away from the classroom due to professional development. Our professional development model has been restructured using a coaching approach where trainers are providing on the job training. We feel that this is more effective, and students do not lose valuable instructional minutes due to teacher training during class time.

Our teachers have preparations in place for substitutes when they are necessary to ensure that instruction continues. Substitute folders are located in the office. When possible, teachers utilize the buddy system where teachers team together and students do not lose instructional minutes. We believe that by implementing the above named strategies, we will reach our attendance goals.

***2. Describe the culture and climate (academic and non-academic) that is central to turning around your school and aligns with the instructional philosophy above. Why do you believe the culture described is one that will turn around your school? What research supports the actions you plan to take and the changes you expect to see?***

The school culture we strive to create involves a positive learning and working environment for all stakeholders. We want to see teachers who are supported, motivated and empowered. Our principal has begun this change by setting a positive tone and acknowledging the hard work and dedication of the teachers. In that context, she is able to lower their affective filter and bring them onboard for the changes that must occur for us to continue to grow. In the book, Cultural Proficiency, by Randall Lindsey et al, it is stated that an important characteristic of an effective leader and effective staff is taking responsibility for one's own learning. Having a vision and understanding the organic and structural nature of the school was also cited. This growth requires an incredible amount of effort on the part of everyone involved and building shared leadership is essential to create a positive culture and climate.

This shift in the interaction between teachers and administration has improved communication and made teachers more receptive to focusing their efforts in a positive direction. Additional collaboration time and

clearly set administrative expectations, have given the teachers a roadmap to increase student achievement. The principal visits classrooms and gives specific feedback on what is working and what needs to change. The administrative team also visits classrooms biweekly with the director doing observations based on the Teaching and Learning Framework. Feedback data is then provided within a day of the visits. The information is received and assimilated by the teachers more smoothly due to the tone and manner in which the information is conveyed. We focus on building trust, and a sense of appreciation, school pride, and community. We have become a team and are committed to pushing ourselves to and beyond our achievement goals.

We want students to feel valued and safe at school. We will continue to support these goals by instilling a feeling of ownership for the students of the school. We want Woodcrest students to learn to care for and protect their school and then transfer those skills to caring for and protecting their community. We will engender the feeling of campus pride by involving the students in our upcoming beautification projects.

In the book, Teaching With Poverty In Mind, by Eric Jensen, the author states that while emotions such as sadness, joy, and anger come naturally to all people, more complex constructs like compassion, sympathy, patience, and cooperation must be taught. To begin to teach the character traits we want our Woodcrest Tigers to take into their future, they will work together to plant and tend a Peace Garden. With the exception of the outside lawn, the school currently has no green areas. On the benches of the Peace Garden, students will be taught to resolve problems using the strategies they have learned from the Second Step behavioral management curriculum. The school is also learning a song to promote peace. It will be sung at school gatherings and promotes thoughtfulness as it spreads the message that peace begins with each individual. Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) states, “The education of the child shall be directed to the spirit of understanding peace, tolerance, and friendship among all peoples”. By teaching our students respect and peace and continuing our school-wide campaign against bullying, we intend to see a reduction in the number of suspensions and behavioral referrals to the office. Once we establish how to treat each other, learning will flourish.

Another opportunity to improve the culture and climate of Woodcrest is our partnership with the organization KaBOOM! This wonderful non-profit national organization is dedicated to saving play. They work with low income organizations to involve the local community in building custom playgrounds. KaBOOM! has chosen to support Woodcrest in the planning and building of a brand new custom designed play area. The organization brings the community together by enlisting the entire community, students, teachers, administrators, parents, and other community members, to design and even build the playground. The children currently do not have a park within walking distance and our present playground equipment is outdated. Parents who were surveyed reported they keep their children inside due to the high crime rate in the neighborhood. So, having a school created playground will add enjoyment and exercise to the children’s school days and give them a sense of ownership and belonging in the school. Office referral data shows that the majority of our suspensions and classroom disruptions grow out of disturbances on the yard. Having adequate playground equipment and enjoyable activities will decrease the number of students who begin self created games which easily turn into altercations.

