HighTech LA

17111 Victory Blvd, Lake Balboa, CA 91406

Charter Renewal
Petition
For
July 1, 2013—June 30, 2018

Presented to

Los Angeles
Unified School District
Board of Education

September 18, 2012
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Executive Summary – School Achievements

High Tech Los Angeles (HighTech LA) is a charter high school where students are prepared to enter a college of their choice and become “knowledge leaders” in the 21st century digital world.

HighTech LA is designed to stimulate curiosity, inquiry and a constant desire to push beyond limits, through a rigorous college-preparatory curriculum and intensive technology training. With the goal of preparing students for high-skilled, high-wage careers, this demanding college preparatory curriculum is brought to life by students’ using the latest technology to develop innovative hands-on projects.

HighTech LA is a small high school which provides a standards-based, college preparatory education that places an emphasis on using technology and hands-on interdisciplinary projects in addition to more traditional pedagogy. HighTech LA students do not simply learn facts and figures, but are engaged in discovering new knowledge on their own with the tools afforded to them in today’s information age. In addition to a college preparatory curriculum in which each student meets the A-G University of California requirements, HighTech LA has provided technology-based electives on web design, robotics, computer engineering, Biotechnology, Computer Programming, and computer repair. As a graduation requirement, each senior is placed in an off-campus internship. All students participate in twice yearly “Presentations of Learning” in which they present their best work to a panel for defense and review.

HighTech LA is located on the campus of Birmingham Community Charter High School in the San Fernando Valley and is a self-contained, state-of-the-art facility which is co-located on the Balboa Complex with Birmingham Community Charter High School, Magnolia Science Academy 2, and Daniel Pearl Magnet High School. HighTech LA opened in September 2004 with fewer than 200 students in grades 9, 10, and 11 and grew a grade each year until it reached current population of about 360 students in 2010. High Tech LA has a full time staff of 16 teachers, a college counselor, and a principal. In addition, there is a part-time academic counselor and a part-time school psychologist on staff.

The facility itself is approximately 30,776 sq. ft. and contains state-of-the-art technological equipment, in an environmentally-friendly building designed to educate and inspire all students, teachers, and community members who walk through its doors. The facility is uniquely designed to meet the specifications of the curriculum as outlined in this charter. The school contains thirteen classroom spaces and seven project rooms. In 2010, the school added two portable classrooms on the north side of the school for the science classes. The new rooms provide a much-needed science laboratory and teaching space and have allowed the school to increase its overall enrollment capacity to 380 students. Private funding from the HighTech LA Foundation and the Lowell Milken Foundation made this addition possible. The overall facility reflects the philosophy of the school: each classroom, project room, and office is adorned with windows to both the exterior and interior of the building, embracing the idea that the work of the school is open, visible, and transparent. High Tech LA is a school where students are engaged and stimulates by a project-based, rigorous curriculum that allows them to learn by doing.
Academic Achievements

In its eight years of operation, the school has achieved the following outstanding accomplishments:

- Scored above 800 on API all years
- 95% or better passing rate on the CAHSEE all years
- Statewide and Similar School’s API ranking of 9 or 10
- Became a California Distinguished School
- Granted two 6-year WASC accreditation terms
- Received a Title I Academic Achievement Award
- Identified by US News and World Report List as a “Best High School” for three years.
- Each graduating class has had a 100% college acceptance rate, with students accepted to all of the University of California campuses as well as to other colleges and universities around the country.
- Has exceeded 95% attendance rate in all years of operation.

AB 1994 Compliance

HighTech LA complies with all renewal standards in accordance with AB 1994.

Goals of Original Charter and Renewal Petition

HighTech LA successfully achieved the goals and objectives of its previous charter by meeting its API, AYP, CAHSEE, and college-going goals, reducing the achievement gap for minority and economically disadvantaged students, performing at a higher level than schools students would otherwise attend, and implementing an effective and innovative instructional program as outlined in the charter.

Reflection

The HighTech LA administration and faculty are proud of the many accomplishments of our school. The numbers tell one part of our success story: we have maintained an API of over 800 throughout our existence and have met all of our AYP criteria for the last five years, our students across the board score higher than the state and district averages on the California Standardized Tests in all areas tested, and in excess of 90% of our students pass the CAHSEE as sophomores. Our attendance rates have exceeded 95% for the past three years.

In addition to these statistical successes, we have also created a safe and supportive learning environment for an incredibly diverse student body, with a strong college-going culture. In difficult economic times for everyone, we have lived up to our promise to provide a 21st century learning environment by providing our students access to interactive internet-based technology on campus and providing a personal laptop computer for use by each and every student. The students who attend HighTech LA represent seventeen different countries and slightly over one-third of our student body speaks a language other than English at home. Approximately half of our students are economically disadvantaged and one-eighth of our students have IEP’s. Despite
this diversity of background, nationality, economic resources and ability, we have created a united community bound by mutual respect and shared goals. Parents routinely comment on the absence of bullying or any type of violence on our campus. Students police themselves and each other to keep the campus clean and orderly so they can earn “casual Fridays” when the dress code requirements are relaxed. Notwithstanding what type of student they were when they arrived on campus as Freshmen, nearly our entire Senior class enrolls in post-secondary education (all but five students in the last two years), evidencing the success of our college-going culture. We have created and refined innovative educational practices and programs at HighTech LA that have emphasized group work, community ethics, personal responsibility and individualized instruction. Our emphasis on project-based learning helps our students learn how to work as part of a team and connect “school” lessons to the real world, which is made more concrete when our Seniors spend a semester working as interns at businesses and organizations in Los Angeles. Our Advisory program builds community ethics and provides academic support for Presentations of Learning and final exams, but it also affords an opportunity for students to have a faculty advocate who knows them outside an academic context and can act as a mentor.

While we are justifiably proud of our successes, we are also cognizant of areas where we need more work. Just as we instruct our students to be reflective about their learning and accomplishment, the staff at HighTech LA spends significant time reviewing data, past practices and in professional development to reflect and improve on our own practices. One area in particular that we have focused on is our attrition rate. Because we have a unique curriculum and culture, we have not generally admitted students after Freshman year, and, as a result, our attrition numbers are obvious since departing students are not replaced. In order to help remediate the attrition rate, going forward, the school will admit students after the freshman year. We have conducted many exit interviews with students to determine why they are leaving to help us understand how to address the issue. Primarily, our students leave (usually after Freshman or Sophomore year) to return to their home school where the academic requirements are significantly reduced. Our “competition” is the neighborhood public schools where students are relieved of the obligation to take math and science in their last two years of high school, where many fewer class hours are needed for graduation, and often where the coursework for any given class is less rigorous than is required at HighTech LA. We have worked over the past several years to implement various plans to help reduce our attrition rate. Among these are: Programs to appropriately identify before the beginning of Freshman year those students who may need additional skill-building to get them to high school level; adding note-taking, study and organizational skills instruction to our Freshman Humanities curriculum; having a special evening program for parents of Freshman to help them understand the demands of the school and how they can be a partner for success using Power School, Moodle and other technological tools to understand their child’s progress, and identifying struggling students in order to intervene early to find ways to give them the skills and confidence they need to succeed. Finally, we began offering credit-recovery courses at HighTech LA during the summer, as a way to encourage students to stay on track to graduate and keep them enmeshed in the school’s academic culture. We will continue to focus on this problem and other ways to address it.

The rigorous nature of the academic program at HighTech LA presents other challenges for our student population. Although we are committed to heterogeneous groupings across the
curriculum for any grade level, we have seen our Freshmen struggle in particular in math. Our students arrive at our doorstep with very disparate academic pasts and we work to bring them all to the same high-achieving standard. In mathematics, we have taken the view that the differential in skills is too profound between our best students and least successful students for heterogeneous grouping to work successfully. As a result, in an effort to get all of our students to a proficient level in math by the end of their Freshman year, we have moved to skills-based grouping of students based on diagnostics administered by HighTech LA before they arrive on campus. Although we instituted this policy only a year ago, we have seen an increase in our students’ math scores on the CST’s, especially among Hispanic or Latino students and Economically Disadvantaged students. We will continue to focus on this as an area of concern for us, reviewing data and best practices, in order to implement policies we think will be most likely to increase the number of students who are proficient or advanced in math.

Another area of concern for HighTech LA is to make sure we are properly serving all of our students. In particular, HighTech LA has a disproportionately large population of students who have been diagnosed as being on the Autism spectrum. The needs of this population of students is diverse, as each student has his or her own ability level and challenges, but we have held professional development meetings and in-service training with faculty and staff specifically addressing the needs of students with Autism and Asperger’s Syndrome in order to make sure we are providing all students with the opportunity for success.

Finally, we are always focused on ensuring a diverse and representative population of students at HighTech LA, and providing the support all diverse students need to achieve. Our population is not currently reflective of our surrounding neighborhood, in that it has a disproportionately larger percentage of boys than girls and a disproportionately smaller percentage of Hispanic or Latino students. In order to try to attract a population of students that more accurately reflects our neighborhood demographics, we partnered with UCLA’s graduate education department to conduct a study of our recruiting practices and make recommendations. As a result, HighTech LA has changed recruiting practices to include advertising in Spanish, having Spanish language translation available at our informational meetings, and emphasizing the role of girls on our campus in our promotional materials and on our website.

Although the foregoing are specific areas we are focused on, HighTech LA is committed to observation and reflection of our current practices in order to make sure we are providing the quality education our student population deserves. In order to formalize that process, a committee made up of administrators and staff has been trained in the process of “Instructional Rounds,” adapted from the medical community to the educational community, as a formal method of observing and collecting data in order to identify and address potential problems of practice.
BRIEFING PAGE

Name of organization applying for charter renewal: HighTech Los Angeles

Grades Served and Enrollment Numbers:

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Location Address: 17111 Victory Blvd, Van Nuys, CA 91406

Prop 39? Yes.

Does the Location Meet Board Policy (Low API, Overcrowded)? Yes

Board of Directors: Dr. Elliot Ponchick, Chair
Carla Christofferson, Secretary and Director
Dr. Bernard Luskin, Director
Paul Davies, Director
Seppy Azadi, Director
Kate Ides, Director

The HighTech Los Angeles Mission Statement: HighTech LA is a diverse community of active learners dedicated to fusing the traditional academic subjects with real-world technical applications and problem solving skills. Students are productive, self-directed learners, engaged in rigorous, relevant work. HighTech LA prepares students to be motivated, influential leaders committed to the challenge of connecting our community to the larger society.

The HighTech Los Angeles Vision Statement: HighTech LA will provide a California State Standards-based college preparatory education for all students, but especially for “low income students,” to meet the A-G requirements for admission to a University of California or California State University, and to develop “knowledge leaders in the 21st century digital world.” HighTech LA emphasizes the development of an educated person in the 21st century who can take knowledge and apply it to solving problems.

Source of Money: State and federal funds, including ADA, Block Grants, Title I.


Has the charter applied to any other jurisdiction for approval? No
Are there any sister charters? No

What innovative elements of your charter could be considered “best practices” and replicated by other schools?: Presentations of Learning, Advisory Program, use of Moodle, Powerschool and ActivBoards, heterogeneous grouping, Project-Based Learning, “POP Day,” College Counseling at all grade levels
AFFIRMATIONS AND ASSURANCES

HighTech LA shall:

- Be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and all other operations.

- Not charge tuition.

- Not discriminate against any student on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code.

- Admit all pupils who wish to attend the school. EC 47605(d)(2)(A)

- Determine admission by a public random drawing, if the number of pupils who wish to attend the school exceeds the school capacity, and preference shall be extended to pupils who currently attend the Charter School and their siblings and pupils who reside in the District. EC47605(d)(2)(B)

- Not enroll pupils over nineteen (19) years of age unless continuously enrolled in public school and making satisfactory progress toward high school diploma requirements.

- Not require any child to attend the Charter School nor any employee to work at the charter school.

- In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(3), if a pupil is expelled or leaves the charter school without graduation or completing the school year for any reason, the charter school shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil’s last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card, and health information.
ELEMENT 1 – THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The address of the Charter School is 17111 Victory Blvd. Lake Balboa, CA  91406. The phone number of the Charter School is 818.609.2640. The contact person of the Charter School is Marsha W. Rybin, Principal.

The term of this charter shall be from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2018. The grade configuration is 9 through 12. The number of students is currently 366.

The admissions requirements include: Students must reside in the state of California, must be in grades 9 – 12, have submitted an application, and been selected in the public, random lottery.

The enrollment capacity is 380. Enrollment capacity is defined as all students who are enrolled in Charter School regardless of student’s residency.

The instructional calendar will be modeled on the 2012-2013 school year calendar, as follows:

Staff Development August 5,6,7, 2012
Semester Begins - Pupil Free Day August 13, 2012
Semester Begins - Students August 14, 2012
No School September 17, 2012
No School September 26, 2012
Veterans Day November 12, 2012
Pupil Free Day (POL’s) November 20, 2012
Pupil Free Day (POL’s) November 21, 2012
Thanksgiving Day November 22, 2012
Thanksgiving Holiday November 23, 2012
Winter Break Begins December 17, 2012
Winter Break Ends January 4, 2013
Spring Semester Begins January 7, 2013
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day January 21, 2013
Presidents Day February 18, 2013
Spring Break March 25 -29, 2013
Pupil Free Day (POL’s) April 24, 2013
Pupil Free Day (POL’S) April 25, 2013
Pupil Free Day (POL’s) April 26, 2013
Memorial Day May 27, 2013
Pupil Free Day May 31, 2013
The Bell Schedule will be:

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<td>3:00 PM</td>
<td>3:50 PM</td>
<td>50 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If space is available, traveling students will have the option to attend.

HighTech LA provides 64,890 instructional minutes per year over 174 days.

**History of HighTech Los Angeles**

Beginning in 2000, the school’s founding team ventured forth with staff, students, and parents of Birmingham High School (BHS) in the Van Nuys community of Los Angeles to assess the need for a new kind of school. During an extensive 3-year R&D process, the school’s founding team solicited input from local LAUSD educators, other parents and students, Board of Education members, high tech industry visionaries and managers, an architectural firm, and community representatives. The quest was for a school that would provide youth with skills and the environment to increase their chances to articulate into higher education and the workplace successfully. School models were found in San Diego and other communities, many of which focus on preparing students with job skills. But HighTech LA took a slightly different turn to focus on preparing high school students for the highest level of post-secondary education to which they aspire, while also giving them a solid grounding in work-based skills and attitudes.
HighTech LA’s charter was approved by LAUSD on March 25, 2003 and the school began operating as an affiliated start-up charter in fall of 2004. However, it operated initially as an Academy, or Small Learning Community, within Birmingham High School – not as a charter school. In September, 2002, HighTech LA opened as an Academy with 45 ninth grade students from Birmingham High School. The principal of Birmingham High School, Doris Lasiter, was a supporter of HighTech LA from the beginning and allowed the Academy to use a double room bungalow for the HighTech LA classes. Two Birmingham teachers, Karyn Koven and Mat McClenehan, were recruited by Birmingham’s Assistant Principal, Marsha Rybin, and the High Tech High LA Academy was born. Through generous contributions from Roberta Weintraub and the LOSANGELESHIGHTECH HIGH Foundation (now known as HighTech LA), the bungalows were equipped with laptop carts, a server, and an ActivBoard. The students took Math, Technology, and English in the Academy and Foreign Language, P.E., and Science with the general population. The classes in the Academy were thematic, project-based, and had a culminating Presentation of Learning. In September, 2003, the Academy added 45 ninth graders and began the year with a ninth and tenth grade cohort and four teachers. In the second year, Academy students took Math, English, Social Studies, and Science in the Academy and Foreign Language and P.E. with the Birmingham students. During these years, teachers and the administrator were attending professional development at HighTechHigh in San Diego and were developing the vision of a technology-rich, academically rigorous, project-based school that would be open to students of all ability levels and would not “track” students by ability. Even though the Academy was a part of Birmingham High School, these years were marked by an exploration of integrating technology into the curriculum, rather than having an “add on” technology piece, developing cross-disciplinary, hands-on projects with students, and creating a “college going culture.” As an Academy, HighTech LA had weekly “Power Lunches” where adults in a wide range of professions spoke to the students about their jobs and what it took to get them. Karyn Koven, then the English teacher, discussed college admissions and guided the students to use the technology in the rooms to research colleges.

Roberta Weintraub, founder of HighTech LA, raised two-thirds of the total cost, or a total of $10.5 million, to build the existing HighTech LA facility at 17111 Victory Blvd and fulfill the vision of the school. Specifically, the HighTech LA Foundation was awarded a $3 million Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) to rehabilitate the buildings on the Birmingham campus for HighTech LA. Roberta Weintraub selected and hired the architect, had the building model created, helped put the project out to bid, closely worked with LAUSD on the construction, and matched the QZAB grant with $300,000. Ms. Weintraub then won a $2 million competitive state grant to build a high tech school. The two grants, totaling $5 million, were awarded to the HighTech LA Foundation and went directly to LAUSD, under the auspices of Jim McConnell. Ms. Weintraub raised $4 million more through foundations and other philanthropy. Finally, she received $1 million in a federal earmark from Congressman Brad Sherman for technology and a $500,000 donation from CISCO. The total of $10.5 million raised by Roberta Weintraub and HighTech LA Foundation were used to renovate old facilities, construct new facilities, purchase computers and other technology equipment critical to the success of HighTech LA, and to make ongoing renovations and other necessary changes. When the project ran out of money due to increasing prices, LAUSD contributed approximately $4.8 million to complete the project. The campus was largely built during the 2003-2004 school year. Academy students were given tours
of their emerging campus and were given updates by the architect and the project manager. In September, 2004 the School opened in its new building with 117 ninth grade students, 39 tenth grade students and 35 eleventh grade students.

HighTech LA received a five-year charter renewal in June, 2008 due to the school’s success in achieving the goals and objectives of its original charter by meeting its API, AYP, CAHSEE and college-going goals; reducing the achievement gap for minority and economically disadvantaged students; performing at a higher level than schools that students would otherwise attend and implementing an effective and innovative instructional program as outlined in the charter and as evidenced in this report.

The school elected to renew its charter with LAUSD in 2008 as an independent charter school. HighTech LA is not a conversion school. It was an affiliated start-up charter school that became a fully independent charter school upon approval of the renewal. The charter application included signatures from 100% of its current permanent status teachers to indicate their support for this evolution to a fully independent charter school and their decision to leave employment with LAUSD and join employment with HighTech LA. The school’s charter is authorized by the Los Angeles Unified School District.

In the summer of 2010 HighTech LA added two modular classrooms on the north side of the school for the science classes. The new rooms provide a much needed science laboratory and teaching space and have allowed the school to increase its overall enrollment capacity to 380 students. Private funding from the HighTech LA Foundation and the Lowell Milken Foundation made this addition possible. Currently, HighTech LA is a comprehensive independent charter high school serving 132 ninth graders, 102 tenth graders, 66 eleventh graders, and 66 twelfth graders, totaling 366 students.

Recent Record of Excellence

- Title I Academic Achievement Award – 2007
- California Distinguished School Award – 2007
- CBEE Honor Roll – 2010
- 8 Posse scholarships awarded in the past 5 years and 6 senior Posse finalists in 2010
- Milken Scholar awarded to Daniel Oueis – 2010
- 3 scholarship finalists for the Questbridge Scholarship
- 7 scholarship finalists for the SRLA Scholarship in the past 2 years
- Justin Comins and Rozie Yeghiazarian earned "Recognition" at the LACOE Science Fair – 2012
- Spencer Sterling won 1st place in Microbiology at the LACOE Science Fair – 2011
- Student April Bacarro’s photo entry selected as cover photo for the LA Music Center “Spotlight Awards” – 2011
- Student Sidra Bahadar awarded first place in photo contest sponsored by Congressman Brad Sherman – 2011
• Student Brandon Ordonez won Best of Show in the Annual Congressional Arts competition and his photo was exhibited at the Nation's capitol – 2011
• FIRST Robotics team (#4) won several Regional Competitions
• 24th ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL ARTS COMPETITION - 2nd place Emily Eisen
• 25th ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL ARTS COMPETITION - 1st place/Best of Show-Rosalyn Herrera; 2nd place-Irina Hermoso; 4th Place-Angela Crilly
• 26th ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL ARTS COMPETITION - 2nd place-Camille Pike; 4th Place-Maya Hadash
• Student Nate Grossman was one of 30 semi-finalists and went on to receive honorable mention for his photograph and was part of the Awards exhibition at Bergamont Station in Santa Monica. He was also the only 9th grader to be a semi-finalist.

**HighTech LA Mission & Vision**

Vision Statement:

HighTech LA will provide a California State Standards-based college preparatory education for all students, but especially for “low income” students to meet the A – G requirements for admission to a University of California or California State University, and to develop “knowledge leaders in the 21st century digital world.

Mission Statement:

HighTech LA is a diverse community of active learners dedicated to fusing traditional academic subjects with real world, technical applications and problem solving skills. HighTech LA has two major goals: 1) to successfully integrate technical and academic education in a school that prepares students for post-secondary education and careers, and 2) to increase the number of underrepresented students in math and engineering who succeed in high school and post-secondary education and become productive leaders.

**Whom the School is Attempting to Educate**

HighTech LA is a high school with approximately 360 students located on the campus of Birmingham Community Charter High School in the San Fernando Valley, operating since September 2004. HighTech LA blends a strong directed learning environment, the application of technology to a core curriculum emphasizing math and science as well as the A-G University of California requirements, and a supplemental project-based curriculum focusing on current technology.

HighTech LA students are 51.9% Caucasian, 33.6% Hispanic or Latino, 4.6% Asian, and 2.5% African-American. English Language Learners make up 3% of the student population and 48.5% of students qualify for the Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Program.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>American Indian or Alaska Native</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Filipino</th>
<th>Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>Pacific Islander</th>
<th>White not Hispanic</th>
<th>Multiple or No Response</th>
<th>Socioecon. Disadvantaged</th>
<th>English Learners</th>
<th>Students with Disabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>50.1%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>37.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>37.8%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>43.7%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The African-American populations show a slight decrease while the Filipino group has shown a slight increase. The most noticeable decline has been among the Asian group. Our numbers reported in the “Hispanic or Latino” group are trending upwards again after a slight decrease.
The most significant change has been the change in the percentage of students in the Multiple/No Response category from 2010-11 with 16.5% to 2.1% of the students in 2011-2012. This appears to be a result of changes in identification options. This was the second year that students were able to identify more than two groups for reporting purposes.

HighTech LA draws many students from the attendance area of Birmingham Community Charter High School as it is located on its campus. Birmingham High students are 78% Latino, 8% Caucasian, 8% African American, and 2% Asian. English Language Learners make up 17% of their student population. Approximately 81% of their students qualify for the Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Program.

### Neighborhood Demographic Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>2011-12 Enrollment</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>American Indian or Alaska Native</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Filipino</th>
<th>Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>Pacific Islander</th>
<th>White not Hispanic</th>
<th>Multiple or No Response</th>
<th>English Learners</th>
<th>Free &amp; Reduced Price Meals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HIGH SCHOOLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTLA</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>2713</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>77.8%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>81.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reseda</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>68.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Nuys</td>
<td>2846</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>61.8%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MIDDLE SCHOOLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mulholland</td>
<td>1602</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>86.2%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>76.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portola</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>52.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millikan</td>
<td>2180</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Nuys</td>
<td>1337</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>80.6%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a charter high school, HighTech LA annually receives applications from potential students throughout Los Angeles County to establish its freshman class. Admission to HighTech LA is based on a lottery from a pool of students who submit complete applications by a January deadline. Siblings of current HighTech LA students are automatically admitted. The lottery is conducted in the HighTech LA Great Room and is open to the public. Unlike neighboring schools, including Birmingham Community Charter High School, HighTech LA does not have a geographic attendance boundary and students from anywhere in the state of California are allowed to apply. Despite numerous recruiting efforts, the HighTech LA student body continues to have a higher ratio of boys to girls.
In 2007, HighTech LA entered into a contract with a student research team from the Graduate School of Education (GSE&IS) at UCLA to examine recruitment processes regarding student diversity and ways to achieve a more diverse pool of applicants. Following their recommendations and those of the Visiting Committee from the first self-study, the school has undertaken numerous strategies to achieve a more diverse pool of applicants by gender and ethnicity.

The projected upward trend over several years offers promise. The school is committed to addressing this challenge. To that end, the school has set the following goals for increased diversity over the next five years:
### Ratio of White Students to Non-White Students

**Yearly Goals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Non-White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013*</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Current year

Student enrollment in the Resource Specialist Program at HighTech LA has increased from 22 students in 2007-08 to 45 students in 2011-2012, which constitutes 12.3% of the school’s total enrollment. The greatest increase in the disabilities grouping from 2007-2008 to the current school year has been students with autism. The continued growth in the special education population has impacted staffing. An additional full time RSP teacher was added last year and a full time aide has been on board for the last three years.

### Student Enrollment Special Education RSP Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Students</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Enrollment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Percent Student Pop in RSP

- 2007-2008: 9%
- 2008-2009: 7.0%
- 2009-2010: 11.0%
- 2010-2011: 12.5%
- 2011-2012: 12.3%
HighTech LA provides a Resource Specialist Program for all identified students who qualify for Individual Education Plans. Currently, students are enrolled with the following disabilities: other health impaired, autism, specific learning disability, hard of hearing, traumatic brain injury, and orthopedically impaired. HighTech LA provides services to these students according to the specific needs identified on the students’ IEPs. Special services include occupational therapy, speech and language, DHH, and counseling. Unique to the Resource Specialist Program at HighTech LA, is a daily homework monitoring system conducted by the resource teachers and/or the special education paraprofessionals. The staff member checks the students’ planner for all homework assignments. This daily attention to detail and follow through improves student achievement for these special needs students. The special education teachers provide constant collaboration with the general education teachers, and a daily study skills class in math and English provides targeted assistance for those students who need it. In spite of special needs, HighTech LA boasts high graduation statistics and high passage of the CAHSEE for its resource students. One hundred percent of special education students have passed the CAHSEE.

The number of students receiving Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) and/or other EL instructional services increased from nine students in 2007-2008 to seventeen in 2010-2011, but due in part to reclassification of a larger percentage of students as Fluent English Language Proficient in 2011-2012, the number of EL students in 2011-2012 decreased to 8.

The percentage of students who were reclassified as fluent-English proficient increased substantially in 2011-2012 from prior years—from 47% to 75%. Currently 139 of our students (approximately 30%) speak a language other than English at home.