At Woodcrest Elementary, we believe every child is a scholar and we have created a culture of being college bound and career ready. Each of our grade levels has adopted a college and participates in activities such as a college parade, wearing college T-shirts on Monday, and creating display boards with college admission requirements and information. Last year, we were visited by City Year which is an organization that increases college awareness by promoting campus beautification. Fifty college students painted college murals, slogans, motivational phrases, and words of encouragement across Woodcrest’s campus. They also spoke to all fourth and fifth grade classrooms and shared information about their college of attendance. They encouraged and motivated students to attend college by sharing their personal experiences of college life. We believe this emphasis on having a college going culture creates an awareness of the possibilities that are available for our students.

***3. How will you engage your school community, faculty, staff, students and parents so that they are able to understand and effectively implement elements of the instructional philosophy and turnaround plan***

***3a. Given your community context, what needs to true for your colleagues, students and parents to join you in the transformation of our school?***

In order for the school community to join in the transformation of the school we need to create a supportive environment for our colleagues, a sense of ownership for our students, and a feeling of inclusion for our parents.

Our 2012 Academic Performance Index of 645 marks a 46 point growth over 2011 and the highest API in the history of Woodcrest. While it is understood by all that the growth was positive, it is also understood by all that we still have much work to do. The school community must stay committed to the positive direction in which we are headed. Key to this statement is the understanding that this road to transformation will require a tremendous amount of effort for all members of our team. However, we must commonly agree to continually refine our plan of action and keep pushing forward until we meet our goals.

To maintain a supportive environment for our professional learning community, we will rely on a strong instructional leadership team based on shared decision-making, where all members of the community are accountable for the success of all students. Positive attitudes and a renewed commitment to the profession will be a high priority as evidenced by a focus on collaboration and professional development that builds a “team spirit” and a “can do” attitude at our school site. We will not focus on those issues like poverty and transience which are outside of our control. We will, however, look at our data and put our full energy into those areas like quality instruction, strong classroom management, and culturally responsive teaching strategies, where we can make a positive change. Our teaching staff has embraced this plan for our school. We have their commitment because they were involved in the planning stages. The tenets of this plan were formed based on the input of school staff, students, and parents.

Our students are the most important part of our plan. We strive for our students to feel a sense of value. We want students to see this as their school and to take an active role in their education. Woodcrest Elementary is committed to providing consistent access for all students to standards-based curricula that embody high expectations for academic achievement, as well as differentiated instruction that takes into account different learning styles, socio-cultural influences and possible learning disabilities so that students receive individualized, personalized learning. The students deserve an instructional focus shaped by communication of high expectations, cultural sensitivity, active teaching methods, small group instruction, teacher as facilitator of dialogue and student controlled classroom discourse.

Socio-emotional development is also key to students having a sense of ownership. Students participate in the Student Involvement, Development, and Engagement group. This leadership group provides students with a forum to not only share ideas about their school, but to act on bringing their ideas to reality. They work on such projects as how to improve the school playground and what events are important and meaningful to them. In addition, upper grade students act as play-leaders and peer mediators to the younger students.

We also need to continue to engage our parents as partners. We will continue to utilize our website, [www.woodcrest-laUSD-ca.schoolloop.com](http://www.woodcrest-laUSD-ca.schoolloop.com), to communicate with parents and share important information regarding our school. In addition to fliers and newsletters, we also utilize the Connect Ed system to contact parents on the telephone for important announcements.

The community members are eager volunteers. Many are seen volunteering in the classrooms, on the playground and in the Parent Center. During the school year 2011-2012, over 100 parents were invited to our Volunteer Tea! The Parent Center serves as a place to complete projects for teachers, gather information about community resources and attend small group workshops. In addition, our community representative and our Health and Wellness Facilitator work to bring resources to our parents in the area of parent education workshops that support the academic achievement of their child and that support the social emotional well-being of families.

Our parents and caregivers must feel welcomed at school. From the moment they step on campus, we want them to be greeted and treated with respect. We will continue to train our office staff to welcome and provide prompt assistance to parents and the public at large. We feel that it is important that information is provided to them in their home language and translation is provided when necessary. We recently purchased a headphone translation system to make communication as effective as possible.

In addition to attending School Site Council and English Language Advisory Committee meetings, parents are invited to attend Back to School Night, Open House, Poetry Slam, Math and Literacy Nights, Community Reads Days and English as A Second Language Classes. Our parents are eager to support the school and have worked diligently to reactivate the Parent Teacher Association. For our plan to be successful, we need the continued support of our parents.