**What It Means to be an Educated Person in the 21st Century**

An educated person in the 21st century is a person who can take knowledge and apply it to solving problems. Today, rote learning is not an option for an educated person. Knowledge is only the beginning of learning, as it is more critical that educated people be able to apply knowledge to solve the problems facing them. Once those problems are solved, there will be new problems that will be created and the application of continuous knowledge will be necessary to solve those problems as well. For example, computers and the Internet evolved out of the problem of not being able to attain information quickly and easy enough. While the advent of T1 lines and DSL lines has made access to information easier and quicker, it has caused the new problem of providing access to this wealth of information for low-income earners, a problem known as the “digital divide.” The ensuing problem is a society that is divided by those who
have access and those who do not. The rules of existence have changed and the educated person has to deal with a world where technology has been created ahead of need and where passive learning is not an option. The educated person needs to step from a foundation of knowledge onto a creative ledge where technology, individual “out-of-the-box” tinkering, and problem-solving mentality will be needed. Today students have to know how to open Pandora’s Box and also deal with its contents.

**How Learning Best Occurs**

There is no one single way how learning best occurs. Students are individuals who learn in different ways. Some are auditory learners. Some are visual learners. Some can work well with a combination of both. Learning best occurs when the teacher understands the needs of each student and helps each student reach his or her potential in an environment that is accessible to all. A high interest curriculum, positive teacher guided feedback, a non-threatening environment and an atmosphere that promotes peer encouragement are essential to a true learning experience. Additionally, HighTech LA hopes to enable students to become self-motivated, competent, life-long learners by establishing an environment where learning is engaging and worthwhile. When students experience learning that is engaging and connects to “real world” applications, they develop a love of learning that continues far beyond high school.

**Schoolwide Student Learning Goals (ESLRs)**

HighTech LA remains dedicated to the Learning Goals which represent what HighTech LA students should be, know and be able to do upon graduation. HighTech LA’s Learning Goals are as follows:

1. **Collaboration.** In addition to working as self-directed learners, students draw upon their collective thinking and experience. When students work in teams on projects, their collaboration is an explicit focus for assessment.
2. **Technology.** Students use technologies to problem solve and to enhance their project work in the context of conducting research, writing, completing complex mathematical calculations, organizing and managing projects and schedules, or being creative with digital graphics, photography, web design or video.
3. **Communication.** Excellent communication skills, both oral and written, are essential to success in post-secondary education and in the workplace. Student communication skills are assessed in rigorous reviews by faculty, peers, and members of the community. The Faculty emphasize student writing across all curricular content areas as a focus for program development and assessment.
4. **Community Ethics and Responsibility.** HighTech LA students are being prepared to be positive and productive forces in their families and communities, embracing traits of alert citizenship and an appreciation for diversity. Faculty guide students toward a global vision of ethics and social responsibility through the exploration of science, humanities, the arts, the advisory process, and interactions with the communities in which they will live, study and work.
A Typical Day

A typical day at HighTech LA begins with students arriving at school between 7:30 am and 8:45 am, when the actual school day begins. They are dressed in the HighTech LA dress code – a polo shirt and khaki pants or skirt. Teachers arrive at 7:45 am. On Monday mornings, teachers attend a calendar meeting and on Thursday mornings, they attend a curriculum meeting. On the other mornings, teachers are tutoring students or updating grade books or lesson plans, and students are finishing up assignments on their personal laptop computers (assigned to them at the beginning of the school year), checking their email and ordering lunch online. Groups of students, representing seventeen countries of the world, speaking thirteen different languages at home, are sitting together in the Great Room, Commons, Back Yard or Front Yard, playing guitars, and finishing breakfast. At 8:45, students go to their first two-hour block of class (see schedule).

Once the school day begins, a guest touring the building might see photography students taking photos inside or outside the building, groups of students working in project rooms together on a class assignment, teachers using ActivBoards in their classrooms for direct instruction, special education aides interacting with their students in the classroom, and almost every student sitting with a laptop in front of him or her. Less visible to a visitor might be the students with vision or hearing impairment who have been seated in the front of the room, those with learning disabilities who have been provided with notes ahead of the lecture or been given a reduced homework assignment, or the ones on the autism spectrum who have been quietly handed their “fidget toy” by a teacher or aide during class discussion to keep them focused on classwork. Visiting a particular classroom, one might see Mr. Chiou doing a chemistry experiment under the document camera so that all students can see, a Socratic Seminar in Mr. Bewley’s English Class, or a simulation in Ms. Perkins’ History class. In Ms. Goodman’s Constitutional Law class, one might see a heated debate on search and seizure. Several rooms have students taking a test on Moodle. Wandering into one of the faculty offices, one could see Mr. McClenahan creating a podcast of his Government lecture for the student’s future use, Ms. Fregoso updating her Moodle page to reflect the homework for 10th Grade English or Mr. Perahya and Mr. Babaheki collaborating on the requirements for the upcoming Freshman cross-curricular “Angry Birds” project.

During nutrition and lunch, a tour of the campus might uncover Project Rooms containing groups of students working in groups or with volunteer college advisors in the College Center, students congregating outside, many of them stopping by the lunch cart in the back yard or taking out the lunch they brought from home. Students are playing guitars, meeting with club members in various classrooms, hanging around with their friends in the shade of the Back Yard, or playing basketball on an outside court. The sounds of lunch are punctuated by guitars and singing, laughter, the scuffle of the ball in front of the school. Since there are no bells, students watch the clock and go to their next class at the appointed time.

After lunch, seniors who have an Internship leave campus to “go to work” while the others get ready for “X Block.” During “X Block” some students are doing conditioning drills in the Great Room, Zumba in one classroom and Dance in another, while other groups of students and
teachers go on a brisk walk around the neighborhood park, lace up their sneakers to train as a part of Students Run LA, or play flag football or soccer on one of the fields at Birmingham High. Some students use one of their X-Block periods a week to meet with their speech therapist, or in a social networking group with the school psychologist to work on overcoming social issues, or participate in prep for the upcoming California High School Exit Exam, if needed.

As the students return from “X Block,” they prepare to go to the last period of the day. Fifth and sixth periods are electives for upperclassmen, and so there might be a group of students working in the alcove on a scene for Drama class, another creating a Powerpoint presentation for Art History or a classroom of students with special needs receiving additional support from the Resource Specialist and special education aide. After school, students huddle with teachers for one-on-one tutoring or repair to the Robotics lab to create the next competition robot. Other students rush out after school to catch the bus or Orange line home, or wait for their ride home.

**Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Accreditation**

HighTech LA submitted an application for interim WASC accreditation in 2004. The school had one visit from a WASC team and was granted interim accreditation through June, 2008. The next year, 2005, the school added a grade level to include grades 9 – 12 and applied for “substantive change” which, after a one-day WASC visit, was granted. In the school year 2008, HighTech LA participated in a full WASC application, hosted a full visit in March 2009, and was granted a 6 year term with a three year revisit. The WASC Visiting Committee conducted a one day revisit in April, 2011, and reaffirmed the accreditation through the end of the six year term.

The WASC Leadership Team established for the previous self-study continued to monitor and ensure implementation of the Action Plan. The school team meets on a regular basis to review progress made in relation to school goals and to meet standards of accreditation. The entire staff is directly and indirectly involved with the Action Plan implementation. The principal devotes time at the annual school retreat in the fall for faculty to examine school data and refocus on the goals of the Action Plan. Throughout the year staff members talk about data, plan and strategize ways to intervene and assist students in areas where significant progress still needs to occur. There are frequent collaborative meetings where the entire faculty is focused on student learning outcomes and data analysis which influence school-wide decision making.

The midterm progress report was prepared collectively by the WASC Leadership Team with input from all faculty members, staff, students and parents. Initial planning and discussion for the progress report began in September at the start of the school year. Changes to the action plan were made based on changes in data. With the latest data, preparation for the midterm progress report was begun. A first draft and questions were presented on December 2, 2010. Following the suggested changes and revisions, a second draft was presented on January 20, 2011 during a faculty meeting. Two follow-up meetings were scheduled to complete the report for the WASC revisit. One was in April of 2012, and the next will be in the spring of 2014.
Parent are notified that the school is accredited by WASC and that all courses taken at HighTech LA are transferrable to other high schools and recognized by colleges. Notification is included on report cards and transcripts, and at parent meetings and orientations.

Curriculum

The HighTech LA curriculum is a unique blend of education that will enable the students to master the content standards for the four core curriculum areas adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to Education Code section 60605. HighTech LA’s core curriculum includes the following key components:

- Core Curriculum is based on the UC/CSU A-G Requirements—Upon graduation, all HighTech LA students will have met or exceeded all the A-G requirements for admission to a University of California or California State University.
- All Core classes are UC approved.
- Integration of technology into all subjects
- A focus on cross-curricular projects that connect to the “real world”
- A student internship

The school has benefitted from a number of positive course additions and changes:

- The traditional physics curriculum was changed to project physics to engage all 9th grade students.
- 9th grade students are now given a Math diagnostic test (CSU/UC Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Project) prior to the beginning of the school year. Based on their skills, students are grouped by Math ability in the 9th grade. All students take a standards-based Integrated Math 1 class, but, based on the ability levels of the students, teachers are able to go both broader and deeper in the content. Students with a more advanced background are able to work more complex problems and to extend the learning into areas they will be covering in more detail in future classes. Students with a thinner background are able to concentrate on the core of the concepts so they can exhibit mastery across the content area. Further, by narrowing the spread of the ability levels in the classroom, teachers are able to focus on issues common to more of the students in the classroom.
- Laptop computers were checked out to all students to take home in the spring semester of 2011 in order to ensure that they had the required technology for class work.
- The grading policy at HighTech LA changed at the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year such that grades of “D” are no longer accepted for graduation. In order to make certain that all graduating students will be UC/CSU eligible, graduation requirements changed starting with the class of 2014 (2010-2011 school year) to mandate that students must pass all classes with a grade of “C” or higher to receive credit.
- Summer school was funded by HighTech LA for the last two years for credit recovery. Depending on resources, it will be made available in future summers as well.
- The honors curriculum has been aligned by department after teachers reviewed and revised their requirements and courses.
HighTech LA has increased the use of Moodle, which is a tool to provide students and parents with access to teachers’ course requirements, homework assignments and future planning. Moodle is used by students and teachers for advisory period and preparation for POLs, as well as in their daily academic classes.

Each year HighTech LA staff review elective offerings and design new courses to offer a variety of experiences for students and to take full advantage of the knowledge and skills of a very talented faculty. Several new teachers have helped to widen the range of electives.

Woven into these curricular components is HighTech LA’s commitment to meeting and exceeding the Content Standards for California Public Schools in all curriculum areas. HighTech LA will ensure that curriculum, projects and lessons are standards-based.

Extracurricular Activities

In addition to the curriculum, HighTech LA also provides an array of extra-curricular activities during lunch and after school in order to allow students to pursue areas of interest outside the confines of the classroom. Among the more popular extra-curricular activities at the school is the Robotics Team, which competes nationally as part of the FIRST Robotics program. This group is obviously directly aligned with HighTech LA’s commitment to promoting math and science skills and interests among teenagers and gives the students an opportunity to apply some of their academic principles in the practical world. The wide array of other extra-curricular activities demonstrates the diverse interests of our students, as they can participate in Game Club (a computer gaming group), Operation Donation, Project Rainbow and Community Wishing Well (community service clubs), Junior State of America, Anime Club, Filmmakers Club, Art Club and Sports Club. In addition, students are engaged in student council, as class representatives or student body president and vice president, and the faculty nominates deserving students as school “Ambassadors,” who give tours of the campus, act as ushers and monitors during parent meetings and graduation, and act as liaisons of the student body to the community. Like all public high schools, HighTech LA has struggled with budget cutbacks that have reduced the funds available to operate extracurricular activities, but we remain committed to providing the resources available to ensure students have both an academic and extra-academic life at HighTech LA.

Freshman “Bootcamp” – Summer Bridge

The Freshman BOOTCAMP is a 2-day summer orientation program that bridges incoming students from middle schools into the HighTech LA culture. Students are met by 9th grade faculty who (1) lead them into the counseling process; (2) introduce them to the school’s graduation requirements; (3) provide a tour of the campus and its state-of-the-art technology; (4) welcome them as members of the school community and assign email accounts; and (5) assess where they are academically in math with the help of UCLA and in English/Language Arts (ELA) using writing and language assessments developed by the HighTech LA English department. This process lays the foundation for a Student Support Team (SST) to shape a personalized education plan. To break the ice for nervous newcomers, a fun-filled improvisation,
Comedy Sportz, dominates the first day’s activity, and by the second day, students of the newest cohort are ready to join the HighTech LA community.

**Core Curriculum**

HighTech LA’s graduation requirements meet or exceed the National and State Standards as well as the A-G requirements of admission into the University of California and California State University.
The following chart outlines this comparison:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>HighTech LA</th>
<th>CA Grad.</th>
<th>UC Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td><strong>4 years</strong>: English 9A/B; English 10A/B; American Literature/Contemporary Composition; Expository Composition/Modern Literature</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td><strong>4 years</strong>: Integrated Math I, II, III (all A/B); Probability &amp; Statistics or Calculus (both A/B) (Algebra and geometry are included in Integrated Math.)</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td><strong>4 years</strong>: Physics A/B; Chemistry A/B; Biology A/B; Environmental Science or Advanced Physics A/B (All science classes incorporate lab work.)</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td><strong>4 years</strong>: Humanities/Geography A/B; World History/Geography A/B; U.S. History A/B; Government; Economics</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td><strong>2 years</strong>: Spanish 1 A/B; Spanish 2 A/B. Students have the option of taking Spanish 3 or a foreign language proficiency tests at CSUN, UCLA or an AP test.</td>
<td>1 year of either</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual/Perf. Arts</td>
<td><strong>1 year</strong>: Photography 1 A/B; Photography 2 A/B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Education</td>
<td><strong>1 year</strong>: embedded in the biology curriculum, with related projects in other classes</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education (PE)</td>
<td><strong>4 years</strong>: Students from all grade levels play together in PE through X-Block activities implemented in consecutive 10-week sessions: archery, basketball, frisbee, volleyball, soccer, flag football, running, walking, Zumba, dance, yoga and conditioning.</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td><strong>2.5 years</strong>: Various electives that have been offered are: Art History; Forensics; Anthropology; Introduction to Psychology; Journalism 1 A/B; Journalism 2 A/B; Philosophy A/B; Science Technology and Research 2 A/B; Drama A/B; Advanced Acting A/B; Screen Writing; Environmental Studies A/B; Constitutional Law A/B; International Relations; Documentary Studies.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations of Learning (POL)</td>
<td><strong>ALL</strong> students at HighTech LA are required to complete two oral presentations, one in the fall and the second in the spring, to a panel of two or three faculty and administrators for a grade each year in order to matriculate to the next grade or graduate. This important process, which has evolved over several years based on feedback from industry partners, teachers and students, helps prepare students for both college and work and has become a major event, as students prepare and audiences engage. English learners (ELs) and students with disabilities (SWDs) or behavioral problems are supported in this process as they are individually able to participate.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Internship</td>
<td>Seniors are required to complete a one semester internship.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAHSEE</td>
<td>All students must pass the CAHSEE to graduate. Students who have not passed enroll in a special month long, intensive class to prepare them for reexamination.</td>
<td>Must Pass</td>
<td>Must Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Tech Educ</td>
<td>Permeates all learning, all classes.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Literacy</td>
<td>All students must be computer literate by 10th grade to keep up with the course work at HighTech LA, which is designed to ready them for 21st century living. Embedded in the 9th grade curriculum are lessons in use of all basic computer programs.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Students with Disabilities usually meet all requirements. SWD students receive supplemental support in and out of class from the teachers and/or specialists equipped to handle special need cases (i.e., ADD, autistic students or physically disabled) to help them stretch to their highest capability. Students with an IEP who need help in math, ELA and organization are put in Resource Class this was added

**Course of Study by Grade Level**

Complete course descriptions with standards and textbooks can be found in Appendix D.

**Grade 9**
All ninth grade students take:
- English 9AB*
- Integrated Math 1AB*
- Geography/Humanities AB
- Project Physics AB*
- Photography AB*
- Spanish 1 AB*

**Grade 10**

All tenth grade students take the following courses:
- English 10 AB*
- Integrated Math 2AB*
- World History and Geography AB*
- Chemistry AB*
- Spanish 2 AB*
- Elective

**Grade 11**

All eleventh grade students take the following courses:
- American Literature and Composition AB*
- Integrated Math 3AB*
- United States History and Geography AB*
- Biology AB*
- 2 Electives

**Grade 12**

All twelfth grade students take the following:
- Modern Literature and Advanced Composition*
- United States Government and Economics*
- Math (Honors Advanced Calculus OR Pre-Calculus OR Statistics) AB*
- Science (Advanced Physics OR Environmental Studies) AB*
- One semester of Internship
- Three semesters of Electives

*UC Approved

**Selected Electives Descriptions:**

**Art History**  
This course is designed as a survey course in Western European art from Paleolithic art to 20th century graphics. The course is structured chronologically, introducing the major themes and
ideals of Western European art, with students required to create and present their own Powerpoint lectures weekly on the topic being discussed. The students are expected, by the end of the term, to be able to identify title, artist and year for a set of iconic pieces of artwork from each major period of art discussed in class and present about a major artist, his/her place in European art history, and the artist’s influences.

**Brain, Mind and Consciousness**
This course deals with the structure and function of the brain, from a scientific perspective to a philosophical and metaphysical perspective. Some of the questions addressed in this course are the functions of the five senses and the possibility of a “sixth sense,” aspects of mental illness, the nature of consciousness, the function of dreams, the mind-body connection and more.

**Design Thinking**
Design Thinking is a process of observing deeply, being empathetic, and creating innovative solutions to ill-defined problems. Design thinkers see the world differently and can spot not only where change is needed but also *where change is possible*. In Design Thinking we will learn: 1) how design thinking is a key skill for many professions in the 21st century; 2) the theory behind the design thinking process; 3) how to undertake each step in the process (and to practice the process!); 4) the principles of good design; and 5) to explore and develop our capacities for innovative & creative thinking.

**Drama**
This course is designed to expose students to various aspects of theatre including improvisation, pantomime, acting, and script reading. Students in this class will prepare and perform scenes for the school.

**Environmental Science**
Environmental Science integrates topics from a wide variety of subjects, including chemistry, geology, biology, geography, sociology, and political science. This is a senior-level course at HighTech LA, and follows the formal physics, chemistry, and biology classes that students have taken in the 9th – 11th grades. The class strikes a balance between the rigorous scientific inquiry/experimentation and the political and sociological approaches to the subject. It also focuses on meaningful, student-driven projects that follow the interests of the class and remain relevant to current events. Students develop an understanding of the environment, both local and global.

**Forensics**
Forensic Science is the application of a broad spectrum of sciences, including biology, chemistry, and physics, to the law. This course requires critical thinking and attention to detail. Students participate in projects, research and laboratory investigations in order to foster and develop critical thinking skills.

**Guitar**
Beginning and intermediate course. Students learn to play chords and basic music harmony and theory. This is applied to the performance of popular American songs. Students perform in
History of Math
This course is the study of the history of mathematics from ancient times - beginning with ancient Greeks - through Hindu-Indian mathematics, Arabic mathematics, and European mathematics up to the twentieth century with emphasis on three aspects: the development of mathematics throughout the centuries, mathematics as a human endeavor, and the history of mathematics as an educational tool. This course is designed to create an appreciation for our present mathematical system and an understanding of how our present mathematical system came to be what it is today.

International Relations
International relations is a semester-long elective course in which students analyze global issues, sources of influence and power, conflict and conflict resolution, and learn about international organizations and agreements.

Philosophy
“Philosophy” means “love of knowledge or wisdom.” This introductory course will endeavor to feed and augment student’s innate love of knowledge and wisdom. The study of philosophy and philosophers will help students further their own understanding of the world in which they live. Students will study some of the greatest thinkers in the Western philosophical tradition including: Plato, Thomas Aquinas, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, David Hume, Blaise Pascal, Rene Descartes, Immanuel Kant, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Georg Hegel, Karl Marx, John Stuart Mill, Isaiah Berlin, and John Rawls.

Robotics
The Robotics elective course is a hands-on lab class that will give students technical training in robotics engineering design, electronics design, computer programming, organizing and managing a robotics team, and building robots that are specialized to do certain tasks. Students will be introduced to and learn to safely use manual and digitally controlled design programs and metal part manufacturing machines. There are no prerequisite classes for this course. Students will be required to use word processing software (Word), spreadsheet software (Excel) and presentation software (PowerPoint). The Computer Assisted Drawing (CAD) program may also be used to design specific parts to be manufactured.

Screenwriting
In teams of two, students spend the semester writing a full-length screenplay and filming a trailer for their movie. Using “The Hero’s Journey” as adapted from Joseph Campbell’s work, as well as the screenwriting method laid out by Blake Snyder in his book, Save the Cat, teams go from a one-sentence logline, to a 15-beat pitch, to a scene-by-scene storyboard, and finally to a 110-page screenplay.

Instructional Materials
Core course textbooks are selected based on review and recommendation of the department and/or grade level team. Below are strategies for adopting instructional materials/academic supports for students in need:

- Assess student test scores, project and homework assignments, individual strengths and weaknesses. (Data on 9th graders is collected during Freshman Bootcamp and from 8th grade scores.) Build student and cohort profiles. (This dynamic process is ongoing as students improve and/or fall behind during a school year.)

- Acquire and introduce State-approved standards-based instructional materials to ALL students.

- Collect materials as needed to supplement approved texts for use with ALL students, such as supplemental readers and workbooks, Internet websites, instructional kids (for solar cooker and robotics design), and articles about current events, etc.

- Collect materials appropriate for special subgroups and/or individual students and introduce to the appropriate students.

- Continuously review the progress of each student and make necessary changes, such as switching their supplemental materials, adding more or less rigorous materials, etc.

### HTLA Textbooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Spanish 1</td>
<td>Realidades 1</td>
<td>Boyles, Met, Sayers, and Wargin</td>
<td>Prentice Hall</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Integrated Math 1</td>
<td>Algebra 1: Applications, Equations, Graphs</td>
<td>Larson, Boswell, Kanold, Stiff</td>
<td>McDougal Litell</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>World History</td>
<td>World History: Connections to Today, The Modern Era</td>
<td>Ellis &amp; Esler</td>
<td>Prentice Hall</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Spanish 2</td>
<td>Realidades 2</td>
<td>Boyles, Met, Sayers, and Wargin</td>
<td>Prentice Hall</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Integrated Math 2</td>
<td>Geometry</td>
<td>Larson, Boswell, Kanold, Stiff</td>
<td>McDougal Litell</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Technology is pervasive in all aspects of the school’s culture, as it is in the world’s culture, and students use it to solve math problems, download homework, complete writing assignments, access on-line resources, communicate with teachers and project team members, keep journals on their learning process, present their learning, and play games. All teachers use the HighTech LA website and a popular online forum called “Moodle” for posting grades and collecting homework and class notes, giving online tests, setting up student journals, and creating discussion boards. New teachers quickly become adept with ActivBoards, PowerPoint, the Internet and PowerSchool, the Student Information System (SIS). Evaluators confirm that teachers effectively use technology as a tool for delivering instruction, and technology is built into evaluations through class observations and focus groups to show how achievement and instruction is impacted. School administration also is benefiting from technology with the help of
enterprising students. One student developed an online interface for tracking student lunch requests and distribution using barcodes on student I.D.s. Another student is the resident webmaster and podcast expert.

All students are issued a laptop computer for school and home use. Students can move from classroom to classroom using their school-issued computers to access their work due to the common server. The school is supervised one hour before school and forty minutes after school so that students with computer needs, can access technology assistance and trouble-shooting from the Technology Department. There is clear and successful site integration of technology in all classrooms. Staff sets benchmarks in technical knowledge to be mastered in each grade level within the existing curriculum.

Naviance/Family Connection is an exciting comprehensive web-based tool for students at HighTech LA. Students have their own accounts, and parents have access to these accounts. This electronic college data management system is used by the college counselor to keep track of student data including GPAs, standardized test scores, college choices, college applications, summer program opportunities, scholarships, college match and search functions, a personality and career assessment as well as a learning style inventory assessment. On Naviance, students and parents can access college acceptance data from graduated HighTech LA students to assess their own chances of being accepted to particular universities. Teachers use Naviance with their students during advisory classes.

Students are introduced to Naviance/Family Connection during 9th grade orientation. The college counselor visits each 9th grade classroom to familiarize new students with the program. Students create and update their resumes as well as take the career assessment and learning style surveys. After training, students become familiar with how to access their personal site, organize their college planning and search process, obtain general college information and access specific college websites. Students also learn how to analyze their GPA and test information. Students post their personal statements on the site as well as other important college related documents.

Communication with parents is increased through Naviance/Family Connection since students and parents list their email addresses within their accounts. This creates an email database in order to distribute emails to large groups or small very specific groups interested in particular scholarships, college opportunities or other time-sensitive college related material. Parents have access to their student’s site in order to add colleges they are interested in to their “college list” as well as explore links to important websites and college information.

CSUN Access Course is offered by CSUN, the college’s ACCESS program (Accelerated Coursework in Computer Science and Engineering for Student Success). It enrolls academically talented high school juniors and seniors in a special online section of the college’s MSE 101 (Introduction to Engineering) course each fall. It is distance learning with a teacher liaison at each selected school site. HighTech LA is one of only five high schools in the region selected to participate. Students earn two units of college credit. Students were engaged in projects such as “Build Your Own Robot Arm,” using engineering strategies to build a popsicle bridge and exploring computerized bar-coding.
Students and interested parents are in-serviced on ethical uses of technology, and filters are installed to block inappropriate Internet content. Each parent and student also signs an Acceptable Use Policy, violation of which results in disciplinary action. Students are trained to gauge quality and reliability of websites, and teachers check student’s work for plagiarism continuously. HighTech LA staff works as a team to evaluate software and online resources. The Technology coordinator notifies staff if there are issues with an online resource or software.

Technology at HighTech is fully integrated into all classes. Since there is no “add-on” technology class, each grade level team is responsible for teaching technology skills as follows:

**9th Grade:**
- Use of Moodle
- Web research and evaluating web sources
- Word
- PowerPoint
- Powerschool
- Web design
- Use of ActivBoard
- Naviance (reinforced in grades 10, 11, and 12)
- Photoshop

**10th Grade**
- Flash
- Moodle reinforcement
- Web research reinforcement
- Web design reinforcement
- Naviance reinforcement

**11th Grade**
- Build upon and reinforce skills learned in 9th and 10th grade.

Students’ proficiency on the above technological skills is assessed by teachers whose assignments require the use of these technological skills. Students also exhibit proficiency during their twice-yearly Presentations of Learning which require them to use Word, Moodle, PowerPoint, web research, and the ActivBoard.

**Student Internship**

The school’s mandatory senior internship requirement provides an important opportunity for industry participation. Not only does this provide valuable volunteer help around the office for these businesses, it also provides students with a taste of the world of work, while giving local businesses a way to help shape their future workforce. It gives students a close-up view of a
particular company or career. The school’s Internship Coordinator investigates and chooses appropriate companies and organizations to provide internship opportunities for students, with the input and supervision of the principal. The Internship Coordinator interviews potential internship placements and visits each internship placement to ensure that it is a appropriate and safe work place for students. The Internship Coordinator places all internships and meets with interns every Friday to debrief about their experiences. Over the course of the semester, the principal and Internship Coordinator visit the internship locations to ensure students are attending, are involved in a meaningful experience and are adequately supervised. Student internships culminate in a final project presented to the school at the end of the semester, and students are given an opportunity to evaluate the performance of their host employer as well as the experience.

HighTech LA is now in the seventh year of offering internships. Students are placed in positions matched with the skills needed by the employer who has agreed to participate with HighTech LA in this program. Half of the senior class takes the internship class in the fall and the other half in the spring semester. Students work from 1:30-4:00 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays and attend class on Friday afternoon at HighTech LA.

Internship grades are based on the completion of a resume, daily journals, internship presentation, mentor evaluation, classroom participation, and a business proposal. Business proposals include an executive summary, mission statement, company description, marketing plan, products and services, customer base/competition, management and organization, and start-up costs and capital. Recent proposals included: Greenworx, an eco-friendly gym; The Chocolate Moose; a chocolate shop; Eon, a shampoo product; Dog’s Heaven Bakery, treats for dogs; Energy Pies, a dessert energy product; Techmen, a technical support and computer repair service that is internet-based; and Admiral Ackbar Cereal, a quality morning breakfast cereal.

For the last four years, HighTech LA has held an Open House at the end of the Spring semester where mentors, students, parents and staff come together at the school. Students make presentations about their internship experience to the assembled group. This year HighTech LA plans to host a ‘Community Internship Mentor Day.’ This event is designed as a mentor appreciation day with awards and recognition of mentors. Students, parents and staff will be invited to attend.

**Advisory Program**

Each staff member, in addition to regular classes, has a specific grade level Advisory that meets twice weekly. Each student is assigned an Advisor who stays with the student, if possible, for the entire four-year high school span. The Advisories ground students in the elements of independent thinking, planning, community service, and study, and guides them through a continuum of regularly monitored projects to a successful student-initiated senior class project.

Staying with the same Advisor throughout the program is crucial. Studies show that a major stumbling block in the educational development of underserved students is consistency. Many students live in overburdened households, shifting residences, schools, friends and family
members. Also, the media and pace of current events contribute to conditioning students to live in a sound-bite world where immediate gratification and short-term goals are the norm.

Real education is long-term. The Advisory model forces students to focus and with the consistent guidance in the advisory period, gives them the opportunity to stretch and reach, ponder and plan, work and wait for the satisfaction of a long-term goal achieved. Students research colleges and careers and participate in values clarification activities. Additionally, there is an articulation between the student and the Advisor regarding issues with academic and social progress.

Educators, too, benefit as advisory guides, who, over the four-year span become intimately involved in the education of a specific student, not a name on the class roster. The target population for HighTech LA is low-income minority students, from diverse cultures and with varied individual needs. Educators need to assess their approach to educating students who may not be native born and whose early education cannot be categorized or tracked. All too often, these students get lost in a large school. Especially vulnerable are the quiet students who drift through without a hint of trouble or a hint of potential. Seeing these students in the bare-bulb light creates, for the educator, an opportunity to focus on all students individually and to revisit the up-close challenges of high school years. Advisors participate in all team meetings with their advisees and parents as another source of information, outside the curricular world, providing input on what a student may need to succeed.

In 1992, the United States Department of Labor formed the Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS), which was comprised of distinguished representatives from education, business labor, and government. The mission of the SCANS Commission was to outline the necessary skills to be successful in the current and future workplace. The Advisory Program uses the SCANS findings as the baseline for the program with the goal of developing a whole child who will be personally, socially and professionally successful in the future. When a student enrolls at HighTech LA, these skills will be presented to them and with the help of their Advisor and parent and/or guardian, develop an individual learning plan that will map and set specific goals as they develop while enrolled at HighTech LA. This learning plan is revisited annually by the Advisor and student at the beginning of every grade to evaluate the student’s progress towards his or her goals.

Advisory provides a context for academic planning, home/school communication, class and community building, and reflection about HighTech LA’s philosophy and program. As the curriculum has evolved since the previous self-study, there is clear evidence that it supports student achievement of the ESLRs (Learning Goals) of collaboration, technology, communication, and community ethics and responsibility.

We are continuing to build an advisory curriculum with all of the information, requirements, and time task calendar on Moodle. Grade level and Committee meetings with teachers are scheduled in order to coordinate the concerns and priorities of each grade level and to establish a common goal(s).

The curriculum design project units for 2010–2011 Advisory included:
• **Goal Setting**  This unit introduced the advisory plan and provides students with time to identify their top personal goals for the semester, share their goals, make an individual advisory folder on the project server and maintain a journal in that folder.

• **Show and Tell a Current Event**  This unit focused on bullying, defining bullying, the types of bullying and incidents related to bullying. Students maintained a Current Event journal, worked in groups to research a current event about bullying and culminated in student presentations to their peers.

• **Fall TPOL and Spring POL Preparation**  The lessons in this unit are built to help students succeed in their Presentations of Learning including an assembly with examples of best POLs by grade level. Advisors review the POL concept, expectations, evaluation and rubric. Advisors also assist students to identify potential topics and select a topic for presentation.

• **Cross Grade Community Project**  The Community Project paired students in the 9th grade with 12th graders and 10th grade students with those in the 11th grade and encouraged mentoring. Students worked in committees to select a community organization that they will adopt and support for the semester through the creation of PSA’s, flyers and fundraising activities, culminating in a community meeting rally showcasing the PSA’s and emphasizing the successful fund-raising and service commitment.

• **Class Project/Senior Class Project**  This year’s class project focused on class and school spirit, culminating in HighTech LA’s First Annual Class Pep Rally, coordinated and managed by the Senior class, in which all classes participated.

• **Support Unit**  Time was set aside in Advisory in the period leading into fall and spring final exams, to provide strategies for preparing for final examinations and review of study guides provided on Moodle by faculty for students by grade level for each subject. Peer tutoring and quiet study time is scheduled to assist students as they prepare for semester final examinations. Advisors may also facilitate make-up test time as needed.

Added to the Advisory curriculum in 2011-2012 were the following units:

• **Gratitude Project**  Advisories created gratitude slogans and posters that were displayed around the school campus in the fall semester. In Advisory, students discussed things in their lives about which they were most thankful and wrote and posted thank you letters to people who made a difference in their lives. Throughout the project, Advisories competed in a canned food drive to support the LA Food Bank.

• **Dream Project**  This unit was built around the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Advisories spent time reading articles about the Civil Rights Movement, viewing documentaries, and looking at Civil Rights photos. Each Advisory created a Gallery of Civil Rights photos and quotes that were exhibited along the walkways of the school.
Each Advisory created a poster that collected everyone’s dreams which were joined together in the Great Room of the school to create the school’s Wall of Dreams.

**Presentations of Learning**

One of the school’s signature innovative practices is the “Presentation of Learning” (POL) that students participate in every year at HighTech LA. Students begin learning presentation skills in the ninth grade and build upon these skills each year. While students do many presentations in their classes, the POL is a high-stakes culminating event that every student must successfully complete to go on to the next grade level. Students are given many opportunities to practice for their POL and as many opportunities as they need to pass their “Transitional” POL to the next grade level. The POL gives the student an opportunity to pick their “best work” and present it to a panel of faculty members. Using a rubric that increases in rigor for each grade level, a panel of two to three faculty members assess the POL and require the student to defend his/her work. POLs require a student to employ presentation skills, technology skills, and communication skills in a five minute presentation that culminates in an “on the spot” question and answer period that requires students to think critically and synthesize and analyze information.

HighTech LA presented a session of “Presentations of Learning” at the LAUSD Small Learning Communities Conference in 2007. As a result, several schools, including Monroe High School and Northridge Academy, have begun to use Presentations of Learning.

Over the last four years, teachers have spent a considerable amount of time in faculty meetings and at the annual fall retreat reviewing the POL process, analyzing the results, reviewing the rubrics and making adjustments. As a result of this annual reflective process, the POLs have been revised to fit age-appropriate expectations, have become more uniform and more sequential.

Changes were made to better scaffold the POLs while making certain that the focus is on student achievement and not just the outcomes. The questions have changed in that they are deeper, not just about a project. Questions now have more of a conceptual emphasis. Teachers backward planned from the 12th grade POL to make certain that POLs are scaffolded and that each grade’s presentation leads in a sequential manner to the next level.

Some of the changes made in the POL process to better meet the needs of students include:

- The time allotment was changed to provide 10 to 15 minutes for 9th - 11th grade POLs and 10 to 20 minutes for 12th grade POLs.
- Since 2008, POLs have been scheduled on pupil free days to stress their importance and significance in student learning.
- POL judges are not listed on the POL schedule so that there is no effect on the students’ selection of topic.
- Videotaping POLs has allowed for further analysis by grade and gender of students who are not successful to identify any patterns that may emerge. A selection of POLs which
were videotaped in the fall of 2010 and in the 2011-2012 school year were used for faculty-wide assessment of the POL process during the faculty retreat prior to the start of the 2011-2012 school year. Among the areas of discussed were the validity, inter-rater reliability and consistency of faculty assessments in order to ensure a more uniform experience for all students. Continuing discussions are held around the POL rubrics as part of a continuing reflective process by the Faculty POL committee and the faculty as a whole.

- Teachers prepare students for the POL during advisory and in a community meeting by grade level where they look at the assessment rubric and requirements.

- The most outstanding POL in each grade level is presented in a community meeting after completion of process

- Online grading during POLs starting in 2010 with grades entered into a central database allows for collection, analysis and reflection of data and preparation for the spring POL.

**Moodle**

Teachers at HighTech LA have developed an on-line set of tools on Moodle that allows teachers to give exams/quizzes, assignments, and lectures online. Additionally, Moodle allows students to take exams online, and both teachers and students receive immediate feedback. Instructors at HighTech LA have shared this information with teachers from other schools, who have, in turn, shared it with their colleagues.

**ActivBoard**

All rooms at HighTech LA are equipped with an ActivBoard. Throughout the school’s years of operation, we have demonstrated the ActivBoard to many visiting teachers and administrators who have purchased them and return to HighTech LA for professional development on the use of the boards. The ActivBoard is an electronic whiteboard which allows a teacher to do all of the things a teacher would do on a dry erase white board with added major advantages.

The biggest advantage of the ActivBoard is the ability to save work. Unlike a traditional whiteboard, a teacher can save their notes or class work throughout the class period, rather than having to erase and start anew when running out of white board space. All notes and classwork written on an ActivBoard can also be saved to a computer in many formats, including PowerPoint, HTML, and Activstudio (the ActivBoard’s software), which can then be made available to students who may have missed class or want to review. Teachers can create ActivBoard presentations ahead of time, much like PowerPoint, but they can be easily annotated and extended during class based on discussions and questions.

In addition, the ActivBoard and its software allow the teacher to more easily create interesting “chalkboard” images, using multi-colored, multi-sized handwritten or typed text to emphasize items during class. Digitized images can be added to presentations and information can be highlighted in front of the class. Objects can be moved around and manipulated on the screen.
A variety of additional tools allow teachers to present the course information in a visually appealing yet comfortably familiar fashion.

The ActivBoard can be used to annotate files from other applications, such as annotating a map from a textbook which may be available digitally, or easily accessing content from the internet to integrate into class discussion. Thus teachers have the ability to do everything they could on a chalkboard, but with the added power of both their own computers and the World Wide Web.

**PowerSchool**

HighTech LA uses PowerSchool as its student information system and over the last three years, the school has found that the expanded use enables teachers to make timely decisions that impact student performance while creating a collaborative environment for parents, teachers and students to work together in preparing 21st century learners for the future. Powerschool allows parents and students real-time access to student’s grades, both cumulative and on an assignment-by-assignment basis, and student attendance records. Faculty has access to all parent contact information, and other useful student information.

**Interdisciplinary Projects and Project-Based Learning**

The backbone of the school’s pedagogy is Project Based Learning (PBL). PBL is a method to develop standards-based, interdisciplinary projects that connect to a real world product. Since the first full self-study in 2008, staff have worked together to further develop and refine the interdisciplinary project and post project assessment of the interdisciplinary elements within the projects as determined by the school. At the faculty retreat in August 2011, we had a two-day seminar by the Buck Institute, an educational think tank specializing in Project-based learning, to help us create and refine interdisciplinary and single subject projects.

For example, in the spring of 2011-2012, tenth grade students collaborated on a “Genocide Awareness” Project that integrated World History, English, Chemistry, and Art. Students learned about the escalation of Nazi Policies in WWII Germany, read and wrote meta-cognitive journals while reading Elie Wiesel’s Holocaust memoir Night, and viewed films exploring modern day examples of Genocide. In Chemistry, students learned the base elements of paint products in order to make their own paint, which they then used to create their own artistic interpretation of the unit. The culmination of the project was a visit to the Los Angeles Museum of Tolerance and an exhibition night to display and honor their art pieces. The art was auctioned to visitors and the proceeds were donated to the Jewish World Watch organization.

In 2010-2011, the 11th grade teaching team received a grant from Hewlett-Packard to carry out a cross-curricular “Night at the Museum” project. Students were divided into small groups, each assigned a group of immigrants (e.g., Irish immigrants in the late 1800’s or Vietnamese immigrants of the late 20th century) and required to create a “museum display” setting out the causes for that group’s immigration and the cultural, political and economic impact of the group in the United States. The students brought artifacts, food, dances or other cultural touchstones of their immigration groups for display on Museum Night and evidence of their lasting contribution to American society. They used math and biology concepts in tracing human migration patterns
through mitochondrial DNA and statistical and graphic representations on data in their displays. We had a pre-assessment and post-assessment for the students as well as a specifically designed rubric for the student displays.

Several teachers from nearby high schools have observed some of the projects HighTech LA has done and have used the HighTech LA projects as a springboard for projects in their own classrooms.

“POP” Day

Four years ago, HighTech LA launched a new program called “POP Day” where the students come together to work on a surprise project. The project, designed by teachers, includes the four Learning Goals with the focus on building school community. The project lasts only one day and regular classes are cancelled without notice to the students, as the project consumes all of time from 8:45 to 3:50. The driving idea behind POP Day is to build school community through a common goal: every student in the school is working on the same thing at the same time. The intent of this project is to make the activity fun, as a reward for working hard in the rigorous curriculum at HighTech LA.

In 2009, the project was for students to gather in large, multi grade-level groups and to write and "publish" a newspaper for the day, fashioned after real-life publications. The students spent the day as “editorial boards,” organizing their newspaper, researching and writing the articles, and formatting the stories with photographs and images using Microsoft Publisher. The teachers supervised the students, but did not actively participate in the activity, mimicking a real-life business environment, where everyone has to learn to work as a team and deadlines are real. Teachers, together with some professionals in the newspaper industry, evaluated the final products, and declared winners according to different categories.

The Spring 2010 POP Day activities were modeled after the popular TV show "The Amazing Race," where students, paired in teams of two, had to compete in various activities to gather points and move on to greater challenges. Over 100 activities were planned around the school, ranging from the academic to the physical, such as solving math problems, making a free throw on the basketball court, or building a tower out of spaghetti and marshmallows. Points, allocated based on difficulty, were awarded for completing the tasks. One of the teachers, Wun Chiou, built a website for the day that allowed teachers to keep score as tasks were completed and which students could access to see their standings throughout the day. At the end of the day, the three teams who had accumulated the most points were recognized as the "winners," and received prizes.

The POP Day task for 2011 was designed to promote class spirit, by having each grade level compete in various “field day” activities against the other 3 grades. Students within each grade were challenged to work as a team to complete different activities such as class speeches, class spirit decorations (posters, bulletin boards, door decorations, banners, and floats for a parade), tournaments in sports and dance activities, and team building activities (human knot, student trivia, class cheer, relays, and human bingo).
2012’s POP Day mission was to work in pre-organized multi-grade level teams to develop a “Rube Goldberg” machine. Using school supplies and other materials provided in a mystery grab bag, the machine the students created needed to work independently from human intervention to complete a pre-assigned task, which in this case was “turning in homework to a teacher.” This could be accomplished in several ways, such as placing a sheet of paper in a homework tray or catapulting a piece of paper at a teacher dummy. Groups needed to capture the successful functioning of their machines on video as evidence for the judges and to demonstrate success to the school. The day culminated with students watching the videos from the other groups, to see how everyone else solved the challenge, and prizes being awarded to the most successful groups.

**Meeting Student Needs**

HighTech LA strives to meet the needs of all students regardless of ability or background. However, the school does not group by ability or other characteristics, other than in the first year of math. All students are in the same classes regardless of their status as Gifted, Special Ed, socioeconomically disadvantaged, English language proficiency or achieving below grade level. The school recognizes that some students will need intervention in order to be successful at HighTech LA. Some examples of intervention at HighTech LA are “Team Meetings” with parents, student, administrator or counselor, and all teachers to discuss student progress and identify possible interference with learning as well as strategies to improve; from these Team Meetings (SST) students are given an improvement plan which may include tutoring, (Also discussed under “Strategies to Improve At-Risk Performance” on page 44 of this petition.)

**Special Education**

All charter schools must adhere to all terms and conditions of the *Chanda Smith Modified Consent Decree* (“MCD”) and any other court orders and/or consent decrees imposed upon the LAUSD as they pertain to special education. Charter schools must insure that no student otherwise eligible to enroll in their charter school will be denied enrollment due to a disability or to the charter school’s inability to provide necessary services. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure the recruitment, enrollment, and retention of students with disabilities at charter schools.

Prior to Los Angeles Unified School District (“LAUSD” or “District”) Governing Board approval, HighTech LA will execute a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) by and between LAUSD and HighTech LA regarding the provision and funding of special education services consistent with the requirements of the LAUSD Special Education Local Area Plan (“SELPA”) Local Plan for Special Education.

**SELPA Reorganization**

The Los Angeles Unified School District is approved to operate as a single-District SELPA under the provisions of Education Code 56195.1(a) and intends to continue operating as a single-District SELPA as in the current structure but has created two school sections (District-operated Programs and Charter-operated Programs) under the administration of one single Administrative
Unit pursuant to a reorganization plan approved by the Board of Education on January 4, 2011 (149/10-11). Full implementation of the reorganized LAUSD SELPA will begin in the 2013-2014 school year requiring all District-authorized charter-operated schools to elect one of the three options available under the LAUSD SELPA. Prior to an Option election, all District-authorized charter schools shall participate as a school of the District under the District – Operated Programs Unit. Prior to the beginning of the 2013 – 2014 school year, all District-authorized charter schools, other than those that have previously executed an Option 3 Memorandum of Understand (“MOU”), will be required to execute a new MOU setting forth the LAUSD SELPA option election for the remainder of the charter petition term. The Charter-operated schools will not have a LEA status but will function in a similar role in that each charter school will be responsible for all special education issues including services, placement, due process, related services, special education classes, and special education supports. Charter schools may apply for membership in the Charter-operated Program section of the SELPA. These schools will receive support from a Special Education Director for the Charter-operated programs.

**Modified Consent Decree Requirements**

All charter schools chartered by LAUSD Board of Education are bound by and must adhere to the terms, conditions and requirements of the *Chanda Smith* Modified Consent Decree (“MCD”) and other court orders imposed upon the District pertaining to special education. The MCD is a consent decree entered in a federal court class action lawsuit initially brought on behalf of students with disabilities in LAUSD. It is an agreement of the parties approved by the federal court and monitored by a court-appointed independent monitor. The MCD includes nineteen statistically measureable outcomes and facilities obligations that the District has to achieve to disengage from the MCD and federal court oversight. All charter schools are required to use the District’s Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual and Welligent, the District-wide web-based software system used for online Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and tracking of related services provided to students during the course of their education.

As part of fulfilling the District’s obligations under the Modified Consent Decree, data requests from charter schools that are not connected to the District’s current Student Information System (“SIS”) are made on a regular basis. The requested data must be submitted in the Office of the Independent Monitor’s required format and are as follows:

- The Independent Charter School Suspension/Expulsion Report, due monthly throughout the school year.
- Paper SESAC Report and Welligent Student Listing Verification, due monthly throughout the school year.
- CBEDS, which is due at the end of October of each school year.
- All students enrolled December 1 of Each School Year, due at the end of December every school year.
- Graduation status if 12th Grade Students Enrolled on December 1, due at the end of June every school year.
The MCD requires charter schools to implement the District’s Integrated Student Information System (ISIS). ISIS is a suite of applications which is designed to capture all District student data.

**English Learner Instruction**

HighTech LA is required to timely identify potential English Learner students and provide them with an English language acquisition program that affords meaningful access to the school’s academic core curriculum. Instructional plans for English Learners (EL) must be (1) based on sound educational theory; (2) adequately supported with trained teachers and appropriate materials and resources; and (3) periodically evaluated to make sure the program is successful and modified when the program is not successful.

On an annual basis (on or about October 1), HighTech LA shall submit the certification to the District that certifies that they will either adopt and implement LAUSD’s English Learner’s Master Plan or implement the Charter School’s own English Learner Instructional/Master Plan. If Charter School chooses to implement its own EL plan, the instructional plan shall encompass the following, including but not limited to:

- How ELs’ needs will be identified;
- What services will be offered;
- How, where and by whom the services will be provided;
- How the program for ELs is evaluated each year and how the results of this assessment will be used to improve those services (annual report of the assessments)

HighTech LA shall provide to CSD a copy of its entire, current plan upon request such as during the annual oversight review process.

HighTech LA shall administer the CELDT annually. HighTech LA shall also ensure that it will provide outreach services and inform parents with limited English proficiency with important information regarding school matters to the same extent as other parents.

HighTech LA reclassifies EL students to Reclassified English Fluent Proficient (RFEP) at the point when specialized language and academic support services are deemed no longer needed for ELs to be successful in the mainstream educational program at a level commensurate to non-ELs. The decision is made using criteria that include assessment of English language proficiency using the CELDT, CST scores in ELA, teacher evaluation and parent consultation. ELs are reclassified to fluent English proficient based on multiple criteria that are identified in the California Education Code and recommended by the State Board of Education. The minimum criteria to be considered for reclassification are:

- Score of Basic or above on the most recent CST or CMA in English Language Arts
- English proficiency on the CELDT: Overall level of Early Advanced (level 4) or Advanced (level 5) with each domain score (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) Intermediate (level 3 or higher)
- Teacher evaluation based on student grades/progress report marks
- Parent consultation and approval
**Strategies for English Language Learner Instruction and Intervention**

Teachers who serve EL students are trained to use Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) techniques to meet the needs of English language learners.

The instructional design model used by HighTech LA places a heavy emphasis on differentiating instruction to meet the needs of English Language Learners based on their academic and language readiness. Faculty has been trained on a variety of instructional strategies to be used with all students and specifically with English Language Learners. Specifically, teachers have had professional development on SDAIE/Sheltered Instruction to teach the skills and knowledge in the content areas and to promote acquisition of academic language. HighTech LA’s philosophy of differentiated instruction for all students also benefits English Learners by providing entry points learning tasks and outcomes that are tailored to the student’s needs. Teachers will monitor the progress of EL students by evaluating assessments, both traditional and performance.

**Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students**

HighTech LA uses the majority of its Title I funding to provide tutoring before and after school in all subjects. All students can attend tutoring, but socioeconomically disadvantaged students are the target population since their Title I dollars generate the funds for it. In addition, the school is supervised for one hour before school and forty minutes after school so that students, especially those without easy access to a computer and/or internet at home, can access the technology.

Eligibility for federally funded programs such as Title I is based on the number of low-income students as evidenced by the number of students enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program. For an entire school to qualify for Title I funds, at least 40% of students must enroll in the free and reduced lunch program. Since the first full self-study, there has been some variation in the percentage of students deemed eligible for the free and reduced lunch program. In 2007-08, 43.7% of students were eligible. For the 2011-2012 school year, 48.3% of students were eligible.

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Source: CDE DataQuest
**Gifted Students**

The philosophy of the school is that within a heterogeneously grouped classroom, each student is challenged at his or her own level. This includes gifted students. Project Based Learning allows students to go as deep and as wide as they can. Additionally, students may take the core curriculum in certain grade levels for “honors” credit by contracting with the teacher to do additional projects.

**Students Achieving Below Grade Level**

HighTech LA provides tutoring before and after school, as well as personalization in the classroom to address the needs of students achieving below grade level. Teachers also assess their students frequently and remediate as needed. Teachers always use their assessments to tailor their instruction to address the needs of their students. Research on cooperative learning also suggests that mixed ability groups, such as those utilized at HighTech LA, help struggling students achieve at higher levels.

HighTech LA screens the following data to identify at-risk students in accordance with the California guidelines:

- Students scoring Below Basic and Far Below Basic on the previous year’s adopted standardized test in any one subtest score in Math and/or Language Arts.
- Students who are at least one year below grade level in the areas of reading, written language and math, identified by informal teacher assessment or prior progress reports.
- Students recommended for academic intervention.

**At-Risk Pupil Outcomes**

HighTech LA makes every effort to raise the CST scores of our at-risk students to the next level (e.g., from Far Below Basic to Basic and Below Basic to Basic, etc.). At-risk students will have their CST scores individually monitored. All identified at-risk students will be referred for
intervention services, such as the “Team Meetings” described elsewhere in this Element, and receive individualized attention in the classroom on a regular basis.

**Strategies to Improve At-Risk Performance**

HighTech LA has implemented the following strategies to improve the performance of at-risk students:

- By the end of the eighth week of school, all parents of students at HighTech LA identified as low achieving are informed of their child’s academic standing.
- A list of available in-school tutoring is developed and made available for parents of all students by the second week of school. Some teachers provide *required* tutoring.
- Staff professional development sessions are devoted to meeting both the needs of low achieving students and gifted students; innovative practices of teachers are presented, implemented as appropriate, and evaluated for their effectiveness.
- A centralized list of targeted low-achieving students is kept by the administrator to monitor student progress, to track services, and to provide the HighTech LA Board with periodic updates on the progress of student achievement.
- Parent/Student/Teaching Team meetings are utilized to develop individualized strategies for targeted low achieving students.

The following programs have been added to provide additional support for students at risk:

- Summer school classes in math, history, and English are funded by the school and held at HighTech LA.
- Online credit recovery courses are provided and counselors have access to this information for their struggling counselees.
- Math recovery classes are offered after school, on Saturdays, or during the school day.
- Students are referred to LAUSD summer classes and adult school. There is a strong relationship between the adult school and HighTech LA.

Additionally, counselors, working with teachers, provide additional support this year. Daily grades are reviewed by staff and parents. Students deemed at risk (two or more D’s or Fails) meet one-on-one with a counselor. An anecdotal log is maintained for struggling students. Team meetings are held frequently with a student’s teachers, counselor, and parents. These meetings can be requested by a counselor, a parent, a teacher, or the school psychologist and they provide an opportunity for student growth and improvement.