***3b. Given your community context, how are you going to share, communicate, and generate interest and excitement about your plan for turning around your school?***

Our growth in API for 2012 provided a much needed spark of enthusiasm with the knowledge that we can move our students into greater proficiency. The school community recognizes that Woodcrest is moving in the right direction. In addition, our School Site Council and English Language Advisory Committee provide a forum for active parents who receive updates on the status of the school including educational issues and budgetary issues. This year we are revitalizing our Parent Teacher Association. They too will be well informed and supportive in the continued transformation of our school.

On a regular basis a Coffee Chat is held with interested parents and the Principal. Parents are invited to the library to enjoy coffee and pastries, while the principal shares updates, and engages the parents in discussions about various aspects of the school. Teachers will communicate with parents of students in their classes about the turnaround of the school. They will have opportunities during conferences, school wide events, and their classroom newsletter where they will communicate success and generate excitement.

Another opportunity to generate excitement is through celebration of academic achievement and social emotional success. Our parents are invited to monthly assemblies where students are celebrated for their success in the classroom and in attaining perfect attendance.

We need to continue to reach out to the parents and make them partners in our growth. We have three parent volunteers on our plan writing committee and we use them along with the parent center as liaisons to obtain information from other parents who are unable to attend school meetings and functions. However, we are aware that we need to do more to reach out to our African American parents. We have a much lower number of African American parents involved. One way we plan to remedy this is to create a flyer which highlights our recent improvements and gives some information on our plan for continued growth. As a staff, we will greet parents before and after to school to introduce ourselves, discuss that flyer, and give personal invitations to the PTA and the various other parent activities on campus. Our

goal is to maintain our currently involved core of parent volunteers and grow our PTA, with some of those new members being our African American parents.

#### **D. Implementation**

##### ***1. How will you monitor the implementation of your proposed turnaround efforts?***

As a Professional Learning Community, the faculty and staff of Woodcrest asked the critical question, “How will we know that what we are doing is working?” Our plan is a living document and is set up to be an ongoing and reflective process of continual improvement. With the use of the Data Driven Dialogue Process and the Instructional Rounds, we have a system in place that allows us to monitor and reflect whether or not the programs, policies, and strategies are producing the desired impact. Grade levels have the flexibility to recalibrate and adjust instruction as needed based on the data.

Woodcrest Elementary will use multiple measures administered throughout the year to monitor progress based on our key priorities. We have identified three key priorities; student achievement, school-wide behavior, and attendance. We have developed a comprehensive implementation plan that outlines our priorities, timelines, and responsibilities that will promote accountability and personal responsibility for the implementation of our plan as outlined below. The plan we have outlined builds on the successful changes we began to implement last year which resulted in our academic growth.

##### ***Student Achievement***

We have developed and will continue to revisit the specific skills necessary to reach benchmarks for proficiency and further growth. We have developed a comprehensive assessment plan that not only incorporates on-going District benchmark assessments but also provides students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. The following chart highlights the District mandated assessments we will administer to monitor our progress toward higher student achievement.

**Fig 14: School Assessment Plan, (Weekly Common Grade Level Assessments not listed)**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Kinder</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Grade</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Grade</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Grade</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>
<b>August</b>	DIBELS	DIBELS	DIBELS	DIBELS		
<b>September</b>						
<b>October</b>	Math Periodic1	Math Periodic1	Math Periodic1 LPA 1	Math Periodic1 LPA 1	Math Periodic1 LPA /Science1	Math Periodic1 LPA/Science1
<b>November</b>						
<b>December</b>						
<b>January</b>	Math Periodic2 DIBELS	Math Periodic2 DIBELS	Math Periodic2 DIBELS	Math Periodic2 DIBELS	Math Periodic2 Science 2	Math Periodic2 Science 2
<b>February</b>	LPA Writing 1	LPA Writing 1	LPA 2	LPA 2	LPA 2	LPA 2
<b>March</b>	Math Periodic 3	Math Periodic 3	Math Periodic3 OLSAT	Math Periodic3	Math Periodic 3 CST Writing	Math Periodic3
<b>April</b>			CST	CST	Science 3 CST	Science 3 CST Reading Placement
<b>May</b>	DIBELS Writing 2	DIBELS Writing 2	DIBELS	DIBELS	LPA 3	LPA 3 Math Placement
<b>June</b>						

Teachers will engage in a continual process of inquiry using the Data Dialogue Process. This systemic approach to analyzing student data to inform instruction will be implemented in all grade levels. The Data Dialogue process will help the teachers reflect on the effectiveness of what they are doing. Teachers will engage in the process during grade level collaboration time which is provided on a weekly basis. A member of the administrative team is assigned to each grade level and attends weekly grade level meetings to assist in the process and ensure accountability of set outcomes. The school's Leadership Team meets bi-monthly and is attended by the data coaches, (grade level chairs), who are responsible for presenting the work accomplished by their grade level. Their progress will be added to our school data wall which is a visual reminder of the where we are going and how we are getting there.