**Recruiting Qualified Teachers**

HighTech LA attracts and recruits teachers qualified to deliver the instructional program through a variety of search methods including EdJoin, CCSA job fairs and website, and advertisements at local colleges and universities.
Professional Development

Teachers of HighTech LA are prepared to deliver focused and standards-based instruction in all subject areas, along with a project-based, technology-infused curriculum. This preparation takes place in classroom settings, as well as in non-traditional environments such as industry work sites, research laboratories and off-site, small-group sessions. HighTech LA also schedules professional development activities throughout the entire year. These activities promote knowledge and skills in content areas, such as math and science, and emphasize more than just familiarity with the state frameworks. HighTech LA has set up comprehensive, interactive presentations on proven assessment measures and standardized tests. In addition, HighTech LA recruits industry experts in high technology and manufacturing to design and/or involve our teachers in customized technology training programs.

HighTech LA has presented professional development sessions on project-based learning and assessment at an LAUSD Small Learning Communities Conference and at the California Charter Schools Association. The school aims to continue to provide professional development opportunities to teachers outside of HighTech LA staff.

By design, professional development (PD) at HighTech LA parallels the way students are taught. It is primarily personalized and specific to issues that arise, a fluid process with a mix of school-based, local and national training, interwoven with standards-based training offered by the district and other school support systems. It evolves from collective and individual student needs and is, thus, based on the scientifically proven research that drives instruction (such as differentiated instruction, heterogeneous groups and project-based learning) while being aligned with State and federal content standards. The PD planning process is built into yearly, weekly and periodic staff meetings and informal contacts during each school day as noted in the chart on the following pages, and is intimately linked with the school’s management and collaborative culture. It is funded from our general operating budget, leveraged with private sources, project-specific grants, equipment vendors, and grants to higher education partners.

Professional development conducted at the school site is primarily focused on teamwork and Critical Friends Meetings where information is shared and is responsive in real time to student assessments and needs, whether a cohort, a subgroup or even an individual student. It begins with hiring practices where the principal hires teachers and other staff members who not only have appropriate training and/or experience for their jobs, but also bring their life experience to the collaborative table, drawing from higher education and the world of work. The principal looks for professionals who are willing to share, collaborate with, and train their peers. Many are award winners in their fields of expertise. While it is impossible within these page limits to fully profile the staff, a summary of their collective expertise may be found on the following page.

Since staff is key to student achievement gains, members are highly valued and invested in liberally. For instance, the school routinely pays for special training and conference attendance for teachers and nominates them for awards and teacher grants. Parents also have a way of saying “thank you” to teachers by hosting Teacher Appreciation Lunches.

The following are some highlights of PD activity at HighTech LA:
• Training of the teaching staff in the use of the Moodle online system for course management by a fellow staff member has provided teachers of all subjects a way of garnering immediate feedback on student progress, which, in turn, allows the teacher to repeat lessons or try new strategies to ensure students understand the material.

• By continuing his own education at the Photoshop World Conference and Epson Print Academy, photography teacher Kevin Merrill shared the latest technological advances in digital media with his students who have won awards at competitions held at the Skirball Center, The Music Center and the annual Congressional Arts Competition.

• Training was done for a combined teaching and administrative committee in Instructional Rounds (IR), a practice adapted to education from the field of medicine, which embodies a specific set of ideas about how practitioners can work together to solve common problems and improve their practice. In the education context, it is designed to help schools, districts and state systems support high-quality teaching and learning for all students. Instructional Rounds strategically connects school, district and state efforts with improvements at the instructional core and builds collaborative networks of educators who learn from one another about improving teaching and learning.

• The Principal and other staff members have attended professional development by Smarter Balanced on the Common Core and will attend follow up in-services. The Principal and other trained staff members are conducting professional development with the teaching staff to prepare to implement the Common Core.

| CA Standards for Teaching Profession | The CSTP standards are a corner-stone of HighTech LA PD, which incorporates, among many other elements of the standards, 1) a vision of holistic teaching that builds on the philosophy that a teacher’s knowledge of students is critical to developing curriculum and choice of instructional methods, and 2) the realization that expert teaching requires “continuous growth in order to engage and challenge increasingly diverse students in a rapidly changing world.” All six standards are addressed in PD. |
| California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders | HighTech LA Staff PD touches upon all six CPSELS Standards using both traditional methods that are noted in other parts of this application and this chart, specifically. The HighTech LA Foundation is playing a critical role in coaching the administrative and teaching staff in how to navigate the larger political, social, economic, and legal systems (Standard 6) to build sustainability for the school. HighTech LA, like all new innovations in education, has to navigate a delicate balance in leveraging resources from traditional State funding sources with new public and private sources. |
| NCLB | All are NCLB compliant. |
## Collective Qualifications of HighTech Los Angeles Full-time Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrator/Teacher Qualifications</th>
<th>Education/Experience Highlights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BA and BS degrees</td>
<td>All teachers and administrative staff, including the college counselor, academic counselors, and IT Director, have bachelor degrees. Some have more than one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate degrees</td>
<td>8 MA; 6 MS; 1 JD; 1 PPS; 1 EdD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Collective Certificates/ Credentials in Education | California Teaching Credentials; Administration Credential; Single Subject Credentials in biology, chemistry, English, math, social studies, and Spanish; Administrative Services, Professional Credential; Clear California Teaching Credential; Pupil Personnel Credential; Cross Cultural Language and Academic Development Certificate; BICM Certificate; LAUSD Max (ISIS); LAUSD Student Information Systems (SIS); Special Education Clear Credential; UCLA Certificate Program in College Counseling; Credential in Gifted and Talented; MFT  
Others in progress are: Intern Credential Program; California Teaching Credential; Single Subject Teaching Credential; Autism Authorization; Preliminary Education Specialist Instruction Credential |
| Safety: CPR/First Aid                | Nine members of the staff plus the nurse have been trained and certificated in CPR and First Aid. |
| Other Relevant Qualifications        | Most teachers have several years of business or industry experience that they also bring to bear in the classroom and in PD for others on the team. For instance, drama teacher Adrian Bewley is a playwright and theatrical producer; and math, and logic teacher Maral Rostami has worked in retail as the president of a resale store of children’s toys, furniture and clothing. Others have worked with philanthropic groups, worked in advertising/PR, taught at the university level and overseas. Languages spoken by staff are: English, Spanish, Armenian, and Farsi. Cultures lived in and/or studied/taught in: Salvadorian, Guatemalan, Armenian, Mexican, Spanish, French, Iranian, and Swedish. |
## An Integrated Management and Professional Development System

(built on State standards with custom enhancements)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PD</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yearly Planning Retreat</strong> (also a first step induction program for new staff)</td>
<td>All HighTech LA staff meet for three days soon after the Freshman Bootcamp and prior to the start of school to plan the school year. Faculty review information gathered about incoming students—both those known from the previous year and the new freshmen—to map the core curriculum for students and staff, and choose instructional materials, other resources and supports. From this base, PD evolves over the school year to meet individual and collective needs. Evaluation indicates this process is pivotal to coordinating the start of the new school year and inducting new staff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Common Planning Time and “Critical Friends” Sessions** | Monday AM Staff Meetings: All staff meet to discuss operations related to master schedules, pacing schedules for all subject areas, school priorities, general policies such as those relating to student discipline, teacher and program evaluation, plans for the future and resources/PD needed in that context. All decisions are team consensus, but when group consensus fails, the principal breaks the tie. 

Thursday AM Planning and “Critical Friends” Sessions: Staff, invited consultants and stakeholders discuss curriculum and instructional strategies to engage students. Within a 3-week cycle, teachers meet by academic discipline on the first Thursday to collaborate on specific subject matter issues and assess student and school performance in accordance with the annual plan. The following Thursday, teachers meet by grade level to integrate instruction across academic disciplines, discuss needs of individual students/subgroup needs, create interventions, and problem-solve around benchmarks for each grade based on NCLB/State standards. In week three, teachers participate in “Critical Friends” (a teacher/team presents a class project or instructional plan to other faculty, who then make recommendations). These meetings help develop best practices. The cycle of three sessions is repeated to continuously review student progress and instructional practices. Subjects include other PD needs by group, subgroup or individual teachers, and how to get additional PD from industry partners or other sources. 

Project-Based Planning: All day every day as teachers and staff collaborate on project-based instruction. |
| **Instructional Materials Training** | As new instructional materials are adopted or new software is installed, appropriate staff receives training from HighTech LA staff and/or vendors. Annually HighTech LA staff receives updated Naviance Teacher Training. The Principal and one teacher attended the Incident Command System Training—TOT Program. Many trainers are state-certified. |
| **External Training** | HighTech LA administrators and teachers, have participated in a number of special training programs, such as: 1) Harvard University Institute training on Instructional Rounds and “Charter Schools: Practices for High Performance;” 2) HighTechHigh San Diego (i.e., best practices in Standards-based curriculum and technology); 3) the Buck Institute of Education (i.e. project-based learning techniques); 4) Promethean smart board technology used in classrooms; 5) PWI (the independent evaluation team) on evaluation results and other subjects related to assessment, 6) Wildwood Summer Institute on Project Based Learning; 7) All trainers work with State standards. |
| **Higher Ed/Industry Partners** | HighTech LA staff receives training, coaching and mentoring from district and stakeholder sources and from higher education and industry partners. For example, the Spanish teacher attended LA Stars and an English teacher was invited to join Facing History, the Skirball Museum of Tolerance teacher training program. A Science teacher and his students collaborated on a lab project with the City’s Department of Sanitation. A Social Studies teacher has worked on curriculum for US History at the Reagan Foundation. |
| **Conferences** | Staff members attend conferences and share their knowledge at staff meetings. A sampling of regional and national conferences are: Harvard Institute on Leadership, NACAC, UC and CSU Annual Conferences and Financial Aid Meetings, California Charter Schools Annual Conference, Western and National Associations of College Admissions Counseling, Photoshop World Conference, California Mathematics Council/Southern California Conference, Harvard College Admissions Summer Institute, College Counseling Coordinating Committee of LA Conference, Educating for Careers, and National Council of Teachers of English. As the state moves toward implementation of the Common Core, selected staff have attended Common Core workshops and will conduct staff development on the information learned. Teachers will also receive PD on the Common Core via webinar. |
| **Induction Training** | Induction training includes orientation to HighTech LA and research-based methods used for instruction. All teachers attend a Critical Friends Staff Retreat annually. HighTech LA teacher-led technology training in Photoshop, Excel, web programming, ActivBoard, and Moodle. |
| **Technology Training** | Technology is incorporated into most PD. Professional IT staff support teachers and their classrooms and informally coach teachers on-the-job. Training through the Buck Institute for Education taught teachers how to use technology to support collaborative/standards-focused projects, the foundation of the HighTech LA instructional model. The evaluation team at PWI coaches staff on using technology and data/evaluation. |
Calendar and School Day Schedule

HighTech LA has block scheduling for the school week. Periods 1, 2, and 3 meet on Mondays and Wednesdays. Periods 4, 5, and 6 meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays. All periods meet on Fridays. Students participate in X-Block on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays, and have an Advisory Study Hall on Wednesdays and Thursdays. The full schedule and calendar year are set forth above.

Classes begin at 8:45 AM every day and end at 3:50 PM. HighTech LA offers 375 minutes of instruction per day on regular days, and additional time is allotted for tutorial hours and computer use.

The master schedule, shown below, supports both college and career preparation, using CTE foundation standards that are worked into all classes for all grade levels. Students are introduced to potential career pathways that relate to project-based learning throughout each school day. Time also is built into the schedule for students to meet with the college counselor/academic counselors or to attend special programs that will help them pass standardized tests and learn about postsecondary opportunities and support programs (i.e. college visits, Revolution Prep Mock PSAT and SAT exams, CAHSEE prep courses, college research, applications for colleges and scholarships, summer programs, or advanced and online courses).

The master schedule is designed to ensure that students can achieve mastery of content standards. The college counselor and academic counselors advise students and parents on CAHSEE preparation, test fee waivers and course requirements for college via individual meetings before and after school, group workshops, monthly emails, and college awareness events, and financial aid strategies for college. Incoming freshman are assessed during Freshman Bootcamp, results of which, when combined with CST scores, inform course curriculum and needed interventions. Parents attending Bootcamp are also educated about this process.
MASTER SCHEDULE with Sequencing Examples for Each Grade
(All HighTech LA classes other than freshman math are heterogeneous with differentiated instruction as noted earlier in this petition.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before-school</th>
<th>HighTech LA’s Master Schedule resembles a college schedule. Students attend 3 courses on M/W and three other courses on T/Th. All courses are covered on Fridays.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Period</td>
<td>Freshmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before-school</td>
<td>Students use this time to do homework and complete projects. Faculty schedule 3 days a week to meet with students and/or parents regarding needed interventions, academic or behavioral issues, etc. Two days a week, teachers have meetings on school operations, curriculum, instruction and critical friends. Some faculty schedule tutoring hours before school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HighTech LA’s Master Schedule resembles a college schedule. Students attend 3 courses on M/W and three other courses on T/Th. All courses are covered on Fridays.</td>
<td>English 9 A/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humanities A/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spanish 1 A/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integrated Math 1 A/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physics A/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective Period. Students can choose among offered electives noted in the curriculum, some of which are designed as interventions in ELA or math, for example. Students with special needs enroll in elective courses that provide tailored interventions, such as CAHSEE preparation (math intensive or tutoring, etc.), and Resource Class for IEP students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch:</td>
<td>Students can meet with the college counselor to discuss summer programs, college research, and job prep, among other options. X-Block (Physical Education): All grades meet together in various PE groups on M, W and F. Advisory: Students meet in advisories every Wednesday and Thursday and special interventions are often available, as students need them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After-school</td>
<td>Various academic interventions, such as tutoring and college counseling. Meetings among students for Interdisciplinary Projects. Programs and clubs, such as robotics, and JSA. Students use this time to do homework and use resources and computers for research.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This set of courses is modified each year after analysis and reflection on the prior year, the individual grade level needs, what worked/didn’t work in the previous year and other factors.

**Implementation Plan**

The school’s instructional program has been fully implemented as the school has been operational for eight years and has grown to approximately 360 students (near its 380 student capacity) in grades 9-12. If the school determines that any changes in instruction or staffing are needed in the future, they will be implemented in an efficient and uniform manner.

**Notification of Transferability of Grades**

Parents and students are notified that grades earned at HighTech LA are transferable to other schools at parent orientation meetings, on student’s transcripts, and in newsletters.
ELEMENT 2 – MEASURABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

HighTech LA will accomplish several educational objectives through an intensive focus on computers/technology, English/language arts, science, math, history/social studies, foreign language, the arts, health, and physical education.

All students will:

- Understand the multiple uses of computers and technology and apply them in our world.
- Use the tools of math and science to become aware of how the universe works.
- Meet all University of California/California State University A-G Entrance Requirements.
- Meet and exceed all Content Standards for California Schools.
- Pass the California State High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE).
- Be capable of transitioning into higher education.

In Mathematics, students are taught to understand and appreciate the need to analyze data, assess information, and recognize mathematical relationships. Students are encouraged to interact as they explore, investigate, and discover relationships between mathematical skills and concepts. Problem solving and critical thinking skills are emphasized using cooperative and collaborative learning techniques. Students are encouraged to discuss problems and decide upon varied possible solutions by attentively listening and following a logical argument to reach a valid conclusion based on presented or available facts. Students learn to appreciate the contributions of different cultures to Mathematics. Students are given opportunities to confidently apply what they have learned as they move beyond the classroom and apply their skills to real life situations.

In Science, students will demonstrate how to apply the scientific method to design controlled experiments in course projects, the ability to analyze and interpret qualitative and quantitative data in course projects, how to apply scientific writing skills to communicate conclusions from scientific data in course projects, and the ability to apply scientific knowledge and research to current social and world issues in course projects.

In Social Studies, students will understand and apply concepts of cause and effect and evaluation of historical documents, create electronic slideshows to aid public presentations of their work, use Internet search engines to find digitized primary historical documents and public domain books, create storyboards for a dramatic presentation, and use critical thinking skills to analyze events in history and make connections between historical events and current world issues.

In English, students will be introduced to the basic elements of fiction: character, setting, plot, theme, tone/mood, be able to define and identify basic literary terms such as metaphor, simile, alliteration, rhyme scheme, meter, be able to define and identify symbolism and allusion, and understand root words as a key to understanding vocabulary. Additionally, students will know and be able to identify the eight basic parts of speech, understand sentence structure, write a grammatically correct and coherent five paragraph essay, be able to research and write an extended research paper using appropriate citation of sources and write a business letter.
In Spanish, students will build communicative skills and cultural competency and a realistic and insightful understanding of the Hispanic culture and thought. Students will use Spanish in real-life situations by emphasizing oral communication and by developing the other basic language skills (reading and writing). Students will engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions and exchange opinions. Students will use language for personal communication needs. Students will ask and answer questions and request clarification as needed. Students will understand written documents on familiar topics dealing with basic needs or interests. Students will write short descriptive paragraphs.

HighTech LA is committed to meeting and exceeding the Content Standards for California Schools in all curriculum areas. HighTech LA keeps a copy of the Content Standards for California Schools on file, and is committed to updating the standards as they are amended, and will refer to them regularly in the planning and development of curriculum.

**Expected Schoolwide Learning Results**

The school team has established the following Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLRs) to ensure that students will be more likely to pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), continue their education, and be college and work ready:

1. **Collaboration.** How does the student work with others? In addition to working as self-directed learners, students draw upon their collective thinking and experience. When working in project teams, collaboration is an explicit focus for assessment.

2. **Technology.** How does the student use technology? Students use technologies to problem solve and to enhance their project work in the context of conducting research, writing, completing complex mathematical calculations, organizing and managing projects and schedules, or being creative with digital graphics, photography, web design, or video.

3. **Communication.** How does the student take in and express information? Excellent communication skills, both oral and written, are essential to success in post-secondary education and in the workplace. Therefore, student communication skills are assessed by faculty, peers, and members of the community in rigorous reviews. Faculty emphasize student writing across all curricular content areas as a focus for program development and assessment.

4. **Community Ethics and Responsibility.** How does the student demonstrate good citizenship in the school community? HighTech LA students are being prepared to be positive and productive forces in their families and communities, embracing traits of alert citizenship and an appreciation for diversity. Faculty guide students toward a global vision of ethics and social responsibility through the exploration of science, humanities, the arts, the advisory process, and interactions with the communities in which they will live, study and work.
Schoolwide Academic Growth Goals

The school principal, staff, and teachers are held accountable to the Board for meeting the school outcome goals and all data, when possible, is disaggregated to show how sub-groups; e.g. LEP, non-LEP, mobility, gender, etc. perform. HighTech LA pursues the following outcome goals:

- HighTech LA will rank at least 8 on the similar school Academic Performance Index ranking system in the year prior to charter renewal or two of the last three years prior to charter renewal.
- HighTech LA will rank at least 8 on the statewide Academic Performance Index ranking system in the year prior to charter renewal or two of the last three years prior to charter renewal.
- HighTech LA will meet its API growth target in the year prior to charter renewal or two of the last three years prior to charter renewal. It will achieve an API of at least 800 prior to charter renewal.
- HighTech LA’s academic performance on the CST will be equal to or better than the academic performance of the LAUSD schools that HighTech LA students would otherwise attend in the year prior to charter renewal, or in two of the last three years prior to renewal.
- HighTech LA’s academic performance on the CELDT will be equal to or better than the academic performance of the LAUSD schools that HighTech LA students would otherwise attend in the year prior to charter renewal, or in two of the last three years prior to renewal.
- HighTech LA will have a lower student dropout rate than the district average.
- HighTech LA will meet or exceed the percent of Annual Measurable Objectives on the AYP met by LAUSD schools in the neighborhood, in the year prior to charter renewal or in two of the last three years prior to renewal.
- HighTech LA will have a high school graduation rate higher than the LAUSD average and higher than the average of similar neighboring. We expect at least 98% of our enrolled seniors in high school to graduate.
- HighTech LA will have a CAHSEE passage rate higher than the LAUSD average, and higher than the average of similar neighboring schools. We expect at least 90% of our enrolled students to pass CAHSEE.
- HighTech LA will maintain a high student attendance rate of at least 94%, with a school year of 173 days and 375 minutes per day.
- HighTech LA will meet or exceed the percent of Annual Measurable Objectives on the AYP required by NCLB.

HighTech LA Student Achievement Outcomes

Since its first year of operation, HighTech LA has consistently achieved over an 800 API, the state goal for all public schools. In addition, it has outperformed neighborhood and similar LAUSD schools on the API Growth Score. It has achieved 9’s and 10’s on both the Statewide
and Similar Schools API Rank in all years of operation, a feat accomplished by few schools in LAUSD and throughout the state.

The API scores for the 2011-2012 school year have not yet been released, but our CST scores show significant achievement by our students in all tested areas, with just over 84% of all our students scoring proficient and advanced in English Language Arts and over 56% of our students scoring proficient and advanced in Math. In addition, our students’ scores in 2011-2012 show improvements in all areas tested over 2010-2011. The chart below outlines student achievement on CST tests.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELA</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>73.90%</td>
<td>76.20%</td>
<td>71.57%</td>
<td>83.72%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>53.80%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>51.44%</td>
<td>56.45%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>40.40%</td>
<td>45.70%</td>
<td>43.85%</td>
<td>46.01%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hist-Soc. Sci.</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>71.50%</td>
<td>65.40%</td>
<td>72.00%</td>
<td>78.92%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, all three numerically significant subgroups showed increased performance on the CST tests in English Language Arts over the last 5 years, and the gap between Non-Hispanic White students and other subgroups has narrowed in ELA, as indicated on the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of students achieving at the Proficient or Advanced level by sub group</th>
<th>Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>Non-Hispanic White</th>
<th>Economically Disadvantaged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Language Arts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>72.2%</td>
<td>87.8%</td>
<td>74.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>73.9%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>77.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
API Scores

HighTech LA continues to score above the statewide performance target of 800 and has outperformed neighborhood and similar LAUSD schools, as shown on the charts below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of Students in Growth API</th>
<th>Base API</th>
<th>Actual Growth API</th>
<th>Growth</th>
<th>Statewide Rank</th>
<th>Similar Schools Rank</th>
<th>API Growth Target Met</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>819</td>
<td>834</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>834</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>857</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>854</td>
<td>838</td>
<td>-16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP):

On specific measures of performance, HighTech LA has been consistently high-achieving. CAHSEE passage rates have been well over 90% in all years, again outperforming local and similar schools and LAUSD. The percent of students scoring proficient or above on the CST exams has been strong and in most subject areas.

The school met its AYP in 2008-09, meeting 6 of 6 AYP criteria. While the participation rate criteria remained at 95% or higher, the ELA target of percentage of population at or above proficient increased to 44.5%; and the mathematics target increased to 43.5%.
In 2009-10 the school met its AYP meeting 8 of 8 AYP criteria. Participation rate criteria of 95% or higher remained the same. However, the ELA target of percent proficient increased to 55.6% and the mathematics target increased to 54.8% for school year 2010.

In 2010-11 the school met its AYP, meeting 6 of 6 AYP criteria. Participation rate criteria of 95% or higher remained the same. Annual Measurable Objectives targets of percent proficient increased to 66.7% for English Language Arts and 66.1% for mathematics and were met for the school and all significant subgroups. Additionally, the graduation rate of 90% or higher was met.

For the 2011 – 2012 school year, the school met 5 out of 6 AYP criteria. Participation rate criteria of 95% remained the same. Annual Measurable Objectives targets of percent proficient increased to 83.9% for English Language Arts and 79.1% for Math. HighTech LA did not meet the graduation rate, achieving 88.52% instead of the required minimum of 90%. This represents two students who chose not to participate in the school’s summer credit recovery program, or any other credit recovery program, which would have enabled them to graduate.

**Performance Growth Targets by Year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELA Target (At or above proficient)</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2007-08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>44.5%</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Math Target (At or above proficient) | 66.1% | 54.8% | 43.5% | 32.2% |

The Annual Yearly Progress focuses on students who score at or above proficient. While performance growth targets have increased every year, students in all subgroups at HighTech LA have exceeded the target goals set by Federal Accountability measures in English Language Arts and mathematics.

**Growth API**

Although HighTech LA has shown significant achievement among its student population in all areas, it did fail to meet its Growth API in 2011, as a result of the failure of two of its subgroups to meet the Base API. The charts below indicate the Base API and Growth API broken down by Numerically Significant Subgroups:

**Numerically Significant Sub Group Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>2007 Base API</th>
<th>2008 Growth API</th>
<th>Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>771</td>
<td>804</td>
<td>+33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| White (not of Hispanic origin) | 852 | 857 | +5 |

| Socio-economically Disadvantaged | 807 | 817 | +10 |

Source: ayp.cde.ca.gov
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008 Base API</th>
<th>2009 Growth API</th>
<th>Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>804</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>+12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (not of Hispanic</td>
<td>857</td>
<td>863</td>
<td>+6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>origin)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economically</td>
<td>817</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disadvantaged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009 Base API</th>
<th>2010 Growth API</th>
<th>Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>824</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (not of Hispanic</td>
<td>858</td>
<td>876</td>
<td>+18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>origin)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economically</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>826</td>
<td>+12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disadvantaged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010 Base API</th>
<th>2011 Growth API</th>
<th>Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>822</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (not of Hispanic</td>
<td>873</td>
<td>871</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>origin)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economically</td>
<td>824</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disadvantaged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011 Base API</th>
<th>2012 Growth API</th>
<th>Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>+9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (not of Hispanic</td>
<td>871</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>+9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>origin)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economically</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>+31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disadvantaged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We reviewed the data underlying the Growth API and how it relates to the performance by our Hispanic or Latino Students and our Economically Disadvantaged Students, and have focused in particular on the CST scores of these populations as the source of our disappointing results with respect to the growth API. We instituted several changes in practice and policy as a result of our review (all as more fully discussed below in connection with review of the CST Star Results) and were pleased to see our students’ scores in all Numerically Significant Subgroups increasing in the 2011-2012 school year. HighTech LA increased its API by 14 points in 2011–2012, achieving an API of 853.