We believe that ongoing classroom observations are the key to monitoring and improving instruction. Research shows that good first teaching minimizes the need for intervention and maximizes student engagement, thereby reducing disruptive behaviors and loss of instructional time. We have developed a system around the Teaching and Learning Framework where we conduct instructional rounds to look for specific features of quality instruction that are evident in each classroom. The constructive feedback given to the teachers following a team visit provides direct evidence as whether or not we are meeting the goals set forth in our plan. These visits will be conducted bi-weekly with the leadership team, which is comprised of the director, principal, instructional coaches, coordinators, and eventually, teachers.

Writers Workshop is another area of focus for our school. The process of Peer Coaching includes built-in monitoring through side-by-side assistance provided during an actual lesson by our Growing Educators consultants. There is immediate accountability for the strategies and processes that teachers received during the workshop professional development. Every classroom is visited by a Growing Educators professional to provide assistance and ensure the program is implemented with fidelity. Immediate support is given to the teacher through, demonstration, co-teaching, and instantaneous feedback on effective delivery of instruction. Visits are facilitated according to Fall and Spring cycles which consist of a full day Professional Development, a Lab Demonstration day where teachers have an opportunity to see a lesson in a classroom with students, and finally, two side-by-side coaching days where every teacher is visited and receives personal feedback.

Instructional Conversations, which is a strategy in the classroom to increase engagement and stimulate student accountable talk. They are an essential element of our goal to deliver quality first instruction and are a key component of our ELA and math curriculum. We know that the more that students are engaged in rich peer conversation, their understanding of the concept is deepened and the teacher takes on the role of facilitator in the learning process. This allows students to become more self-directed learners which is our ultimate goal. This newly adopted approach to teaching and problem solving aligns with the Common Core State Standards, where students will be required to articulate their understanding of grade level concepts. Through use of open-ended, higher order questioning techniques across the subject areas, children deepen their understanding and formulate approaches to solving complex problems. For example, math tasks using manipulatives and multiple solution paths provide students an opportunity to work cooperatively to solve a problem in a variety of ways. The book, Classroom Discussions, by, Chapin, O'Connor, and Anderson, explains how to get students to have meaningful discussions around math in which they articulate their understanding of the concept and defend their reasoning. This is in line with the Common Core State Standards Mathematical Practice 3, which is the district's focus for this year's implementation. These Instructional Conversations will be monitored through our ongoing classroom observations conducted by the administrative team. Also, the process of Lesson Study, where teachers get an opportunity to review data, create a lesson, observe lesson delivery, and refine the lesson as peers, will empower teachers to engage in peer monitoring and be that collegial sounding board to critique and adjust instruction. We will begin this process in the Spring semester based on the needs identified from our formative assessments administered in the Fall.

### ***School-Wide Behavior***

We will monitor our progress toward improving our school-wide behavior by keeping a close watch on the number and type of office referrals we receive. The Discipline Committee will oversee this process. Several components such as, the incentive plan, the 3 B's, anti-bullying, staff book studies, have been included in our plan to reduce the number of office referrals and subsequent suspensions. We will know by the number of behavior referrals received in the office whether or not we are successful. The type of referral will be monitored to see which area of focus needs to be adjusted. Chronic behaviors will be referred to the COST team to work with staff and parents to determine the underlying factors and create a plan of action. These monitoring measures will be overseen by our Wellness Facilitator, our Psychiatric Social Worker, and our Intervention Coordinator. We will continue to make referrals to outside agencies as necessary. Parents and students will be surveyed quarterly to assess the effectiveness of our behavior plan.

### ***Attendance***

To motivate students to attend school regularly, we will be consistent with our attendance incentive program. We will provide monthly recognition for perfect attendance by providing certificates to families at an assembly. We will also make announcements regarding attendance on our website and in our monthly newsletter.

We will monitor our progress toward improving our attendance by closely tracking our daily absences and keeping track of students with excessive absences. We will create a form for teachers to help the PSA monitor students with multiple absences, especially those which are unexcused. This form will serve as an early warning system so that our PSA counselors can quickly address truancy problems. Should intervention by the PSA prove unsuccessful in remedying multiple absences, families will be referred to SARB for further action.

### ***2. What are the most significant barriers you foresee to successfully implementing the strategies, practices, programs, policies, etc. identified for turning around your school?***

#### **Foreseeable Challenges/Barriers to Implementation**

Given that the majority of this plan is already in place and is proving to be successful, we are already addressing some of the challenges and barriers we encountered. The administration has the unified support of the teachers and staff. We are committed to improving the achievement of our students. However, there are some challenges inherent to working within the confines of a school day, a school year, and district mandates. Providing adequate time for thoroughly understanding policies, programs, and strategies is a challenge to thoughtful and systemic implementation. Finding time to be consistent in monitoring and carrying out the components is also difficult. Monitoring is especially important to make sure that our success is supported by the data and that all programs are implemented with fidelity. Having the necessary personnel available to support the turnaround process is another barrier to success, as well as having the resources to fund components as necessary.

One of the challenges that is unique to Woodcrest is that we have been in the Public School Choice process for several years. Parents have heard many different messages about the outcome of this process. Our challenge is to effectively communicate the process as it exists now, and how it will positively impact our school.

### **How these Challenges/Barriers will be addressed**

Given that time to implement the plan is a challenge we realize that we must be relentless in our focus on our priorities. Every available minute will be dedicated to collegial dialogue around data, implementation and student outcomes. As a result of this commitment we have restructured our professional development model so the focus is more towards a system of examining and analyzing student work. The administration has dedicated to providing at least one hour per week to grade level collaboration. Each grade level will participate in the Data Driven Dialogue process once a month. The first week of the month grade levels will choose an activity or project based on data and student needs. The second and third weeks are dedicated for grade level teams to analyze student work. Through these findings staff will reflect on classroom instruction, procedures, grouping and planning. The last week will be dedicated to planning common lessons, activities and assessments for the upcoming month cycle. Vertical teaming will take place on months with five weeks. Faculty meetings will be kept at a minimum and if necessary, will be held after grade level meetings. Most information will be shared through email, weekly bulletins and through the Leadership Team. We believe that this cycle of systematically embedded professional development will make time less of an obstacle.

Consistency and fidelity will be monitored by administrator visits to the classroom, Instructional Rounds, and the Data Driven Dialogue process. Reconnecting to the vision and our purpose often will motivate and keep everyone focused. The introduction of a Data Wall will generate conversation and keep us moving forward.

The Public School Choice Office has been holding parent meetings to communicate requirements of being included as a Public School Choice 4.0 school. Newsletters of Frequently Asked Questions have been released. There are materials available in English and Spanish in the Office and Parent Center. Three parents consistently provided feedback as members of the writing team. Our principal meets with parents daily, has an open door policy and visits the Parent Center often. Connect Ed messages are sent out in Spanish and English over the telephone. We feel that continued open communication will build bridges between the school and parents.

Focusing on our vision, reconnecting to our commitments, and making sure that all resources and money are geared towards our goals will continue to ensure our success and eliminate or lower our challenges and barriers.

### **E. Alternative Governance Model and Autonomies**

Woodcrest Elementary has chosen to follow a Traditional model of governance at the current time. However, as we begin to implement our currently proposed plan and build our framework of success, we are interested in exploring alternative governance models. We are interested in becoming a Local Initiative School under the LAUSD-UTLA Local School Stabilization and Empowerment Initiative. During the coming year, we will be educating the staff on the ramifications of the change and getting their input. In the meantime, we have taken the basic tenets of the plan we are currently submitting and have asked all staff to voluntarily pledge their commitment to our instructional philosophy. It is our intention to create a solid instructional team of teachers who are able to embrace the changes we started last year and will continue to implement.

## **F. School Planning Team**

### ***1. Who are the members of your planning team? (A. who is leader/how identified? B. who are members? Credentials? C. how chosen?)***

**Kery Jackson, Principal** – Ms. Jackson is our group leader and holds her multi-subject teaching credential, an administrative credential, and a master’s degree in educational leadership. She brings to the team 22 years of experience, nine of which have been spent as an administrator. This is her second year at Woodcrest Elementary. She helped to successfully guide her previous school through the Public School Choice process and brings the knowledge of how to transform a school to the writing team.