**California Standards Test (CST) STAR Results**

**Schoolwide Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percent of students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>achieving at the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficient or Advanced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English Language Arts</strong></td>
<td>83.7%</td>
<td>71.6%</td>
<td>76.2%</td>
<td>73.9%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mathematics</strong></td>
<td>56.5%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Science</strong></td>
<td>46.0%</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>History-Social Science</strong></td>
<td>78.9%</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
<td>65.4%</td>
<td>71.5%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data in the chart above shows that schoolwide, over 60% of HighTech LA students scored at the proficient or advanced level in English Language Arts and history-social studies. The other two disciplines, mathematics and science, showed growth in the number of students reaching the proficient or advanced level with an upward trend. HighTech LA students’ performance patterns by discipline in math and science parallel those of LAUSD and are superior in terms of those students who achieve proficient or advanced levels.
Sub Group Data of Statistically Significant Populations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of students achieving at the Proficient or Advanced level by sub group</th>
<th>Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>Non-Hispanic White</th>
<th>Economically Disadvantaged</th>
<th>Students With Disabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ELA</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>72.2%</td>
<td>87.8%</td>
<td>74.0%</td>
<td>92.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>73.9%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>77.8%</td>
<td>80.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mathematics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
<td>57.0%</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
<td>91.7%</td>
<td>82.4%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>80.6%</td>
<td>87.8%</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>38.2%</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
<td>62.2%</td>
<td>52.7%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Science</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>History-Social Science</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>69.50%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>57.50%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>62.09%</td>
<td>63.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>75.04%</td>
<td>74.15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of the statistically significant groups reported, Hispanic or Latino, Non-Hispanic White and economically disadvantaged showed growth over the five years of students achieving the goal of proficient or advanced in all areas tested, with the exception of Hispanic or Latino students showing a slight overall decline (47% to 43% from 2008 to 2011) in mathematics (see below).
We saw a downward trend among mathematics scores across all populations and particularly in the Hispanic or Latino subgroup in the 2010-2011 school year, which contributed to our failure to meet our Growth API in 2011. Although these scores were a result of a variety of factors, including faculty turnover during that school year, we are continuing to address this problem. In the 2011-2012 school year, we adopted various strategies, including a more rigorous assessment of mathematics skills of all incoming freshman prior to Freshman Boot Camp, and grouping students by ability in 9th grade math in order to make sure all students gain the basic math skills necessary to be successful in high school math. These efforts resulted in higher mathematics proficiency in 2011-2012 CST scores, and we expect to see the trend continue.
The chart above shows that across the board for the five years, over 55% of HighTech LA students scored at the proficient or advanced level in history-social studies and in 2011-2012, over 70% of all students scored proficient or advanced. However, we saw a decline in the number of Economically Disadvantaged students achieving proficient or advanced between the 2007-08 and 2009-2010 school years, and for school year 2009-10, all significant subgroups showed a slight decline in the number of students achieving proficient or advanced. In the spring semester of the 2009-2010 school year, we began to provide a laptop computer to each student for the year that could be taken home daily, ensuring access for all students to teacher assignments posted on Moodle, as well as access to internet sources for assignments where wireless internet is available. In addition, we revised the freshman Humanities curriculum to focus on basic history skills such as evaluating sources, understanding cause and effect and note-taking skills. The scores in succeeding school years have begun to climb again for all groups, and the achievement gap has narrowed, with 70% or more of all groups scoring proficient or advanced in history-social studies.

The chart above for science indicates major gains by Non Hispanic White students scoring at the proficient or advanced level, but it also revealed a gap in the achievement level for Hispanic or Latino students and Economically Disadvantaged students in reaching proficient or advanced. In addition to the gap, there was also a slight decline in both subgroups in 2009-10 and particularly in those Economically Disadvantaged students. HighTech LA recognized the need to provide additional science labs for all students and was able to obtain funding to purchase two portable classrooms. The new science labs opened in the 2010-2011 school year. In addition, a curricular change was made to provide honors biology classes during the school day (as opposed to additional opportunities available only before or after school) to allow better access to advanced classes for all students. The college counselor also met (and continues to meet) with all students to review summer enrichment opportunities in science and encourages students to participate. We have seen an increase in our science scores among all groups in 2010-2011 and 2011-2012, and we continue to analyze our data and reflect on our processes to further close the achievement gap between groups.
One aspect of the CST exam for science in 9th grade should be noted. At HighTech LA, all 9th grade students are required to take physics, and thus take the physics portion of the CST. At other schools, physics is an 11th or 12th grade science class that students opt to take. Those same students in 11th or 12th grade will also have completed one or two more years of mathematics than our freshmen taking the same CST exam. When the scores are reviewed in this light, HighTech LA students score extremely well in science compared to their peers.

The above table demonstrates the continued high achievement across the board by all groups in English Language Arts, with all subgroups scoring above 70% proficient or advanced. The ELA faculty noted a slight decrease across the board in scores in the 2010-2011 year and worked together to focus on vocabulary-building and reading comprehension strategies to move the trend upward again.

Across all subject areas and grade levels, teachers at HighTech LA continue to address all of these issues through rigorous standards-based lessons in all content areas. They analyze schoolwide data at their faculty retreats in the spring and fall. They know each of the students and parents individually and offer a strong personalized and supportive environment for all students.
California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)

Schoolwide Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Pair</th>
<th>English Language Arts</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Students Tested</td>
<td>Number of Students Passed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CDE DataQues

Students at HighTech LA continue to achieve at very high levels on the CAHSEE exam. In each of the last five years, the pass rate for students in both English Language Arts and mathematics has exceeded 90%. In 2009-10, one hundred per cent of the students passed the English Language Arts exam and 97% passed the mathematics exam. It is worthy of noting that given the small student population of HighTech LA, these pass rates mean that of the over 400 students to whom the test has been administered, fewer than 15 students over the past 5 years did not pass the exam on the first attempt.
Numerically Significant Sub Group Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>White (not of Hispanic origin)</th>
<th>Economically Disadvantaged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>English Language Arts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mathematics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HighTech LA continues to have an exceptionally high pass rate on the CAHSEE exam: the White not of Hispanic origin has achieved a 100% pass rate in both English Language Arts and mathematics in four out of five years, and all three subgroups had a 100% pass rate in English Language Arts for school year 2009-10. All subgroups achieve at very high rates each year in both areas tested. There was a significant percentage dip in pass rates among the Hispanic or Latino students in the 2011-2012 school year, although it is significant to note that, given the relatively small size of the subgroup, this means that four (4) fewer students passed in 2011-2012 than in the prior year. The faculty has reviewed the process used to identify students who may need additional support to pass the CAHSEE in order to ensure students in all groups can be successful.

Teachers analyze the CAHSEE data at their annual retreats and at weekly staff meetings. The counselor works with the teachers to identify individual students not passing CAHSEE. Together they target appropriate interventions, counsel students, and offer a CAHSEE support class in the spring semester. The special education teacher and school psychologist review the IEPs of eligible students to ensure that appropriate accommodations for testing are in place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2012 CAHSEE Pass Rate Comparison Scores</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTLA</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAUSD</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other measures of student performance reveal a stable, high-achieving school which is fulfilling its promise to students. The high attendance rate of over 93% over the last five years demonstrates the students’ dedication to the school and their education. All seniors are graduating and getting accepted to college, and last year virtually all students were planning to attend college immediately after graduation.
**Student Attendance Rate:**
2008-2009 93.46%
2009-2010 98.48%
2010-2011 95.52%
2011-2012 95.23%

Since the 2009-2010 school year, HighTech LA has maintained an attendance rate of over 95%. The school communicates the importance of student attendance through the Student Handbook, calls home via Blackboard Connect, and in face-to-face meetings with parents and students. Students with perfect attendance are recognized in awards assemblies.

**A-G Course Enrollment (2011 - 2012)**
African-American = 100%
Hispanic or Latino = 100%
Non-Hispanic White = 100%

**Graduation Rate:**

![Graduation Rate Chart]

2009: 100%
2010: 100%
2011: 98.2%
2012: 97.6%

**College-Going Rate**

Because the graduation requirements of HighTech LA are aligned with the admission requirements for the California State Universities, the college acceptance and college-going rates of our graduates are extremely high. Of the Senior class who graduated in 2011, all but three students intended to attend post-secondary education institutions (54 of 57 students) and of the 2012 graduates of HighTech LA, all but two students (79 of 81) intended to attend post-secondary institutions. Graduates of HighTech LA are represented at all nine University of
California campuses, a majority of the California State Universities, as well as private colleges all over the United States, including Smith College, Barnard College, Purdue University, Rochester Institute of Technology, the Claremont-McKenna Colleges, Johns Hopkins University and many more too numerous to list.
ELEMENT 3 – MEANS TO ASSESS PUPIL PROGRESS

The proposed evaluation of the impact of HighTech LA is designed to assess the short- and long-term impact of the charter in a number of areas:

- Student achievement and school performance outcomes.
- Classroom instruction and student learning.
- Preparation for post-secondary education and student exposure to technology and work-based learning experiences.

**Student Achievement and School Performance Outcomes**

The curriculum of HighTech LA is based on delivering a standards-based and technology-infused curriculum that emphasizes mathematics, science and engineering in order to prepare students for post-secondary education and careers in high technology fields. The school also aims to provide a more personalized learning experience for students through small class size and extended periods for project-based instruction.

Research on similar schools (including schools-within-a-school and career academies) has shown that the combination of a more individualized educational experience and the relevance of school curriculum are associated with lower dropout rates, higher attendance rates, as well as raised academic expectations for students leading to better academic performance (i.e., grade point averages) and greater rates of post-secondary eligibility. Indeed, small school advocates have been quick to point out that the “cost per graduate” of these kinds of schools tend to be far lower than those at traditional, comprehensive high schools precisely because the personalized, project-based curricular approach is beneficial for students. Research is less clear on the impact that such schools have had on student achievement on standardized tests and other “high stakes” accountability measures.

To evaluate the unique educational experience for students at HighTech LA, the school examines standard State and District accountability measures including:

**Student-level data indicators**
- CST scores in reading, mathematics, language, science and social studies
- High School Exit Exam scores
- Grade Point Average (GPA)
- California English Language Development Test (CELDT) results

**School-level accountability indicators**
- Academic Performance Index (API)
- Dropout rate
- Attendance rate

Program effectiveness is gauged formally and informally at HighTech LA. Student data—CST and CAHSEE results, course grades and attendance—is disaggregated by student characteristics and analyzed to place each program in perspective, guide students into appropriate electives,
identify students needing additional tutoring on courses/standardized tests, and ensure achievement variations by subgroups are addressed. Using this information, two teachers conduct a month-long effort to coach and tutor predesignated 10th grade students who were at risk of failing the CAHSEE. They meet with them three days a week during the lunch and X Block periods to help them prepare for the test, and, as a result of this and similar interventions, HighTech LA sophomores tested have consistently passed the CAHSEE at rates above 90%, and significantly higher than the pass rates statewide and in LAUSD schools.

All staff meet weekly to evaluate student progress and develop activities/programs to support content proficiency, CAHSEE mastery, and graduation. To this end they discuss the advisory process; look at collective and individual student work; and participate in “critical friends” discussions around projects and curriculum. Adjustments are made as needed to improve the overall programming and student and teacher support systems, as well as to support each individual student’s learning curve. For example, the Presentations of Learning (POL) process was borrowed from other high tech high school models, such as HighTechHigh San Diego, as staff realized the inherent benefits of requiring students to formally present their applied projects and field tough questions about their work.

Faculty at HighTech LA develop and use internal benchmark assessments that may vary from year to year as the needs and skills of the student population vary. Because, as a practical matter, a single teacher will teach a subject area across an entire grade level (for example, one faculty member teaches Physics to all the Freshmen, and another teaches Chemistry to all Sophomores), there is little requirement for pacing plans or assessments to ensure uniformity in a single subject across one grade level. The faculty does, however, meet by department during a retreat prior to the beginning of each school year and every other week during the school year to discuss overall learning goals for students as they progress over four years, and each department creates their own assessments based on student achievement. For example, the Sophomore English Language Arts teacher will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the Sophomore class as a whole in mastering the relevant State Standards with the Junior English teacher at the faculty retreat in order to allow the English curriculum for the rising Juniors to remediate any weaknesses and rely on their strengths. The Junior English teacher would then be prepared to create benchmark assessments to make sure the students are improving in their weak areas and use the results of such assessments to inform instruction.

The other schoolwide benchmark assessment that is used to assess all students’ abilities in oral presentation and critical thinking are the Presentations of Learning made by the students during the Fall semester. These Presentations are scored based on grade-level rubrics and students and faculty alike receive the results. Students must successfully pass Transitional Presentations of Learning at the end of the Spring Semester to advance to the next grade level and the Presentations in the Fall act both as a “practice” for the students and as a benchmark assessment for faculty to inform them whether additional instruction and practice is needed by students in basic presentation skills which form a part of the English Language Arts and Social Studies State Standards, and are also necessary to promote the ESLR’s we have adopted at the school. Finally, the faculty uses the results of the CST exams administered in the Spring semester as benchmark assessments to help inform instruction for the next Fall. Results of the exams are reviewed in department meetings prior to the beginning of the school year, after the results are
made available, so faculty can again focus curriculum on areas of weakness to try to bring all students to proficiency.

SAT preparation courses are held after school in the spring through Revolution Test Prep. The company also assists with an evening for parents and students to demystify PSAT scores in preparation for the SAT. Any student who qualifies for free or reduced lunch may apply through Revolution Test Prep for scholarships. Revolution has been generous with scholarships providing $3,734 in 2009 and $1,696 in 2010. In the spring of 2009, students who took the course improved their scores on average by 277.50 points and in the spring of 2010, students improved their scores on average by 240 points.

Through Revolution Test Prep, HighTech LA offers a mock SAT and a mock ACT. Sixty-nine students took the mock ACT and 84 took the mock SAT last year. These mock exams are open to all students and the community to give students an opportunity to see in which test they perform better. Through the mock exams, HighTech LA raised approximately $1,500.00 which is used to pay for the school’s subscription to Naviance, a spring field trip to the national college fair for the junior class, and scholarships for summer programs for the neediest students. This spring, an ACT prep course may be added based on student demand following the mock exams.

As a result of these proactive strategies, more students have applied for accommodations on the SAT and PSAT than in the past. The college counselor submits requests for accommodations.

Armed with evaluation data on students and programs, staff advises some students to use an Internet-based SAT test preparation program to practice. Teachers at HighTech LA use textbook assessments to address knowledge gaps and then identify students at-risk of failing the CAHSEE. Six weeks prior to testing, teachers conduct a mock exam and provide tutoring. Teachers also tell parents about the CAHSEE and what it means for their children’s success.
Classroom Instruction and Student Learning

In addition to examining student and school performance, the evaluation will carefully assess classroom instruction and student learning at HighTech LA. To evaluate these aspects of charter implementation, HighTech LA staff has created a committee dedicated to Instructional Rounds. The committee is made up of teachers and administrators and is based on a practice adapted to education from the field of medicine—that embodies a specific set of ideas about how practitioners can work together to solve common problems and improve their practice. In the education context, it is designed to help schools, districts and state systems support high-quality teaching and learning for all students. Instructional Rounds strategically connects school, district and state efforts with improvements at the instructional core and builds collaborative networks of educators who learn from one another about improving teaching and learning.

Committee members attended Harvard University for training on implementing Instructional Rounds. The committee subsequently educated and trained fellow staff to initiate the program in 2011-2012. The committee meets to develop essential questions and then conducts classroom visitations.

Method To Measure Student Outcomes

Assessment Tools: Each course has clearly defined outcomes based on the content of the curriculum. Student achievement in developing conceptual thinking, problem-solving skills and content mastery is assessed using multiple measures, based on assessment that both improves learning and provides assurances of accountability. Students will demonstrate knowledge when measured against multiple measures, formative and summative, holistic and standardized, narrative and norm-referenced. Set against a benchmark, students will be evaluated through the following measures:

- State-mandated standardized tests
- Student progress reports - teacher assessment, portfolio/projects, state assessments

State-mandated tests: HighTech LA agrees to comply with and adhere to the State requirements for participation and administration of all state mandated tests. If the Charter School does not test (i.e., STAR, CELDT, CAHSEE) with the District, the Charter School hereby grants authority to the state of California to provide a copy of all test results directly to the District as well as the Charter School.

HighTech LA will meet all statewide standards and conduct the pupil assessments required pursuant to California Education Codes and statewide standards authorized and applicable to students in non-charter public schools.
The following factors will be monitored as indicators for academic achievement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurable Outcomes</th>
<th>Expected Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment Tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Conduct</strong></td>
<td><strong>Average daily attendance rate of 95%</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decrease in tardies (yearly) 5%.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mediation referrals will decrease yearly by 5%.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Suspensions will decrease each year by 5%.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Content Standards for California Schools are subject-based teacher initiated requirements and research-based suggestions that will meld into the development of guidelines determining student accountability at each grade level in each subjects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curricular Focus</th>
<th>Measurable Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment Tools</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English language &amp; history</td>
<td>Reading with comprehension, writing with clarity, speaking with meaning, understanding literary works. Understand historical context and the relationship between historical events, artistic developments in art, music, literature and the human condition. Research, reflect, relate, interpret, and conclude.</td>
<td>California Standards Test, CAHSEE, SAT I, SAT II, Student progress by teacher assessment and peer review</td>
<td>Annually, Annually, Annually, Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish language &amp; literature</td>
<td>Read, write with comprehension and clarity, speak with meaning and possess familiarity with literary work.</td>
<td>A.C.T., SAT II, Student Progress – Teacher assessment</td>
<td>Annually, Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Conceptual understanding of Algebra, Geometry, Math Analysis and Calculus. Ability to use this knowledge where needed in science, technology projects and problems.</td>
<td>California Standards Test, SAT I, SAT II, ACT, CAHSEE, Progress and assessment by teacher</td>
<td>Annually, Annually, Annually, Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Ability to investigate, experiment, hypothesize, conclude and apply knowledge to other disciplines.</td>
<td>A.C.T., SAT II, Student Progress Report</td>
<td>Annually, Quarterly each semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Proficient in use of technology, adaptation of technology and application of technology.</td>
<td>Student Progress Report</td>
<td>Quarterly each semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Arts</td>
<td>Willing to take creative risks, participate in the artistic process of reflecting and working independently. Understanding specific concepts to develop skills and creative self-motivated projects.</td>
<td>Peer review</td>
<td>Quarterly each semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher assessment</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Development</td>
<td>Participation in school and workplace beyond the classroom. Understanding social needs, cultural differences, interdependence through school newspaper, student government, event participation, self-initiated projects.</td>
<td>Records Advisory Checklists</td>
<td>Annually Each semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internships</td>
<td>Meet the standards as set by the workplace in dress, demeanor, learning curve, participation, enthusiasm, reliability, honesty, integrity, and competency. High level of awareness of role An asset to the workplace.</td>
<td>Workplace evaluation</td>
<td>Quarterly during the semester of Internship in the Senior year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grading Policy**

Each HighTech LA teacher determines his/her grading policy and puts it in the course description and on Moodle. Grades are based on graded assessments developed by teachers, presentations of learning, and participation in group processes. Students’ final passing marks are A – 100% - 90%, B – 89% 0 80%, and C – 79% - 70%. Grades of D and F – 69% and below - are not passing. Parents are formally notified of their child’s progress at the five week, ten week, fifteen week, and final report cards each semester. In addition, parents have access to PowerSchool at all times and can login and receive up to the minute, real time grade for their student.

**Testing**

The Charter School agrees to comply with and adhere to the State requirements for participation and administration of all state mandated tests. If the Charter School does not test (i.e., STAR, CELDT, CAHSEE) with the District, the Charter School hereby grants authority to the state of California to provide a copy of all test results directly to the District as well as the Charter School.
ELEMENT 4 – GOVERNANCE

HighTech LA and/or its non-profit corporation is a separate legal entity and will be solely responsible for the debts and obligations of the Charter School.

HighTech LA will comply with the Brown Act.

Members of the HighTech LA Charter School’s executive board, any administrators, managers or employees, and any other committees of the School shall comply with applicable federal and state laws, nonprofit integrity standards and LAUSD’s Charter School policies and regulations regarding ethics and conflicts of interest.

The District reserves the right to appoint a single representative to the charter school board pursuant to Education Code section 47604(b).

Grievance Procedure for Parents and Students
Charter School will designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) including any investigation of any complaint filed with Charter School alleging its noncompliance with these laws or alleging any actions which would be prohibited by these laws. Charter School will notify all its students and employees of the name, office address, and telephone number of the designated employee or employees.

Charter School will adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging any action, which would be prohibited by Title IX, or Section 504.

Charter School will implement specific and continuing steps to notify applicants for admission and employment, students and parents of elementary and secondary school students, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the recipient, that it does not discriminate on the basis of sex or mental or physical disability in the educational program or activity which it operates, and that it is required by Title IX and Section 504 not to discriminate in such a manner.

Public Operating Principles

HighTech LA will comply with all laws applicable to charter schools.

Development Team
HighTech LA has benefited from the expertise of our original planning team, which includes, among others, our founder, Roberta Weintraub, a former president of LAUSD’s Board of Education; Dan Demeter, chief information officer, Korn/Ferry International; Samuel Hoi,
president of the Otis College of Art and Design; Megan Klee, former Chief Information Officer, LAUSD; Sue Mangiapane, Cisco Systems; Doris Lasiter, former Principal, Birmingham H.S.; Marsha Rybin, former Assistant Principal, Birmingham H.S.; Joan Martin, curriculum developer and, J. Gonzalez, facilities project manager and multimedia advisor LAUSD; Richard Berliner, AIA; David Stephens, architect, HighTechHigh--San Diego.

**Board of Directors**
The Board of Directors of HighTech LA Foundation is the Board of Directors of the HighTech LA charter school. HighTech LA exists as a legally and operationally independent nonprofit entity. HighTech LA operates as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation. HighTech LA operates in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws established by the HighTech LA governing board (attached but not incorporated to this petition). The School operates autonomously from the District. Pursuant to the Education Code Section 47604(c), the District shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of the School, operated as a California non-profit benefit corporation or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by the charter school as long as the granting authority has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

The affairs of HighTech LA will be managed and its powers exercised under the ultimate jurisdiction of the HighTech LA Board of Directors (“Board”). The Board of Directors will have a legal and fiduciary responsibility for HighTech LA. The Board will be responsible for providing fiscal accountability by approving and monitoring the budget. The Board will also develop policies and procedures regarding funding and fiscal management. The Board will also help ensure effective organizational planning by approving long-range goals and annual objectives, monitoring the general policies such as health and safety, use and maintenance of facilities, and fundraising, and overseeing that school resources are managed effectively. This goal will be accomplished primarily through hiring, supporting, reviewing the performance of, and if necessary dismissing the administrative staff.

The HighTech LA Board will post meeting notices at the school and on the website in advance of all Board meetings, in accordance with the Brown Act. The school will distribute agendas to parents of students and in the community. A scribe will record all meeting minutes and publish them for all stakeholders to view. HighTech LA will also post agendas, meeting times, and minutes on the www.ht-la.org website. The HighTech LA Board has regularly scheduled meetings every other month.

The Board will have a maximum of 11 members and no less than five. Currently, members of the Board include: Dr. Elliot Ponchick, Chair, William Bannerman Foundation; Dr. Bernard Luskin, Director, Chairman and CEO, Luskin International; Carla Christofferson, Director and Secretary, Attorney; Paul Davies, Director, Attorney; Seppy Azadi, Director, Vice President, Global Services, Information and Technology Group, Korn/Ferry International, and Kate Ides, Director, Attorney. The District reserves the right to appoint a single representative to the charter school board pursuant to Education Code section 47604(b).

As the entity with ultimate oversight responsibility, LAUSD will be provided with an annual programmatic and fiscal audit. The programmatic audit will include a summary of major decisions and policies established by the Board of Directors during the year.
Going forward, all board members will serve three year terms and two board member positions will turn over at a time. Selection of future members will be by consent of the board (via election) to expressly fill positions that work within the needs of HighTech LA and its Board of Directors.

The Board will hold ultimate responsibility for the operation of the School, its compliance with applicable laws and regulations, its financial soundness, and the execution of its mission. The Board will focus its work on:

- Upholding the mission and vision of the School.
- Providing strategic vision and performing long-range planning.
- Hiring and evaluating the Principal.
- Establish the budget for the corporation and approve the budget of the school.
- Ensure compliance with applicable law such as the Public Records Act and policies such as Conflict of Interest.
- Approve and monitor the school budget and the school’s fiscal practices, including solicitation and receipt of grants and donations.
- Provide notice and hold meetings in compliance with the Brown Act.
- Approve personnel policies, and all hiring and dismissal of school personnel.
- Approve and monitor management of school liabilities, insurance, health, safety and risk-related matters.

The HighTech LA Board has adopted the LAUSD Conflict of Interest policy and procedures regarding self-dealing and conflicts of interest. The Board may initiate and carry out any program or activity that is not in conflict with or inconsistent with any law and which is not in conflict with the purposes for which charter schools are established. The Board may execute any powers delegated to it by law, and shall discharge any duty imposed by law upon it and may delegate to an employee of the corporation any of those duties. The Board, however, retains ultimate responsibility over the performance of those powers or duties so delegated.

The Board will receive proper training annually. Some of the topics for the training sessions are:

- Brown Act
- Conflict of Interest
- Delineation of Roles and Responsibilities
- Strategic Planning and Thinking
- Legal and Financial Responsibilities
- Effective Board-Staff Relations
- Creating Effective Committees
- Effective Board Self-Assessment

The above list is a sample and is not meant to be exhaustive.

**Principal**
The Principal of the School oversees the strategic and operational plans of the school. The Principal has overall day-to-day management responsibilities of the school. The Principal will
ensure the school operates in fulfillment of the mission as spelled out in the charter(s) and in compliance with charter school law, Bylaws and applicable education law. The Principal will work with the Board and its committees to ensure the school makes sound strategic decisions. The Principal will ensure the school maintains a focus on student achievement. The Principal will serve as a spokesperson for the Board to further the school(s) prominence within both the local, state and national education and charter school communities.

The responsibilities of the Principal or his/her designee may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Stay in direct contact with District regarding changes, progress, etc.
- Develop Board meeting agenda in conjunction with the Board Chairperson in compliance with the Brown Act.
- Propose policies for adoption by the Board.
- Provide comments and recommendations regarding policies presented by others to the Board.
- Communicate with School legal counsel and any outside consultants.
- Stay abreast of school laws and regulations.
- Approve all purchase orders and contracts up to $25,000 (HighTech LA Board approves purchase orders and contracts over $25,000), pay warrants, and requisitions and, upon approval, forward on for processing.
- Participate in the dispute resolution procedure and the complaint procedure when necessary.
- Establish and execute enrollment procedures.
- Provide all necessary financial reports as required for proper ADA reporting.
- Make budget line item revisions when necessary and submit for HighTech LA Board approval.
- Develop the budget in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and submit to the Board for review and approval.
- Present a monthly financial report to the Board.
- Attend IEP meetings when necessary.
- Supervise student disciplinary matters
- Coordinate the administration of Standardized Testing.
- Oversee and coordinate student orientation.
- Attend all Board meetings and attend District Board meetings as necessary, as the charter representative.
- Establish procedures designed to carry out Charter Board policies
- Provide timely performance evaluations of all HighTech LA employees.
- Participate in the dispute resolution procedure and the complaint procedure when necessary.
- Oversee development and implementation of curriculum in alignment with State of California Standards.
- Develop the HighTech LA annual performance target goals.
- Provide comments and recommendations regarding policies presented by others to the HighTech LA Board.
- Facilitate open house events.
- Oversee all parent/student/teacher relations.
- Implement Site Safety Procedures in compliance with all applicable laws.
- Create and appoint committees to assist in the execution of certain planning and administrative functions
- Supervise all employees and volunteers at the School.

**Organizational Chart**

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HighTech LA
Board of Directors

Principal

Other Administrators (Counselors)   Teachers
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**Advisory Council**

HighTech LA is considering an Advisory Council that will have members appointed because of specific expertise. The Advisory Council will include HighTech LA teachers or staff, students, parents, educators, community members, business members and technology industry members. The role of the Advisory Council would be to advise the HighTech LA Board of Directors on issues including, but not limited to, fundraising, community relations, and student events. When the Advisory committee is formed, it will comply with the Brown Act in all of its meetings and deliberations.

**Parental Involvement**

Research shows that high student achievement and self-esteem are closely related to positive parental participation in education. We believe that we must create a welcoming and collaborative school environment. HighTech LA has provided many opportunities to actively engage parent/guardians in assisting with the learning and development of students at HighTech LA. We remain committed to ensuring all students succeed, and we understand that the partnership between school and home is essential. HighTech LA encourages parental involvement and participation in the school through the following methods:

- PowerSchool
- Moodle
- Monthly Parent Meetings
Recognizing the importance of effective and timely communication between the school and the home, one significant change to increase parent involvement has been the addition of **PowerSchool**, one of the most widely used web-based student information systems available. Beginning in school year 2008-2009, parents, students and staff were introduced to PowerSchool, a schoolwide system that allows ready access to students’ attendance, grades, and teacher assignments. We believe that the parent portal has transformed the collaborative process among parents and teachers, enabling them to focus on the crux of the student information system - student performance and achievement.

All teachers use the HighTech LA website and a popular online forum called **Moodle** for posting grades and collecting homework and class notes, giving online tests, setting up student journals, and creating discussion boards. For parents, HighTech LA has increased the use of Moodle as a tool to provide students and parents with access to teachers’ course requirements, homework assignments and future planning. Their increased use of technology supports the overall goals of HighTech LA. There are now training sheets for parents’ use for both PowerSchool and Moodle.

Parents and students are invited to attend the following **Monthly Parent Meetings** annually through the college guidance office:

- September: 12th Grade **College Night**
- October: 11th Grade **College Night**
- November: 9th and 10th Grade **College Night**
- December: **Financial Aid Night** (grades 9-11) and FAFSA Line by Line for seniors and their parents. Presentations made in Spanish and English.
- January: PSAT Scores Back Night – Understanding the PSAT with Revolution Test Prep
- March: 10 and 11th Grade: Understanding Financial Aid Opportunities

HighTech LA has added **Blackboard Connect**, a mass communications system that allows the school to send an automated **Robocall** with a pre-recorded telephone message to parents. Using the school’s parent database, calls can be generated by grade level, by a single or multiple class(es), as well as schoolwide. School activities, important dates, special reminders and emergency information can be communicated quickly and efficiently with this automated system.

Some of the proudest moments of the year take place during the student hosted exhibitions for **Cross-Curricular Projects**. The student body, parents, teachers, HighTech LA staff, HighTech LA Board Members and community members are all invited to attend. Sometimes the
audience is asked to judge performances or participate in an art auction. Two of the most popular exhibits are the tenth grade Mystery Night and the 11th Grade Decades Night. In 2011 Rybania was introduced by the seniors and in 2012 The Genocide Awareness Project was created by the sophomores.

We have also reached out to parents to seek their involvement beyond the school day in activities including robotics, fundraising, transportation, and chaperones at school events and on college field trips. Some parents act as mentors to students and several parents volunteer time in the Main Office.

The Parent Association with elected board members and officers continues to meet monthly. They interact with staff and students and conduct the annual schoolwide major fund raising activity Monte Carlo Night. The Parent Association also hosts a twice annual Teacher Appreciation luncheon. HighTech LA parents and students actively participated in the Free E-Waste Community recycling project (2010-11, 2011-12). Parents participate in community fund raising events and host a barbeque at the local park as a community activity to create interest and support for HighTech LA.

Finally, parents serve on the School Site Council, which helps develop the Single School District Plan for HighTech LA.

**Grievance Procedure for Parents and Students**

HighTech LA will designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) including any investigation of any complaint filed with HighTech LA alleging its noncompliance with these laws or alleging any actions which would be prohibited by these laws. HighTech LA will notify all its students and employees of the name, office address, and telephone number of the designated employee or employees.

HighTech LA will adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging any action, which would be prohibited by Title IX, or Section 504.

HighTech LA will implement specific and continuing steps to notify applicants for admission and employment, students and parents of elementary and secondary school students, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the recipient, that it does not discriminate on the basis of sex or mental or physical disability in the educational program or activity which it operates, and that it is required by Title IX and Section 504 not to discriminate in such a manner.

**LAUSD Charter Policy**
HighTech LA will comply with the District policy related to charter schools, as it may be changed from time to time after notice and reasonable opportunity for input from the Charter School Collaborative.

**Responding to Inquiries**

HighTech LA and/or its nonprofit corporation shall promptly respond to all inquiries, including but not limited to, inquiries regarding financial records, from the District and shall consult with the District regarding any inquiries. HighTech LA and/or its nonprofit corporation acknowledges that it is subject to audit by LAUSD including, without limitation, audit by the District Office of the Inspector General.

If an allegation of waste, fraud or abuse related to the Charter School operations is received by the District, the Charter School shall be expected to cooperate with any investigation undertaken by the District and/or the Office of the Inspector General, Investigations Unit.

**Notifications**

Notification is to be made to the Charter Schools Division in writing of any notices of workplace hazards, investigations by outside regulatory agencies, lawsuits, or other formal complaints, within one week of receipt of such notices by HighTech LA.

**ELEMENT 5 – EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS**

HighTech LA believes that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity. Charter School shall not discriminate against qualified applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, or any other characteristic protected by California or federal law. Equal employment opportunity shall be extended to all aspects of the employer-employee relationship, including recruitment, hiring, upgrading, training, promotion, transfer, discipline, layoff, recall, and dismissal from employment.

All employees of the Charter School shall be employees of HighTech LA. HighTech LA will not require any employee to work at the Charter School. HighTech LA will adhere to California laws, including fingerprinting, drug testing, and prohibitions regarding the employment of any person who has been convicted of a serious or violent felony. All employees must furnish or be able to provide:

- Medical clearance for communicable diseases and Mantoux tuberculosis (TB).
- Fingerprinting for a criminal record check. Applicants will be required to provide a full disclosure statement regarding prior criminal record. Prior to the first day of work for every employee, HighTech LA will process all background checks through the Department of Justice.
- Documents establishing legal status to work in the United States.
Employees’ job duties and work basis will be negotiated in individual contracts. General job
descriptions have been developed for the administrative staff, teachers, other certificated staff,
office personnel, and classified staff.

**Principal**
The Board will select the administrator/principal on an application and interview basis.
Selection of administrators will be based on proven experience in educational leadership,
educational vision for and experience with low-income and/or minority children, demonstrated
ability in program design and/or development, entrepreneurial, and interest and commitment to
educational reform. The Principal supervises the campus teachers and non-instructional staff.
The Principal shall act as the instructional leader at the School and shall be responsible for
helping the School students achieve outcomes as outlined in the Educational Program.
Candidates for this position will possess:

- Excellent communication and community-building skills
- Administrative experience
- Extensive knowledge of curriculum development
- A record of success in developing teachers
- Experience in performance assessment

This individual must meet all of the following minimum requirements:

- Valid California Administrative Credential, or equivalent
- Valid California Teaching Credential, or equivalent
- Possession of a Master’s Degree or higher

Responsibilities for the Principal include:

- Facilitating communication between all school stakeholders.
- Hiring and firing all other employees according to the mission, philosophy, and
  obligations defined in the charter petition, with Board approval and in accordance with
  Board policies and employment contracts
- Overseeing the day-to-day operations of the school.
- Organizing professional development.
- Student discipline.
- Reporting to the Board of Directors on the progress of the school in achieving
  educational success.
- Assisting with preparing grants, facilitating fundraising, and/or obtaining loans.
- Maintaining a balanced budget and drafting an annual budget proposal for Board review.
- Overseeing the development and implementation of all programs.

**Teachers**
HighTech LA’s teachers will meet the requirements for employment as stipulated by the
California Education Code section 47605(l). Primary teachers of core, college preparatory
subjects (English language arts, mathematics, science, history, and special education) will hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in a non-charter public school would be required to hold. All teachers will be highly-qualified as defined by No Child Left Behind. In addition, teachers will hold English Learner Authorization. HighTech LA will adhere to all requirements outlined by No Child Left Behind with respect to teachers and paraprofessional employees. Appropriate records of credentials held by HighTech LA teachers and supporting documentation will be monitored and maintained by the School administration. Credentials will be monitored annually in compliance with applicable state and federal law. Current copies of all teacher credentials will be kept by the office manager and they will be readily available for inspection.

HighTech LA will monitor the development of the regulations to implement the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and ensure that the qualifications for all teachers will follow the guidelines set by the State with regards to this law. This includes that all “highly qualified” teachers will meet the following 3 factors:

- Teacher possesses state certification or license;
- Teacher holds a bachelor’s degree; and,
- Teacher passed rigorous test; major/course work; or state evaluation.

The Principal and a select group of volunteer teachers will select the teachers and counselors on an application and interview basis. Selection of teachers will be based on their teaching experience, the degree of subject matter expertise, and their ability to demonstrate classroom instructional capabilities. Inexperienced/emergency credentialed teachers will be hired on educational experience (i.e. former paraprofessional, school volunteer, child care, etc.), work experiences found beneficial to education, and resumes with good references. Responsibilities for the teachers will include:

- Preparing and implementing lesson plans that lead to student understanding of the pre-established curriculum content.
- Assessing student progress and maintaining accurate records.
- Participating regularly in professional development opportunities.
- Maintaining frequent communication with students, student’s families, colleagues, and other school stakeholders.
- Maintaining regular, punctual attendance.

Selection of the Academic Counselor will be based on their experience and qualifications. Responsibilities of the Academic Counselor will include:

- Developing and maintaining list of students who are academically “at risk”.
- Participating in parent and team meetings for “at risk” students.
- Notifying student and parents of eligibility status.
- Maintaining accurate graduation checks.
- Holding student/parent meetings to discuss and distribute credit recovery options and applications

Selection of the College Counselor will be based on their experience and qualifications and their ability to use Naviance and PowerSchool. Responsibilities of the College Counselor will include:

- Assisting 12th grade students with college applications.
• Holding information nights for FAFSA
• Holding college information nights for parent and students of each grade level.
• Meeting all 11th grade students and their parents to discuss the development of the 11th graders college list.
• Notifying parents and students of college scholarship activities.
• Arranging visits from college and university outreach coordinators.
• Acting as school administrator in the absence of the Principal.

Other Certificated Staff / Administrators
A pool of day-to-day substitutes will be established and a list of qualified substitutes will be maintained.

• College Advisor Qualifications
  o College Advising Certificate
  o Minimum of 5 years teaching experience
  o Possession of a California Administrative Services Credential or in the process of obtaining one.

• Counselor Qualifications
  o Possession of a Pupil Services Credential

Non-Certificated Personnel
Non-certificated Personnel will be selected by the Principal and a group of volunteer teachers on an application and interview basis. Selection will be based on the ability to perform the job duties for that position. Office personnel duties will include, but not be limited to:

• Answering telephones.
• Filing reports.
• Enrolling students.
• Managing/monitoring office operations.
• Ordering and purchasing office and classroom supplies and vendor management.
• Developing and implementing clerical and administrative procedures for daily school operations.
• Preparing correspondence, reports, bulletins, files, forms, memorandums, and performing other clerical and administrative duties as assigned.
• Bilingual translation and communication with parents and community.

Evaluations
Evaluations will be performed annually. Performance measures will be developed to evaluate all School personnel.

The Board will evaluate the Principal on, among other things:
• Maintaining a fiscally sound charter school including a balanced budget.
• Overall successful School academic program and achievement of educational goals.
• High parental and community involvement.
• Completion of required job duties.
• Creation of a School atmosphere of enthusiasm, warmth, and cooperation among all parties.

The Principal will evaluate teachers, lead teachers, and counselors and on, among other things:
  • Student progress as referenced from assessment measures.
  • Effectiveness of teaching strategies.
  • Performance of job duties.
  • Knowledge of curriculum.

The Principal will evaluate classified and other personnel based upon completion of assigned job duties and regular, punctual attendance.

If an employee disagrees with an evaluation, a written objection may be appended to the review.

**Employee Compensation**

Teachers at HighTech LA will be paid according to the LAUSD Teacher Salary Schedule. The College Counselor, Lead Teacher, and Principal’s salaries will be set by the HighTech LA Board of Directors.

**Termination**

All employees, except at-will employees, will be hired on the basis of annual contracts and their terms expire at the end of their annual contract. In the event of termination of employment prior to the end of an employment contract, the employee shall be entitled only to the prorated salary and benefits earned through the last date of employment. HighTech LA recognizes two reasons to remove an employee from employment:

  • Voluntary Termination (Resignation). Voluntary termination occurs when an employee chooses to leave HighTech LA. To leave in good standing and be eligible for rehire consideration, employees must give at least two weeks prior notice.
  • Involuntary Termination (Discharge). Involuntary termination occurs when HighTech LA chooses to discharge the employee. The Principal may terminate or suspend the employment of any employee if s/he determines that the employee has failed to fulfill the duties and responsibilities and/or demonstrate the qualities outlined in the job description, or if other good cause exists, subject to due process provisions below. In the event the school finds it necessary or desirable to terminate an employee’s employment before the end of the school year, the school will give the employee written notice at least 10 calendar days before termination, unless the Principal determines that the employee poses a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of the school or students, in which case termination will be immediate.

**Due Process**

In the event an employee has any complaint regarding working conditions, a supervisor’s review, a decision of termination or any other matter regarding employment, and such complaint cannot be resolved informally, such employee may file a written complaint with the Principal or Board President (as employee may determine) as soon as possible after the events that give rise to the
employee’s work-related concerns. The written complaint should set forth in detail the basis for
the employee’s complaint. An objective and timely investigation of all complaints which cannot
be resolved informally will be undertaken. This includes meeting separately with the employee
and with others who either are named in the complaint or who may have knowledge of the facts
set forth in the complaint. The School will attempt to treat all internal complaints and their
investigation as confidential, recognizing, however, that in the course of investigating and
resolving internal complaints some dissemination of information to others may be necessary or
appropriate. Upon completion of the investigation, the Principal or Board President, as
applicable, shall report the finding(s) to the employee in writing. If an employee has filed a
complaint in good faith, the employee will not be disciplined or otherwise penalized for lodging
the complaint. If an employee believes that he or she is being retaliated against for lodging a
complaint, the employee should immediately notify the Principal or Board President.
ELEMENT 6 – HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

Criminal Background Checks
The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described in § 44237. Ed. Code §47605 (b)(5)(F) HighTech LA shall require all employees of the Charter School, and all volunteers who will be performing services that are not under the direct supervision of a Charter School employee, and any onsite vendors having unsupervised contact with students to submit to criminal background checks and fingerprinting. The Charter School will maintain on file and available for inspection evidence that the Charter School has performed criminal background checks for their employees prior to any unsupervised contact with students. The Charter School shall also ensure that it receives subsequent arrest notifications from the Department of Justice to ensure the ongoing safety of its students.

As an independent charter, HighTech LA implements its own comprehensive set of health, safety, and risk management policies. These policies were developed in consultation with the school's insurance carriers and address the following topics:

- A requirement that all enrolling students and staff provide records documenting immunizations to the extent required for enrollment in non-charter public schools. Records of student immunizations shall be maintained, and staff shall honor County requirements for periodic Mantoux Tuberculosis (TB) tests.
- Policies and procedures for response to natural disasters and emergencies, including fires and earthquakes.
- A policy requiring that instructional and administrative staff receive training in emergency response, including appropriate "first responder" training or its equivalent.
- Policies relating to the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines.
- A policy that the school will be housed in facilities that have received state Fire Marshal approval and that have been evaluated by a qualified structural engineer who has determined that the facilities present no substantial seismic safety hazard. Periodic inspections shall be undertaken, as necessary, to ensure such safety standards are met.
- A policy establishing that the school functions as a drug, alcohol, and tobacco free workplace.
- A requirement that each employee of the School, and all volunteers who will be performing services that are not under the direct supervision of a Charter School employee, and any onsite vendors having unsupervised contact with students to submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Section 44237.
- A policy that the School will maintain a file of all criminal background checks and will make it available for inspection as evidence that the Charter School has performed the above criminal background checks.
- A policy ensuring that the School receives subsequent arrest notifications from the Department of Justice to ensure the ongoing safety of its students.
• A policy and procedure for reporting child abuse, acts of violence, and other improprieties as mandated by federal, state, and local agencies.
• Compliance with all health and safety laws and regulations that apply to non-charter public schools, including those required by CAL/OSHA, the California Health and Safety Code, and EPA.

These policies are incorporated as appropriate into the School’s student and staff handbooks and are reviewed on an ongoing basis in the School’s staff development efforts and governing board policies. The safety plan is kept on file for review and school staff is trained annually on the safety procedures outlined in the plan.

**Auxiliary Services**
School staff will conduct annual reviews to ensure all auxiliary services are safe (food services, transportation, custodial services, hazardous materials) and will develop appropriate policies and awareness training.

**Staff Responsibilities**
All employees will be responsible for their own safety, as well as that of others in the workplace. HighTech LA will rely upon its employees to ensure that work areas are kept safe and free of hazardous conditions. Employees will report any unsafe conditions or potential hazards to their supervisor immediately. If an employee suspects a concealed danger is present on HighTech LA’s premises, or in a product, facility, piece of equipment, process, or business practice for which HighTech LA is responsible, the employee will bring it to the attention of their supervisor or Principal immediately. Supervisors will arrange for the correction of any unsafe condition or concealed danger immediately and will contact the Principal regarding the problem.

Employees will be encouraged to report any workplace injury, accident, to their supervisor as soon as possible, regardless of the severity of the injury or accident. If medical attention is required immediately, supervisors will assist employees in obtaining medical care, after which the details of the injury or accident must be reported.

On a periodic basis HighTech LA will issue rules and guidelines governing workplace safety and health. All employees will familiarize themselves with the rules and guidelines, as strict compliance will be expected. Failure to comply with rules and guidelines regarding health and safety or work performance will not be tolerated.

**Child Abuse Reporting**
HighTech LA will adhere to the requirements of California Penal Code Section 11166 regarding child abuse reporting. HighTech LA staff must report to the proper authorities if they suspect the following occurring to a student:
• Sexual assault
• Neglect
• Willful cruelty or unjustifiable punishment
• Cruel or inhuman corporal punishment or injury
• Abuse in out-of-home care
The reporting person need only “reasonably suspect” that abuse or neglect has occurred. The reporting person does not have to prove abuse.

The Principal will work will all faculty and staff members to make sure all appropriate steps are taken if a child abuse situation occurs. All faculty and staff will understand that it is their duty and responsibility to report any suspicions of child abuse. Staff will understand that under California law, failure to report an incident of known or reasonably suspected child abuse or neglect is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by up to six months confinement in a county jail or by a fine of one thousand dollars ($1,000) or by both. Staff will not be made to investigate any incident, only report to proper authorities.

All suspected cases of child abuse will be brought to proper authorities. A written report of the situation will be completed and the Department of Children Services or the Los Angeles Police Department will be notified immediately. The reporting person will be responsible for providing all the necessary information and child abuse reports to the Department of Children Services and/or Los Angeles Police Department.

Should it be necessary to remove the child from school, HighTech LA staff will obtain the contact information of the agency person removing the child. This information will be placed in the student’s record and be available to the parent /guardian.

**Immunizations, Tuberculosis Testing, and Screening**

All enrolling students and staff will provide records documenting immunizations to the extent required for enrollment in non-charter public schools. Records of student immunizations shall be maintained, and staff shall honor County requirements for periodic Tuberculosis (TB) tests. All enrolling students will have screening of vision, hearing, and scoliosis to the same extent as would be required if the pupils attended a non-charter public school.

**Prescription Medications**

Parents must bring medication to the office in the original containers, with the name of the prescribing physician, the name of the student, and dispensing instructions. Parents will complete the appropriate form authorizing school staff to administer medication. Designated staff will put medications in a locked cabinet or refrigerator as needed for medications requiring refrigeration. Designated staff will log times for administering medications for each student and will establish a tickler system to ensure that medications are dispensed at the appropriate times. Designated staff will call students to receive medications at the appropriate times. In cases where medications are long-term prescriptions, designated staff will provide parents with one week’s notice to alert them that additional medication is needed.

**Emergency Situations**

**Fire Drills**
Fire drills will be held at least twice a semester. Office personnel will maintain a record of fire drills held and total required time for complete evacuation. When the fire drill signal sounds, teachers will lead the students in their room along the route indicated on the evacuation map posted for that purpose. Before leaving the room, teachers will see that all windows and doors are closed and that they have their class attendance roster with them. Students who are not in a classroom at the time the fire drill signal is given will attach themselves to the nearest teacher exiting the building for purposes of getting to the designated evacuation site.

Once at the designated evacuation site, teachers and other staff will ensure that all students find their respective teachers. Teachers will then take roll to ensure that all students are accounted for. The names of any missing students will be given to the office personnel and the administrative staff will attempt to locate missing students.

Students will remain with their teachers at the designated evacuation site until the administrative staff gives the “all clear” signal.

Disaster Drills

Disaster drills will be conducted at least once every two months. Students will be made familiar with the “duck and cover” routine. A disaster drill would commence with the “duck and cover” routine will be initiated by an announcement over the intercom. Staff and students will hear “This is an emergency drill. Duck and cover.” During the “duck and cover” routine in the classroom, teachers will turn off the lights and have students get under a desk or table or against the wall away from the windows. Students must remain quiet and orderly so they will be able to hear additional instructions when given. All drills will be concluded with an “all clear” announcement on the intercom, or a visible signal from the administrative staff.

In the case of a real earthquake, everyone must engage in the “duck and cover” routine immediately and remain in position until the teacher determines that it is safe to leave the building. If remaining in the room becomes dangerous, or when the shaking stops, teachers will proceed with their students to the evacuation site or another safety zone. If students are on the playground or other outdoor area when a disaster drill is called or during an actual earthquake, students are to drop immediately to the ground, away from trees and power lines, and cover their heads with their hands. They are to remain in that position until given additional instructions.

In the case of disasters other than earthquakes, the administrative staff will contact each room, advise staff of potential dangers, and give further directions or orders. Teachers and students will remain in their classrooms until instructions are received for an all clear or an evacuation. For safety purposes, no one is to leave the rooms. If there has been a chemical spill, the teacher must make sure that all doors, windows, and vents remain closed. The school site maintenance staff will turn off the gas. All unassigned staff will report to the office for assignments such as searching offices, bathrooms, and all other common areas, including outdoor facilities.

Teachers will stay with their classes for the duration of the emergency. In the event of an earthquake or other national disaster, all school employees are immediately designated “Civil
Defense Workers” and are not allowed to leave school until they are given official clearance to do so by the administrative staff.

**Bomb Threats**

The person receiving the call or letter will note the time of day, wording of the message, background noises, and quality of the voice to try to determine if it is a young child or an adult. This person will delay the caller as long as possible, while they alert another adult to the crisis. That adult will immediately notify the telephone company to trace the call and immediately thereafter, notify the police using 911.

Based on the information at hand, the administrative staff will make a decision whether an immediate evacuation is warranted. If so, the evacuation code word “safe school drill” will be given over the intercom and evacuation procedures will be followed. The office personnel will coordinate information requests to and/or from law enforcement, the telephone company, and parents.

If an immediate evacuation is not warranted, the administrative staff will notify teachers to inspect their room for any suspicious materials or unknown packages, without alarming students. All unassigned staff will report to the office for assignments such as searching offices, bathrooms, and all other common areas, including outdoor facilities.

**Evacuation Plan**

A disaster of a significant nature may require the evacuation of the school. Immediately upon notification by outside authorities that the school must be evacuated, the administrative staff will verify the name and position of the person placing the alert. Once the source is confirmed, the administrative staff will give the evacuation code word “safe school drill” over the intercom. Teachers will proceed with their students to the nearest school exit indicated on the evacuation map posted for this purpose. Before leaving the room, teachers will make sure they have their class attendance roster with them. Students who are not in a classroom at the time the intercom signal is given will attach themselves to the nearest teacher exiting the building for purposes of getting to the designated evacuation site.

Prior to evacuation, offices, bathrooms, and all other common areas, including outdoor facilities, will be searched by designated administrative staff.

Once at the designated evacuation site, teachers and other staff will ensure that all students find their respective teachers. Teachers will then take roll to ensure that all students are accounted for. The names of any missing students will be given to the office personnel and an individual will be assigned the task of finding any missing students. Teachers will work together to take care of students with injuries, respiratory problems, or other medical conditions.

Teachers will stay with their classes for the duration of the emergency. In the event of an evacuation, all school employees are immediately designated “Civil Defense Workers” and are
not allowed to leave school until they are given official clearance to do so by the administrative staff.

Students will remain with their teachers at the designated evacuation site until the administrative staff gives the “all clear” signal. In the event students cannot return to the school site, the administrative staff will notify parents and/or the media as to where students can be picked up. The office personnel will sign out students as they are being picked up by a parent or other adult listed on the emergency information card. Parents will be asked to remain in a designated area, and students will be escorted to the designated area for release.

**Insurance Requirements**

No coverage shall be provided to the Charter School by the District under any of the District’s self-insured programs or commercial insurance policies. The Charter School shall secure and maintain, as a minimum, insurance as set forth below with insurance companies acceptable to the District [A.M. Best A-, VII or better] to protect the Charter School from claims which may arise from its operations. Each charter school location shall meet the below insurance requirements individually.

It shall be the Charter School’s responsibility, not the District’s, to monitor its vendors, contractors, partners or sponsors for compliance with the insurance requirements.

The following insurance policies are required:

1. Commercial General Liability coverage of not less than $5,000,000 for each occurrence and in the Aggregate. The policy shall be endorsed to name the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles as named additional insured and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and the Charter School's insurance shall be primary despite any conflicting provisions in the Charter School's policy. Coverage shall be maintained with no Self-Insured Retention above $15,000 without the prior written approval of the Office of Risk Management for the LAUSD.

2. Workers’ Compensation Insurance in accordance with provisions of the California Labor Code, adequate to protect the Charter School from claims that may arise from its operations pursuant to the Workers’ Compensation Act (Statutory Coverage). The Workers’ Compensation Insurance coverage must also include Employers Liability coverage with limits of $1,000,000/$1,000/000/$1,000,000.