**Ms. Olivette Jones, Parent Representative** – Ms. Jones is the grandparent of a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade student. She has been involved at Woodcrest for four years. She volunteered for the writing team because she visits the classroom regularly and noticed a pattern of children struggling with reading. She also noticed the prevalence of African American males in the office for behavior issues and wanted to be involved in changing that trend.

**Ms. Mazariegos, Parent Representative** – Ms. Mazariegos is a parent to a 5<sup>th</sup> and a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade student. She has been involved at Woodcrest for 6 years. She volunteered for the writing team because she wants the school to improve and succeed. She wants her children to get a good education in a safe learning environment.

**Mr. Bryan Davis, Parent Representative** – Mr. Davis is a parent to four students in grades K, 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup>. His children have attended Woodcrest for one year. He volunteered for the writing team out of his concern for the education of his own children and for the education of the children in his community. He has experience in reorganizing and transforming organizations and has shared that knowledge with the writing team.

**Melissa Heckman, Access to Core Instructional Coach** – Ms. Heckman has 13 years of teaching experience, with the last 6 spent as an instructional coach. She has been at Woodcrest for the last 3 years. She possesses CLEAR Multi-Subject general education teaching credential. She was chosen for the writing team based on her instructional experience, writing ability, and commitment to the students and staff of Woodcrest.

**Martina Robles, Third Grade Teacher** – Ms. Robles possesses her general education teaching credential and has a combined total of 21 years of teaching experience. Her first 7 years were done in Mexico and her last 14 years were done here in the US. She has been at Woodcrest for 3 years. She was selected for the writing team based on her willingness to do the hard work involved with increasing student proficiency. Having come to Woodcrest from a higher performing school, Ms. Robles has a special insight into the changes that must be made.

**Keven Kelly, Fifth Grade Teacher** – Mr. Kelly has 14 years of teaching experience, all of which have been at Woodcrest. He has his general education credential and has served as an EL Coordinator in the past. Mr. Kelly was chosen for the writing team due to his perspective of Woodcrest’s progress over the years. He has a strong love for the school and is dedicated to working to dissolve the barriers to success.

**Carolyn Harris, UTLA Representative and Kindergarten Teacher** – Ms. Harris has a general education teaching credential with a specialization in special education. She is a Nationally Board Certified teacher and served as a Title I Coordinator for five years. She has taught for the past 27 years and has spent all of them here at Woodcrest. Ms. Harris was selected for the writing team due to her leadership skills. She desired to give her input and help to shape the new direction in which Woodcrest is headed.

**Mario Alcocer, Fourth Grade Teacher** – Mr. Alcocer has been teaching for 18 years and has been with Woodcrest for the last 2 years. He has both a special education and a general education credential. He was chosen for the writing team based on his desire to make Woodcrest a better school. Mr. Alcocer was involved in helping his last school increase their achievement and brings that experience to the group.

***2. In what ways did you engage parents in the development of your plan?***

Woodcrest parents were involved in every step of the writing of our plan. We attempted to gain parent input in many ways. We had Maricela Cervantes from the Public School Choice office give a series of parent orientations to the process. Over 100 parents were in attendance at the first meeting. At that meeting, interested parents completed a questionnaire asking them how they would like to become involved in the Public School Choice process. From those forms, four parents were selected to represent the parents on the writing team. Three of those parents remained consistent throughout several meetings and paired up with teachers on the team to contribute to the completion of the plan. They were instrumental in giving their input on many issues and provided the group with valuable feedback from the parental perspective. We also requested input on key elements of the proposal from our Parent Center. We also requested that teachers provide us with any concerns that were expressed to them by parents. Some teachers sought out members of the writing team to pass along concerns raised by the parents of their students. We were able to get information on areas of concern for the parents from our parent writing team members, teachers, and the Parent Center. The Student Leadership Team also provided input.

The writing was begun as a whole group contributing ideas for each section. The structure of the plan was shared with the faculty at a meeting and with parents at a parent meeting. All stakeholders wrote ideas on charts for each section. Two or three people from the writing team took the information from prior meetings and the charts and wrote rough drafts for each section of the plan. The principal and the Access to Core Instructional Coach took the information and combined it into one having a common voice. The plan was then shared with the faculty and parents and final input was received.