3. Commercial Auto Liability, including Owned, Leased, Hired, and Non-owned, coverage with limits of $1,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence shall be required unless the Charter School operates a student bus service. If the Charter School provides student bus services, the required coverage limit is $5,000,000 Combined Single Limit per Occurrence.

4. Fidelity Bond coverage shall be maintained by the Charter School to cover all Charter School employees who handle, process, or otherwise have responsibility for Charter
School funds, supplies, equipment or other assets. Minimum amount of coverage shall be $50,000 per occurrence, with no self-insured retention.

5. Professional Educators Errors and Omissions liability coverage with minimum limits of $3,000,000 per occurrence and $3,000,000 general aggregate.

6. Sexual Molestation and Abuse coverage with minimum limits of $3,000,000 per occurrence and $3,000,000 general aggregate. Coverage may be held as a separate policy or included by endorsement in the Commercial General Liability or the Errors and Omissions Policy.

7. Employment Practices Legal Liability coverage with limits of $3,000,000 per occurrence and $3,000,000 general aggregate.

8. Excess/umbrella insurance with limits of not less than $10,000,000 is required of all high schools and any other school that participates in competitive interscholastic or intramural sports programs.

Coverages and limits of insurance may be accomplished through individual primary policies or through a combination of primary and excess policies. The policy shall be endorsed to name the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles as named additional insureds and shall provide specifically that any insurance carried by the District which may be applicable to any claims or loss shall be deemed excess and the charter school's insurance primary despite any conflicting provisions in the Charter School's policy.

**Evidence of Insurance**

The Charter School shall furnish to the District’s Office of Risk Management and Insurance Services located at 333 S. Beaudry Ave, 28th Floor, Los Angeles CA 90017 within 30 days of all new policies inceptions, renewals or changes, certificates or such insurance signed by authorized representatives of the insurance carrier. Certificates shall be endorsed as follows:

“The insurance afforded by this policy shall not be suspended, cancelled, reduced in coverage or limits or non-renewed except after thirty (30) days prior written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, has been given to the District.”

Facsimile or reproduced signatures may be acceptable upon review by the Office of Risk Management and Insurance Services. However the District reserves the right to require certified copies of any required insurance policies.

Should the Charter School deem it prudent and/or desirable to have insurance coverage for damage or theft to school, employee or student property, for student accident, or any other type of insurance coverage not listed above, such insurance shall not be provided by the District and its purchase shall be the responsibility of the Charter School.

**Hold Harmless/Indemnification Provision**

To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Charter School does hereby agree, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their
members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses including but not limited to attorney’s fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever, arising out of, or relating solely to the Charter School’s actions related to this Charter agreement. The Charter School further agrees to the fullest extent permitted by law, at its own expense, to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the LAUSD and the Board of Education and their members, officers, directors, agents, representatives, employees and volunteers from and against any and all claims, damages, losses and expenses including but not limited to attorney’s fees, brought by any person or entity whatsoever for claims, damages, losses and expenses arising from or relating to acts or omission of acts committed solely by the charter school, and their officers, directors, employees or volunteers. Moreover, the Charter School agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the District for any contractual liability resulting from third party contracts with its vendors, contractors, partners or sponsors.

**Health, Safety, And Emergency Plan**
HighTech LA will have a Health, Safety and Emergency Plan in place prior to beginning operation of the Charter School. HighTech LA will ensure that staff has been trained in health, safety, and emergency procedures and will maintain a calendar and conduct emergency response drills for students and staff.

**FERPA**
HighTech LA, its employees and officers will comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) at all times.

**Criminal Background Checks and Fingerprinting**
Charter School shall require all employees of the Charter School, and all volunteers who will be performing services that are not under the direct supervision of a Charter School employee, and any onsite vendors having unsupervised contact with students to submit to criminal background checks and fingerprinting. The Charter School will maintain on file and available for inspection evidence that the Charter School has performed criminal background checks for all employees and documentation that vendors have conducted required criminal background checks for their employees prior to any unsupervised contact with students. The Charter School shall also ensure that it receives subsequent arrest notifications from the Department of Justice to ensure the ongoing safety of its students.

HighTech LA shall be responsible at its own expense for defending any claims, liabilities, or legal proceedings brought against the Charter School by any person or entity. HighTech LA is an incorporated entity acting as a separate legal entity. HighTech LA has complete liability for all actions of the school and its employees in the performance of their duties.
ELEMENT 7 – RACIAL AND ETHNIC BALANCE

HighTech LA will make every effort to recruit students of various racial and ethnic groups as well as girls, who traditionally have not been drawn to the technology field, so as to achieve a balance reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of LAUSD. Recruitment efforts will include, but is not necessarily limited to:

- An enrollment process that is scheduled to include a timeline that allows for a broad-based recruiting process.
- HighTech LA will attempt to assure there is a gender balance at the school through balanced marketing, knowing that the technology field has traditionally lured men to the industry.
- The development of promotional and informational material (i.e. a school brochure, flyers, a website, and advertisements for local media) that is easily transmittable to all of the various racial and ethnic groups represented in the district.
- The appropriate development of promotional and informational materials in languages other than English, including Spanish, to appeal to limited English proficient populations.
- The distribution of promotional and informational materials to a broad variety of community groups, agencies, neighborhood youth organizations, social service providers, churches, grocery stores, public libraries, and legislators that serve the various racial, ethnic, and interest groups represented in the district.
- Outreach meetings in several locations of the San Fernando Valley to reach prospective students and parents.
- Hosting open houses, orientations, and school tours of the on a regularly scheduled basis.
- Publicizing the instructional program.

HighTech LA will maintain an accurate accounting of the ethnic and racial balance of students enrolled in the school. HighTech LA will also document the efforts made to achieve racial and ethnic balance in accordance with the charter petition and standards of charter legislation.

Court-Ordered Integration

HighTech LA shall comply with all the requirements of the Crawford v. Board of Education, City of Los Angeles court order and the LAUSD Integration Policy adopted and maintained pursuant to the Crawford court order, by the Office of Student Integration Services (collectively the “Court ordered Integration Program”). The Court-ordered Integration Program applies to all schools within or chartered through LAUSD. HighTech LA will provide a written plan in the charter petition and upon further request by the District outlining how it would achieve and maintain the District’s ethnic balance goal, which is within a 70:30 or 60:40 ratio. (*Ratio represents the percentage of Predominantly Hispanic Black Asian Other (PHBAO) compared to Other White (OW).* The written plan should list specific dates, locations and recruitment activities to achieve the District’s Racial and Ethnic Balance Goal.

The plan includes:

- An enrollment process that is scheduled to include a timeline that allows for a broad-based recruiting process.
Outreach meetings will be held in several locations of the target area in an effort to ensure all students in the area have equitable access to the school. Open houses and school tours will also be conducted.

Develop promotional and informational materials (i.e. a school brochure, flyers, a website, and advertisements for local media) in English and languages other than English for distribution to a broad variety of community groups, agencies, neighborhood youth organizations, social service providers, churches, grocery stores, public libraries, and legislators that serve the various racial, ethnic, and interest groups represented in LAUSD.

The District receives neither average daily attendance allocations nor Court-ordered Integration Program cost reimbursements for charter school students. Instead, the District now receives the Targeted Instruction Improvement Grant (TIIG) for its Court-ordered Integration Program. The District retains sole discretion over the allocation of TIIG funding, where available, and cannot guarantee the availability of this funding.

**No Child Left Behind--Public School Choice (NCLB-PSC) Traveling Students**

The District and HighTech LA are committed to providing all students with quality educational alternatives in compliance with all federal and state laws, including students who are enrolled in schools of the District identified by the California Department of Education as in need of Program Improvement. No Child Left Behind-Public School Choice (“NCLB-PSC”) placement with charter schools is an alternative strongly encouraged by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (“NCLB”). HighTech LA agrees to discuss with the District the possibility of accepting for enrollment District students participating in the District’s NCLB-PSC program. The parties agree to separately memorialize any agreed-to number of NCLB-PSC placements of District students at the Charter School.

As required under NCLB, all NCLB-PSC students attending HighTech LA shall have the right to continue attending HighTech LA until the highest grade level of the charter. However, the obligation of the District to provide transportation for a NCLB-PSC student to HighTech LA shall end in the event the NCLB-PSC student’s resident District school exits Program Improvement status.

HighTech LA will ensure that all of its NCLB-PSC students are treated in the same manner as other students attending the school. NCLB-PSC students are and will be eligible for all applicable instructional and extra-curricular activities at the school. HighTech LA will make reasonable efforts to invite and encourage the participation of the parents of NCLB-PSC students in the activities and meetings at the Charter School.

Determination of student eligibility for this NCLB-PSC option, including the grade level of eligibility, will be made solely by the District, based on the District’s NCLB-PSC process, guidelines, policies and the requirements of NCLB. In the event demand for seats at HighTech LA under the NCLB-PSC program increases in subsequent years, HighTech LA agrees to discuss with the District the possibility of increasing the number of NCLB-PSC places available at the Charter School.
Federal Compliance
As a recipient of federal funds, including federal Title I, Part A funds, HighTech LA has agreed to meet all of the programmatic, fiscal and other regulatory requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) and other applicable federal grant programs. HighTech LA understands that it is a local educational agency (LEA) for purposes of federal compliance and reporting purposes. HighTech LA agrees that it will keep and make available to the District any documentation necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the NCLB and other applicable federal programs, including, but not limited to, documentation related to funding, required parental notifications, appropriate credentialing of teaching and paraprofessional staff, the implementation of Public School Choice and Supplemental Educational Services, where applicable, or any other mandated federal program requirement. The mandated requirements of NCLB, Title I, Part A include, but are not the limited to, the following:

- Notify parents at the beginning of each school year of their “right to know” the professional qualifications of their child’s classroom teacher including a timely notice to each individual parent that the parent’s child has been assigned, or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who is not highly qualified.
- Develop jointly with, and distribute to, parents of participating children, a school-parent compact.
- Hold an annual Title I meeting for parents of participating Title I students.
- Develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parent involvement policy.
- Submit biannual Consolidated Application to California Department of Education (CDE) requesting federal funds.
- Complete and submit Local Education Agency (LEA) Plan to CDE.
- Complete reform planning process with stakeholders and submit to CDE all appropriate documents for Title I schoolwide status, if applicable; otherwise, identify and maintain roster of eligible students for the Title I Targeted Assistance School Program.
- Maintain inventory of equipment purchased with categorical funds, where applicable; and
- Maintain appropriate time-reporting documentation, including semi-annual certification and personnel activity report, for staff funded with categorical resources, where applicable.

HighTech LA also understands that as part of its oversight of the school, the District may conduct program review of federal and state compliance issues.
ELEMENT 8 – ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

HighTech LA will be open to all students residing in California that wish to attend the school, as outlined in Education Code 47605 (d)(2)(A).

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
The Charter School will adhere to the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths. The Charter School will include specific information in their outreach materials, websites, at community meetings, open forums, and regional center meetings notifying parents that the school is open to enroll and provide services for all students which shall include a District standard contact number to access additional information regarding enrollment. A student’s IEP will never be required prior to participation in any attendance lottery or as a condition for enrollment.

Affirmations
- HighTech LA will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations.
- HighTech LA will not charge tuition.
- HighTech LA will not require any pupil to attend the charter school.
- HighTech LA will not enroll pupils over 19 years of age unless continuously enrolled in public school and making satisfactory progress toward high school diploma requirements and are not more than 22 years of age.

Public Random Drawing:
Should the number of pupils who wish to attend HighTech LA exceed the enrollment limit, a public random lottery will take place to determine the school enrollment in accordance to Education Code section 47605(d)(2)(B). Students currently attending the school and siblings who wish to enroll will automatically be admitted. Priority preference will be given to LAUSD students. The school will designate a deadline and all interested students will be considered for the public random drawing. Public notice will be posted regarding the date and time of the public drawing The school will inform parents of all applicants and all interested parties of the rules to be followed during the lottery process, location, date and time of the lottery at least two weeks prior to the lottery date. The date, time, and place of the lottery will be posted on the school website, on the lottery application, on the lottery application receipt and given orally to those who attend “Information Nights” at HighTech LA and other school’s “High School Information” presentations. The school will choose a date and time for the lottery (preferably on the weekend or after 6 pm on a weekday) so that most interested parties will be able to attend. The lottery will be held at the school site. A waiting list will be developed from the list of students that do not receive admission and will be considered should a vacancy occur during the year. Students on the waiting list will be notified by phone immediately if space becomes available and they will have two weeks to return the enrollment forms. If the enrollment forms are not returned within two weeks, then admission for that student is forfeited, and an admission notice will be mailed to...
the next student on the waiting list. HighTech LA will maintain auditable records of the above activities. Records of each application will be kept on file in the main office and, after the lottery has been held, a record of the students selected for admission via the lottery, and the order in which they were selected, will be kept in the main office as well as the wait list. A list of the application numbers, in order of selection, will be posted on the website as well as the student application numbers, in order of selection in the lottery, of students on the wait list. Each applicant will be notified by US Mail if they were selected in the lottery or if they were placed on the wait list and if so, their number on the wait list. As students’ parents/guardians are called from the wait list, the front office personnel will make a notation of the date and time of the call, if a contact was reached or a message left, and whether the student accepted or declined to be enrolled.

**Lottery Timeline**
The school will determine its open enrollment and lottery dates every year before school starts. In accordance with the previous years, the dates will continue to be:

- Advertisements about the HighTech LA informational meetings will be placed in local English and Spanish language newspapers in the late summer.
- Informational meetings for interested families held in September, October, November and January.
- Applications will be available on the school website and at the school on or before October 1 and will be accepted within 3 weeks before the scheduled date for the lottery.
- Lottery will be held at the end of February for 9th graders and end of May for grades 10-12 at HighTech LA based on the number of openings then determined by each grade level.
- Letters to students admitted from the lottery are sent within two weeks of the lottery.
- In the event more vacancies exist, students will be notified by mail from the waiting list to fill such vacancies.

HighTech LA will invite LAUSD representatives and respected members of the community as official observers of the lottery to verify lottery procedures are fairly executed.

**Admission and Recruitment**

HighTech LA will make every effort to encourage and recruit students of various racial and ethnic groups as well as girls who traditionally have not been drawn to the technology field. HighTech LA will maintain an outreach program to inform students about the program opportunities at HighTech LA.

HighTech LA’s outreach plan includes, but is not limited to, the following elements or strategies which focus on achieving and maintaining a racial, ethnic, economic, and academic balance among students that is reflective of the general population residing in the San Fernando Valley and the surrounding communities:

- An enrollment process that is scheduled and adopted to include a timeline that allows for a broad-based application process.
• The development and distribution of promotional and informational material that reaches out to all of the various racial and ethnic groups.
• Presentations and booths in multiple locations throughout the District to generate interest throughout the District.
• Advertised open houses/tours at the school, held every Tuesday at 9:00 AM.
• Purposefully recruit and reach out to students from surrounding schools, which are largely made up of low-achieving and socioeconomically disadvantaged students. HighTech LA will concentrate its recruiting efforts on the schools around Birmingham High School to attract greater numbers of minority and socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

Upon enrollment, the following is required:

• Parent signature of Parent/Student Handbook agreement form
• Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form
• Proof of minimum age requirements, e.g. birth certificate
• Completion of a student enrollment form
• Proof of Immunizations
• Home Language Survey
• Parent attendance at a school orientation meeting is encouraged but not required for enrollment.

Poor academic performance will not preclude a student from attending the school, as we believe that the personal attention and quality of our academic program can greatly benefit many students who may have experienced problems at other schools.
ELEMENT 9– ANNUAL FINANCIAL AUDITS

Each fiscal year an independent auditor will conduct an audit of the financial affairs of HighTech LA to verify the accuracy of the school's financial statements, attendance and enrollment accounting practices, and review the school's internal controls.

To the extent required under applicable federal laws for audits of the major federal programs, the audit scope will expand to be in compliance with the requirements described in the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133, audits of states, local governments, and nonprofit organizations. Should OMB Circular A-133 be rescinded, audits of the major federal programs will be conducted in compliance with standards and provisions approved by OMB.

HighTech LA will engage an independent public accountant with education finance experience certified by the State of California, to audit the school's financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing standards and the audit guide issued by the Controller of the State of California. The HighTech LA Board of Directors will be responsible for contracting and overseeing the independent audit. The school’s plan for providing information is to gather, prepare, and organize documents, materials, and other information as requested by the independent auditor. Fiscal statements audited by the Certified Public Accountant will be submitted to District within four months following the close of the fiscal year. Audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved in conference with the auditor to the satisfaction of the auditing agency and the LAUSD. HighTech LA agrees to resolve outstanding issues from the audit prior to the completion of the auditor's final report.

HighTech LA will transmit a copy of its annual independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year to the District, Los Angeles County Board of Education, and California Department of Education by December 15 of each year.

Pursuant to AB 1137, HighTech LA will provide any necessary financial statements to LAUSD, the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), and California Department of Education. The Charter School shall cooperate fully with such audits and shall make available any and all records necessary for the performance of the audit upon 30 days notice to Charter School. When 30 days notice may defeat the purpose of the audit, the District may conduct the audit upon 24-hours notice.

Additionally, the following reports will be submitted to LAUSD, in the required format and within timelines to be specified by LAUSD each year:

- Provisional Budget – Spring prior to the operating fiscal year
- Final Budget – July of the budget fiscal year
- First Interim Projections – November of operating fiscal year
- Second Interim Projections – February of operating fiscal year
- Unaudited Actuals – July following the end of the fiscal year
- Audited Actuals – December 15 following the end of the fiscal year
• Classification Report – monthly the Monday after close of the last day of the school month
• Statistical Report – monthly the Friday after the last day of the school month
• P1 Report - first week of January
• P2 Report - first week of April
• Calendar and Bell Schedule – annually by November
• Other reports annually five weeks prior to the first day of instruction.

**District Oversight Costs**
The District may charge for the actual costs of supervisorial oversight of the Charter School not to exceed 1% of the Charter School’s revenue, or the District may charge for the actual costs of supervisorial oversight of the Charter School not to exceed 3% if the Charter School is able to obtain substantially rent free facilities from the District. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District may charge the maximum supervisorial oversight fee allowed under the law as it may change from time to time. The supervisorial oversight fee provided herein is separate and distinct from the charges arising under the charter school/facilities use agreements.

**Balance Reserves**
Additionally, the Charter School will at times maintain a funds balance (reserve) of its expenditures as outlined in section 15450, Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

**Special Education Revenue Adjustment/Payment for Services**
In the event that the Charter School owes funds to the District for the provision of agreed upon or fee for service or special education services or as a result of the State’s adjustment to allocation of special education revenues from the Charter School, the Charter School authorizes the District to deduct any and all of the in lieu property taxes that the Charter School otherwise would be eligible to receive under section 47635 of the Education Code to cover such owed amounts. The Charter School further understands and agrees that the District shall make appropriate deductions from the in lieu property tax amounts otherwise owed to the Charter School. Should this revenue stream be insufficient in any fiscal year to cover any such costs, the Charter School agrees that it will reimburse the District for the additional costs within forty-five (45) business days of being notified of the amounts owed.

**Audit and Inspection of Records**
Charter School agrees to observe and abide by the following terms and conditions as a requirement for receiving and maintaining their charter authorization:
• Charter School is subject to District oversight.

• The District’s statutory oversight responsibility continues throughout the life of the Charter and requires that it, among other things, monitors the fiscal condition of the Charter School.
• The District is authorized to revoke this Charter for, among other reasons, the failure of the Charter School to meet generally accepted accounting principles or if it engages in fiscal mismanagement.

Accordingly, the District hereby reserves the right, pursuant to its oversight responsibility, to audit Charter School books, records, data, processes and procedures through the District Office of the Inspector General or other means. The audit may include, but is not limited to, the following areas:

• Compliance with terms and conditions prescribed in the Charter agreement,
• Internal controls, both financial and operational in nature,
• The accuracy, recording and/or reporting of the Charter School’s financial information,
• The Charter School’s debt structure,
• Governance policies, procedures and history,
• The recording and reporting of attendance data,
• The Charter School’s enrollment process,
• Compliance with safety plans and procedures, and
• Compliance with applicable grant requirements.

The Charter School shall cooperate fully with such audits and shall make available any and all records necessary for the performance of the audit upon 30 days notice to Charter School. When 30 days notice may defeat the purpose of the audit, the District may conduct the audit upon 24-hours notice.

The Charter School will develop and maintain internal fiscal control policies governing all financial activities.
ELEMENT 10 – STUDENT SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS

Charter School shall provide due process for all students, including adequate notice to parents/guardians and students regarding the grounds for suspension and expulsion and their due process rights regarding suspension and expulsion, including rights to appeal.

Charter School shall ensure that its policies and procedures regarding suspension and expulsion will be periodically reviewed, and modified as necessary, including, for example, any modification of the lists of offenses for which students are subject to suspension or expulsion.

Charter School shall be responsible for the appropriate interim placement of students during and pending the completion of the Charter School’s student expulsion process.

Charter Schools will implement operational and procedural guidelines ensuring federal and state laws and regulations regarding the discipline of students with disabilities are met. Charter Schools will also ensure staff is knowledgeable about and complies with the District’s Discipline Foundation Policy. If the student receives or is eligible for special education, the Charter School shall identify and provide special education programs and services at the appropriate interim educational placement, pending the completion of the expulsion process, to be coordinated with the LAUSD Special Education Service Center.

Charter School shall document the alternatives to suspension and expulsion the Charter School utilizes with students who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from compulsory school activities.

If a student is expelled from the Charter School, the Charter School shall forward student records upon request of the receiving school district in a timely fashion. Charter School shall also submit an expulsion packet to the Charter Schools Division immediately or as soon as practically possible, containing:

- pupil’s last known address
- a copy of the cumulative record
- transcript of grades or report card
- health information
- documentation of the expulsion proceeding, including specific facts supporting the expulsion and documentation that the Charter School’s policies and procedures were followed
- student’s current educational placement
- copy of parental notice of expulsion
- copy of documentation of expulsion provided to parent stating reason for expulsion, term of expulsion, rehabilitation plan, reinstatement notice with eligibility date and instructions for providing proof of student’s compliance for reinstatement, appeal process and options for enrollment; and
- if the Student is eligible for Special Education, the Charter School must provide documentation related to expulsion pursuant to IDEA including conducting a manifestation determination IEP prior to expulsion. If the student is eligible for Section
504 Accommodations, the Charter School must provide evidence that it convened a Link Determination meeting to address two questions:

A. Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student's disability:
B. Was the misconduct a direct result of the Charter School’s failure to implement 504 Plan?

Outcome Data
Charter School shall maintain all data involving placement, tracking, and monitoring of student suspensions, expulsions, and reinstatements, and make such outcome data readily available to the District upon request.

Rehabilitation Plans
Pupils who are expelled from the Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Charter School’s governing board at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. Terms of expulsion should be reasonable and fair with the weight of the expelling offense taken into consideration when determining the length of expulsion. Therefore, the rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may reapply to the Charter School for readmission.

Readmission
The Charter School’s governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for the filing and processing of requests for readmission and the process for the required review of all expelled pupils for readmission. Upon completion of the readmission process, the Charter School’s governing board shall readmit the pupil, unless the Charter School’s governing board makes a finding that the pupil has not met the conditions of the rehabilitation plan or continues to pose a danger to campus safety. A description of the procedure shall be made available to the pupil and the pupil’s parent or guardian at the time the expulsion order is entered and the decision of the governing board, including any related findings, must be provided to the pupil and the pupil’s parent/guardian within a reasonable time.

Reinstatement
The Charter School’s governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure for processing reinstatements, including the review of documents regarding the rehabilitation plan. The Charter School is responsible for reinstating the student upon the conclusion of the expulsion period in a timely manner.

Special Education Students
In the case of a student who has an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”), or a student who has a 504 Plan, the Charter School will ensure that it follows the correct disciplinary procedures to comply with the mandates of state and federal laws, including IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973. As set forth in the MOU regarding special education between the District and the Charter School an IEP team, including a District representative, will meet to conduct a manifestation determination and to discuss alternative placement utilizing the
District’s Policies and Procedures Manual. Prior to recommending expulsion for a student with a 504 Plan, the Charter School’s administrator will convene a Link Determination meeting to ask the following two questions:
A. Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student’s disability?
B. Was the misconduct a direct result of the Charter School’s failure to implement 504?

**Gun Free Schools Act**
The Charter School shall comply with the federal Gun Free Schools Act.

Charter School shall provide due process for all students, including adequate notice to parents/guardians and students regarding the grounds for suspension and expulsion and their due process rights regarding suspension and expulsion, including rights to appeal.

Charter School shall ensure that its policies and procedures regarding suspension and expulsion will be periodically reviewed, and modified as necessary, including, for example, any modification of the lists of offenses for which students are subject to suspension or expulsion.

Charter School shall be responsible for the appropriate interim placement of students during and pending the completion of the Charter School’s student expulsion process.

Charter Schools will implement operational and procedural guidelines ensuring federal and state laws and regulations regarding the discipline of students with disabilities are met. Charter Schools will also ensure staff is knowledgeable about and complies with the District’s Discipline Foundation Policy. If the student receives or is eligible for special education, the Charter School shall identify and provide special education programs and services at the appropriate interim educational placement, pending the completion of the expulsion process, to be coordinated with the LAUSD Support Unit, Division of Special Education Service Center.

Charter School shall document the alternatives to suspension and expulsion the Charter School utilizes with students who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from compulsory school activities.

If a student is expelled from the Charter School, the Charter School shall forward student records upon request of the receiving school district in a timely fashion. Charter School shall also submit an expulsion packet to the Charter Schools Division immediately or as soon as practically possible, containing:

- pupil’s last known address
- a copy of the cumulative record
- transcript of grades or report card
- health information
- documentation of the expulsion proceeding, including specific facts supporting the expulsion and documentation that the Charter School’s policies and procedures were followed
- student’s current educational placement
• copy of parental notice expulsion
• copy of documentation of expulsion provided to parent stating reason for expulsion, term of expulsion, rehabilitation plan, reinstatement notice with eligibility date and instructions for providing proof of student’s compliance for reinstatement, appeal process and options for enrollment; and
• if the Student is eligible for Special Education, the Charter School must provide documentation related to expulsion pursuant to IDEA including conducting a manifestation determination IEP prior to expulsion. If the student is eligible for Section 504 Accommodations, the Charter School must provide evidence that it convened a Link Determination meeting to address two questions: A) Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the students disability: B) Was the misconduct a direct result of the Charter School’s failure to implement 504 Plan?

Outcome Data
Charter School shall maintain all data involving placement, tracking, and monitoring of student suspensions, expulsions, and reinstatements, and make such outcome data readily available to the District upon request.

Rehabilitation Plans

Pupils who are expelled from the Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Charter School’s governing board at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The Terms of expulsion should be reasonable and fair with the weight of the expelling offense taken into consideration when determining the length of expulsion. Therefore the rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one (1) year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may reapply to the Charter School for readmission.

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Reinstatement

The Charter Schools governing board shall adopt rules establishing a procedure of processing reinstatements, including the review of documents regarding the rehabilitation plan. The Charter School is responsible for reinstating the student upon the conclusion of the expulsion period, in a timely manner.
Special Education Students
In the case of a student who has an Individualized Education Program ("IEP"), or a student who has a 504 Plan, the Charter School will ensure that it follows the correct disciplinary procedures to comply with the mandates of state and federal laws, including IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973. As set forth in the MOU regarding special education between the District and the Charter School an IEP team, including a District representative, will meet to conduct a manifestation determination and to discuss alternative placement utilizing the District’s Policies and Procedures Manual. Prior to recommending expulsion for a student with a 504 Plan, the Charter School’s administrator will convene a Link Determination meeting to ask the following two questions: A) Was the misconduct caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student’s disability? B) Was the misconduct a direct result of the Charter School’s failure to implement 504?

Gun Free Schools Act
The Charter School shall comply with the federal Gun Free Schools Act.

This Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policy has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well being of all students at HighTech LA. When the policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. This policy shall serve as HighTech LA’s policy and procedures for student suspension and expulsion.

Staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. The Suspension Policy (Element 10) clearly describes discipline expectations, and it will be printed and distributed as part of the Student & Parent Information Packet which is sent to each student at the beginning of the school year.

Discipline includes but is not limited to advising and counseling students, conferring with parents/guardians, detention during and after school hours, use of alternative educational environments, suspension and expulsion.

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of the Policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee’s use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

HighTech LA’s administration shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures. The notice shall state that these Policy and Administrative Procedures are available on request at the Principal’s office.

Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students
A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring anytime including but not limited to any of the following: a) while on school grounds; b) while going to or coming from school; c) during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; d) during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

**Enumerated Offenses**

Students may be suspended or expelled for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

1. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person or willfully used force of violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.

2. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Principal or designee’s concurrence.

3. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.

4. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.

5. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.

6. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.

7. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.

8. Possessed or used tobacco or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel.

9. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.

10. Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11014.5.

11. Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
12. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
13. Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.

14. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal code 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code 243.4.

15. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.

16. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.

17. Engaged in or attempted to engage in hazing of another. For the purposes of this subdivision, “hazing” means a method of initiation or pre-initiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, “hazing” does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.

18. Aiding or abetting as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person.

19. Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property.

20. Committed sexual harassment as defined in section 212.5 of the Ed Code.

21. Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence.

22. Engaged in an act of bullying. For purposes of this subdivision, “bullying” means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a pupil or group of pupils as defined in Section 48900.2, 48900.3, or 48900.4, directed toward one or more pupils that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following: (A) Placing a reasonable pupil or pupils in fear of harm to that pupil's or those pupils' person or property; (B) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health; (C) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance; or (D) Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school. “Electronic act” means the transmission of a communication, including, but not limited to, a message, text, sound, or image, or a post
on a social network Internet Web site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager. “Reasonable pupil” means a pupil, including, but not limited to, an exceptional needs pupil, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with his or her exceptional needs.

Alternatives to suspension or expulsion will first be attempted with students who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from assigned school activities.

**Suspension Procedure**

Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

1. **Conference**

   Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the Principal or the Principal’s designee with the student and his or her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the Principal. The conference may be omitted if the Principal or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An “emergency situation” involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of the student’s right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.

   At the conference, the pupil shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him or her and shall be given the opportunity to present his or her version and evidence in his or her defense.

   This conference shall be held within two school days, unless the pupil waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason including, but not limited to, incarceration or hospitalization.

   No penalties may be imposed on a pupil for failure of the pupil’s parent or guardian to attend a conference with school officials. Reinstatement of the suspended pupil shall not be contingent upon attendance by the pupil’s parent or guardian at the conference.

2. **Notice to Parents/Guardians**

   At the time of suspension, the Principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension and the date of return following suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time when the student may
return to school. If school officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

3. Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Placement/Expulsion

Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension.

Upon a recommendation of Placement/Expulsion by the Principal or Principal’s designee, the pupil and the pupil’s guardian or representative will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the pupil should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination will be made by the Principal or designee upon either of the following determinations: 1) the pupil’s presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the pupil poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the pupil’s suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

Authority to Expel
A student may be expelled either by the HighTech LA Governing Board following a hearing before it or by the HighTech LA Governing Board upon the recommendation of an Administrative Panel to be assigned by the HighTech LA Governing Board. The Administrative Panel will consist of at least three members who are certificated and neither a teacher of the pupil or a Council member of the HighTech LA’s Governing Board. The Administrative Panel may recommend expulsion of any student found to have committed an expellable offense.

Expulsion Procedures
Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. Unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the Principal or designee determines that the Pupil has committed an expellable offense.

In the event an administrative panel recommends expulsion, it will make a recommendation to the HighTech LA Governing Board for a final decision whether to expel. The hearing shall be held in closed session unless the pupil makes a written request for a public hearing three (3) days prior to the hearing.

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student’s parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the pupil. The notice shall include:

- The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
• A statement of specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based;

• A copy of HighTech LA’s disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;

• Notification of the student’s or parent/guardian’s obligation to provide information about the student’s status at the school to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;

• The opportunity for the student or the student’s parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;

• The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;

• The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;

• The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student’s behalf including witnesses.

**Special Procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Sexual Assault or Battery Offences**

HighTech LA may, upon finding a good cause, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of the witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of sworn declarations which shall be examined only by the HighTech LA Governing Board, administrative panel, or the hearing officer. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the pupil.

• The complaining witness in any sexual assault or battery case must be provided with a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of his/her right to (a) receive five days notice of his/her scheduled testimony, (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons of his/her choosing present in the hearing at the time he/she testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, and (c) elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.

• HighTech LA must also provide the victim a room separate from the hearing room for the complaining witness’ use prior to and during breaks in testimony.

• At the discretion of the person or panel conducting the hearing, the complaining witness shall be allowed periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which he or she may leave the hearing room.

• The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.
• The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also limit time for taking the testimony of the complaining witness to the hours he/she is normally in school, if there is no good cause to take the testimony during other hours.

• Prior to a complaining witness testifying, the support persons must be admonished that the hearing is confidential. Nothing in the law precludes the person presiding over the hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The person conducting the hearing may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany him or her to the witness stand.

• If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, HighTech LA must present evidence that the witness’ presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to HighTech LA. The person presiding over the hearing shall permit the witness to stay unless it is established that there is a substantial risk that the testimony of the complaining witness would be influenced by the support person, in which case the presiding official shall admonish the support person or persons not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way. Nothing shall preclude the presiding officer from exercising his or her discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom he or she believes is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.

• The testimony of the support person shall be presented before the testimony of the complaining witness and the complaining witness shall be excluded from the courtroom during that testimony.

• Especially for charges involving sexual assault or battery, if the hearing is to be conducted in the public at the request of the pupil being expelled, the complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a closed session when testifying at a public meeting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are not alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing by means of closed-circuit television.

• Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness’ prior sexual conduct is presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the person conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstances can be made, the witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.
Record of Hearing

A record of the hearing shall be made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, as long as a reasonably accurate and complete written transcription of the proceedings can be made.

Presentation of Evidence

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A recommendation by the Administrative Panel to expel must be supported by substantial evidence that the student committed an expellable offense.

Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay and sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the HighTech LA Governing Board, Panel or designee determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

If, due to a written request by the accused pupil, the hearing is held at a public meeting, and the charge is committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in Education Code Section 48900, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his or her testimony heard in a session closed to the public.

The decision of the Administrative Panel shall be in the form of written findings of fact and a written recommendation to the HighTech LA Governing Board who will make a final determination regarding the expulsion. The final decision by the HighTech LA Governing Board shall be made within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing.

If the expulsion hearing panel decides not to recommend expulsion, the pupil shall immediately be returned to his/her educational program.

Parents/guardians may appeal the expulsion decision of the Board by submitting a written request to the Board within five (5) school days of the Expulsion Order. Unless impracticable under the circumstances, within ten (10) school days of receiving the written request for appeal, the Board will convene an Expulsion Appeal Panel (“EAP”) made up of administrators from other public schools or public charter schools. Administrators on the EAP shall not have previously been involved with the student’s suspension or expulsion, including having been involved when the conduct at issue initially occurred. The pupil and his or her guardian or representative may attend to present the student’s appeal. The Appeal Panel’s decision will be limited to the following questions:

a. Whether the governing board acted without or in excess of its jurisdiction, including
i. Whether the expulsion hearing was commenced within the timelines set forth in this policy;
ii. Whether the Expulsion Order is based upon the acts enumerated in this policy; and
iii. Whether the acts fall within the legal authority set forth in this policy.
b. Whether there was a fair hearing before the governing board.
c. Whether there was a prejudicial abuse of discretion in the hearing, including
   i. Whether school officials have not met the procedural requirements of the
      Expulsion Procedures;
   ii. Whether the decision has the appropriate additional findings for non-
       mandatory expellable offenses; and
   iii. Whether the additional findings are supported by the evidence.
d. Whether there is relevant and material evidence which, in the exercise of reasonable diligence, could not have been produced or which was improperly excluded at the hearing before the governing board.

Within five (5) school days of the appeal hearing, the Appeal Panel shall issue a written decision either upholding or reversing the expulsion. The Appeal Panel decision shall be final. During the pendency of the appeal hearing, the student shall be considered suspended.

**Written Notice to Expel**

The Principal or designee following a decision of the HighTech LA Governing Board to expel shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the HighTech LA Governing Board’s adopted findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian. This notice shall also include the following:

- Notice of the specific offense committed by the student
- Notice of the student’s or parent/guardian’s obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student’s status with the HighTech LA.

The Principal or designee shall send a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the student’s district of residence. This notice shall include the following:

- The student’s name
- The specific expellable offense committed by the student

**Disciplinary Records**

HighTech LA shall maintain records of all student suspensions and expulsions at the Charter School. Such records shall be made available to the District upon request. Charter School shall also submit an expulsion packet to the Charter Schools Division immediately or as soon as practically possible, containing:
• pupil’s last known address
• a copy of the cumulative record
• transcript of grades or report card
• health information
• documentation of the expulsion proceeding, including specific facts supporting the expulsion
• copy of parental notice expulsion
• copy of documentation of expulsion provided by parent stating reason for expulsion, term of expulsion, rehabilitation plan, reinstatement notice with eligibility date and instructions for providing proof of student’s compliance for reinstatement, appeal process, and options for enrollment; and

**Expelled Pupils/Alternative Education**

Pupils who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within the County or their school district of residence. Charter School will give referrals and assist in placing students in alternative education.
ELEMENT 11 – RETIREMENT PROGRAMS

Work Basis

HighTech LA will comply with all the regulations pursuant to California Labor Code 233.

Employee hours per week and salaries will be based on individual contracts. The HighTech LA Board and Principal will determine the employee calendars, work weeks, and work day schedules by April of each school year for the subsequent school year.

HighTech LA will contract with outside agencies for all other facility-related needs, including air filter technician, gardening, landscaping, and pest management.

Benefits

The HighTech LA Board and Principal will determine the School policy for release and bereavement days for employees by April of each school year for the subsequent school year.

All employees will earn paid legal holidays not less than currently offered by LAUSD for a work year of comparable length.

Mandatory benefits, such as workers compensation, unemployment insurance, Medicare, and social security (for non-STRS members) will be provided by HighTech LA. Life, health, dental, vision, and related benefits will also be provided to all full-time employees at the cost of the school. HighTech LA will purchase health, dental, and vision insurance for employees directly from LAUSD so that HighTech LA employees receive the same insurance benefits as they would as LAUSD employees. At any time, HighTech LA may choose to purchase insurance elsewhere that is comparable to insurance provided by LAUSD.

Retirement

I) STRS
All full-time certificated employees who are eligible will participate in the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS). Employees will contribute the required percentage, and HighTech LA will contribute the employer’s portion (currently 8.25%) required by STRS. All withholdings from employees and the Charter School will be forwarded to the STRS Fund as required. HighTech LA will submit all retirement data through LACOE and will comply with all policies and procedures for payroll reporting. Employees will accumulate service credit years in the same manner as all other members of STRS. HighTech LA accepts and understands obligations to comply with Sections 47611 (STRS) of the Education Code.

II) PERS
All HighTech LA classified employees who are eligible will participate in the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). Employees will contribute the required percentage as designated by PERS, and HighTech LA will contribute the employer’s portion as required by PERS. All
withholdings from employees and the charter school will be forwarded to the PERS Fund as required. Employees will accumulate service credit years in the same manner as all other members of PERS. Social Security payments will be contributed for all qualifying PERS members.

III) PARS and Others
HighTech LA will participate in the Public Agency Retirement System for non-PERS/STRS eligible part-time employees.

Social Security payments will be contributed for all qualifying non-STRS members. All full-time eligible employees will be covered by the Federal Social Security program. The Principal will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements for the retirement coverage have been made. The HighTech LA Board of Directors retains the option to consider any other public or private retirement plans and to coordinate such participation with existing programs, as it deems appropriate.
ELEMENT 12 – ATTENDANCE ALTERNATIVES

“The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district that choose not to attend charter schools.” Ed. Code § 47605 (b)(5)(L)”

HighTech LA is a school of choice that is open to anyone in the State of California. The parent or guardian of each student enrolled in the Charter School shall be informed that the students have no right to admission in a particular school of any local education agency (or program of any local education agency) as a consequence of enrollment in the charter school, except to the extent that such right is extended by the local education agency. The governing board of a school district shall not require any pupil enrolled in the school district to attend a charter school.

Pupils who choose not to attend HighTech LA may choose to attend other public schools in their district of residence or pursue an interdistrict-transfer in accordance with existing enrollment and transfer policies of the District.
ELEMENT 13 – RIGHTS OF DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

Leave and return rights for union-represented employees who accept employment with the Charter School will be administered in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements between the employee’s union and the District and also in accordance with any applicable judicial rulings.

Job applicants for positions at HighTech LA will be considered through an open process, and if hired, will enter into a contractual agreement with the school. Any District union employee who is offered employment and chooses to work at HighTech LA will not be covered in the District collective bargaining agreement, although HighTech LA may extend the same protections and benefits in individual employee contracts.

Unless the employees elect to be represented by an organization for bargaining purposes, all employees will be individually contracted, maintaining “total compensation” competitive with the District’s compensation. The individual contract will address, among other issues, salary, health and welfare benefits, work schedules and responsibilities, accountability measurements, and standards for performance evaluations.
ELEMENT 14 – MANDATORY DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The staff and governing board members of HighTech LA agree to resolve any claim, controversy or dispute arising out of or relating to the Charter agreement between the District and HighTech LA, except any controversy or claim that is in any way related to revocation of this Charter, (“Dispute”) pursuant to the terms of this Element 14.

Any Dispute between the District and HighTech LA shall be resolved in accordance with the procedures set forth below:

1) Any Dispute shall be made in writing (“Written Notification”). The Written Notification must identify the nature of the Dispute and any supporting facts. The Written Notification shall be tendered to the other party by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Notification shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 PM or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail. All Written Notifications shall be addressed as follows:

   To Charter School:  HighTech LA
                   17111 Victory Blvd.
                   Van Nuys, CA 91406
                   c/o School Director

   To Director of Charter Schools:  Director of Charter Schools Division
                                      Los Angeles Unified School District
                                      333 South Beaudry Avenue, 20th Floor
                                      Los Angeles, California 90017

2) A written response (“Written Response”) shall be tendered to the other party within twenty (20) business days from the date of receipt of the Written Notification. The parties agree to schedule a conference to discuss the Dispute identified in the Written Notice (“Issue Conference”). The Issue Conference shall take place within fifteen (15) business days from the date the Written Response is received by the other party. The Written Response may be tendered by personal delivery, by facsimile, or by certified mail. The Written Response shall be deemed received (a) if personally delivered, upon date of delivery to the address of the person to receive such notice if delivered by 5:00 p.m., or otherwise on the business day following personal delivery; (b) if by facsimile, upon electronic confirmation of receipt; or (c) if by mail, two (2) business days after deposit in the U.S. Mail.

3) If the Dispute cannot be resolved by mutual agreement at the Issue Conference, either party may then request that the Dispute be resolved by mediation. Each party shall bear its own attorneys’ fees, costs and expenses associated with the mediation. The mediator’s fees and the administrative fees of the mediation shall be shared equally among the parties. Mediation proceedings shall commence within 120 days from the date of either party’s request for mediation following the Issue Conference. The parties shall mutually agree upon the
selection of a mediator to resolve the Dispute. The mediator may be selected from the approved list of mediators prepared by the American Arbitration Association. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, mediation proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial mediation procedures of the American Arbitration Association.

4) If the mediation is not successful, then the parties agree to resolve the Dispute by binding arbitration conducted by a single arbitrator. Unless the parties mutually agree otherwise, arbitration proceedings shall be administered in accordance with the commercial arbitration rules of the American Arbitration Association. The arbitrator must be an active member of the State Bar of California or a retired judge of the state or federal judiciary of California. Each party shall bear its own attorney’s fees, costs and expenses associated with the arbitration. The arbitrator’s fees and the administrative fees of the arbitration shall be shared equally among the parties. However, any party who fails or refuses to submit to arbitration as set forth herein shall bear all attorney’s fees, costs and expenses incurred by such other party in compelling arbitration of any controversy or claim.

**Sponsoring District Services**

With the exception of services performed by LAUSD in providing fiscal oversight to HighTech LA, all charter-requested services from LAUSD will be on a fee-for-service basis. Mutually agreed upon fees must be in place prior to the charter-requested service. HighTech LA will outsource many of the services not retained from LAUSD.

Subject to availability, HighTech LA may request LAUSD services on a fee-for-service.

**Amendments**

Any requests for amendments to this charter will be made by the HighTech LA Governing Board to the LAUSD Board of Education, which will with grant or deny the request. Material revisions and amendments shall be made pursuant to thenstandards, criteria, and timelines in Education Code Section 47605
ELEMENT 15 – EXCLUSIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYER

HighTech LA is deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for the purposes of the Educational Employee Relations Act (EERA).
ELEMENT 16 – CHARTER SCHOOL CLOSURE

Revocation
The District may revoke the charter if HighTech LA commits a breach of any provision set forth in a policy related to Charter Schools adopted by the District Board of Education and/or any provisions set forth in the Charter School Act of 1992. The District may revoke the charter of HighTech LA if the District finds, through a showing of substantial evidence, that the Charter School did any of the following:

- HighTech LA committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter.
- HighTech LA failed to meet or pursue any of the pupil outcomes identified in the charter.
- HighTech LA failed to meet generally accepted accounting principles, or engaged in fiscal mismanagement.
- HighTech LA violated any provision of law.

Prior to revocation, and in accordance with Cal. Educ. Code section 47607(d) and State regulations, the LAUSD Board of Education will notify the HighTech LA in writing of the specific violation, and give HighTech LA a reasonable opportunity to cure the violation, unless the LAUSD Board of Education determines, in writing, that the violation constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of the pupils. Revocation proceedings are not subject to the dispute resolution clause set forth in this Charter.

Closure Action
The decision to close HighTech LA either by the HighTech LA governing Board or by the LAUSD Board of Education, will be documented in a Closure Action. The Closure Action shall be deemed to have been automatically made when any of the following occur: the charter is revoked or non-renewed by the LAUSD Board of Education; the Charter School board votes to close the Charter School; or the Charter lapses.

Closure Procedures
The procedures for charter school closure are guided by California Education Code sections 47604.32, 47605, 47605.6, and 47607 as well as California Code of Regulations, Title 5 (5 CCR), sections 11962 and 11962.1. A closed charter school must designate a responsible entity to conduct closure activities and identify how these activities will be funded. The procedures outlined below are based on “Charter School Closure Requirements and Recommendations (Revised 08/2009)” as posted on the California Department of Education website. References to “Charter School” applies to the charter school’s nonprofit corporation and/or governing board.
Documentation of Closure Action

The revocation or non-renewal of a charter school must be documented by an official action of the authorizing entity. Notice of a charter school’s closure for any reason must be provided by the authorizing entity to the California Department of Education (CDE). In addition, the charter school must send notice of its closure to:

1. Parents or guardians of students. Written notification to parents/guardians/caregivers of the enrolled students of HighTech LA will be issued by HighTech LA within 72 hours after the determination of a Closure Action and the effective date of closure. A copy of the written notifications to parents is also to be sent to LAUSD within the same time frames.
2. The authorizing entity
3. The county office of education. Written notification to the Los Angeles County Office of Education of the Closure Action shall be made by the HighTech LA by registered mail within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the CSD.
4. The special education local plan area in which the school participates. Written notification to the Special Education Local Planning Area (SELPA) in which the Charter School participates of the Closure Action shall be made by the HighTech LA by registered mail within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the CSD.
5. The retirement systems in which the school’s employees participate. The Charter School will within fourteen (14) calendar days of closure action contact the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS), Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), and the Los Angeles County office of Education and follow their procedures for dissolving contracts and reporting. Charter School shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the CSD.
6. The CDE. Written notification to the California Department of Education of the Closure Action shall be made by HighTech LA by registered mail within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action. Charter School shall provide a copy of this correspondence to the CSD.

Notice must be received by the CDE within ten calendar days of any official action taken by the chartering authority. Notification of all the parties above must include at least the following:

1. The effective date of the closure
2. The name(s) of and contact information for the person(s) handling inquiries regarding the closure
3. The students’ school districts of residence
4. How parents or guardians may obtain copies of student records, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements

In addition to the four required items above, notification to the CDE must also include:

1. A description of the circumstances of the closure
2. The location of student and personnel records

In addition to the four required items above, notification to parents, guardians, and students should also include:

1. Information on how to transfer the student to an appropriate school
2. A certified packet of student information that includes closure notice, a copy of their child’s cumulative record which will include grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, completed coursework, credits that meet graduation requirements, a transcript, and State testing results.
3. Information on student completion of college entrance requirements for all high school students affected by the closure

The Charter School shall announce the closure to any school districts that may be responsible for providing education services to the former students of the charter school within 72 hours of the decision to Closure Action. This notice will include a list of returning students and their home schools. Charter school closures should occur at the end of an academic year if it is feasible to maintain a legally compliant program until then. If a conversion charter school is reverting to non-charter status, notification of this change should be made to all parties listed in this section.

School and Student Records Retention and Transfer

HighTech LA shall observe the following in the transfer and maintenance of school and student records:

1. The Charter School will provide the District with original cumulative files and behavior records pursuant to District policy and applicable handbook(s) regarding cumulative records for secondary and elementary schools for all students both active and inactive at the Charter School. Transfer of the complete and organized original student records to the District will occur within seven calendar days of the effective date of closure.

2. The process for transferring student records to the receiving schools shall be in accordance with LAUSD procedures for students moving from one school to another.

3. The Charter School will prepare an electronic master list of all students to the Charter Schools Division. This list will include the student’s identification number, Statewide Student Identifier (SSID), birthdate, grade, full name, address, home school, enrollment date, exit code, exit date, parent/guardian name(s), and phone number(s). If the Charter School closure occurs before the end of the school year, the list should also indicate the name of the school that each student is transferring to, if known. This electronic master list will be delivered in the form of a CD.

4. The original cumulative files should be organized for delivery to the District in two categories: active students and inactive students. The CSD will coordinate with the Charter School for the delivery and/or pickup of the student records.
5. The Charter School must update all student records in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) prior to closing.

6. The Charter School will provide to the CSD a copy of student attendance records, teacher gradebooks, school payroll records, and Title I records (if applicable). Submission of personnel records must include any employee records the charter school has. These include, but are not limited to, records related to performance and grievance.

7. All records are to be boxed and labeled by classification of documents and the required duration of storage.

**Financial Close-Out**

After receiving notification of closure, the CDE will notify the charter school and the authorizing entity if it is aware of any liabilities the charter school owes the state. These may include overpayment of apportionments, unpaid revolving fund loans or grants, or other liabilities. The CDE may ask the county office of education to conduct an audit of the charter school if it has reason to believe that the school received state funding for which it was not eligible.

HighTech LA shall ensure completion of an independent final audit within six months after the closure of the school that includes:

1. An accounting of all financial assets. These may include cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value.
2. An accounting of all liabilities. These may include accounts payable or reduction in apportionments due to loans, unpaid staff compensation, audit findings, or other investigations.
3. An assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to the charter school.

This audit may serve as the school’s annual audit.

The financial closeout audit of the Charter School will be paid for by the HighTech LA. This audit will be conducted by a neutral, independent licensed CPA who will employ generally accepted accounting principles. Any liability or debt incurred by HighTech LA will be the responsibility of HighTech LA and not LAUSD. HighTech LA understands and acknowledges that HighTech LA will cover the outstanding debts or liabilities of HighTech LA. Any unused monies at the time of the audit will be returned to the appropriate funding source. HighTech LA understands and acknowledges that only unrestricted funds will be used to pay creditors. Any unused AB 602 funds will be returned to the District SELPA or the SELPA in which the HighTech LA participates, and other categorical funds will be returned to the source of funds.

HighTech LA shall ensure the completion and filing of any annual reports required. This includes:
1. Preliminary budgets
2. Interim financial reports
3. Second interim financial reports
4. Final unaudited reports

These reports must be submitted to the CDE and the authorizing entity in the form required. If the charter school chooses to submit this information before the forms and software are available for the fiscal year, alternative forms can be used if they are approved in advance by the CDE. These reports should be submitted as soon as possible after the closure action, but no later than the required deadline for reporting for the fiscal year.

For apportionment of categorical programs, the CDE will count the prior year average daily attendance (ADA) or enrollment data of the closed charter school with the data of the authorizing entity. This practice will occur in the first year after the closure and will continue until CDE data collection processes reflect ADA or enrollment adjustments for all affected LEAs due to the charter closure.

**Disposition of Liabilities and Assets**

The closeout audit must determine the disposition of all liabilities of the charter school. Charter school closure procedures must also ensure disposal of any net assets remaining after all liabilities of the charter school have been paid or otherwise addressed. Such disposal includes, but is not limited to:

1. The return of any donated materials and property according to any conditions set when the donations were accepted.
2. The return of any grant and restricted categorical funds to their source according to the terms of the grant or state and federal law.
3. The submission of final expenditure reports for any entitlement grants and the filing of Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as appropriate.

Net assets of the charter school may be transferred to the authorizing entity. If the Charter School is operated by a nonprofit corporation, and if the corporation does not have any other functions than operation of the Charter School, the corporation will be dissolved according to its bylaws.

   a. The corporation’s bylaws will address how assets are to be distributed at the closure of the corporation.
   b. A copy of the corporations bylaws containing the information on how assets are to be distributed at the closure of the corporation, are to be provided to LAUSD prior to approval of this Charter.

For six (6) calendar months from the Closure Action or until budget allows, whichever comes first, sufficient staff as deemed appropriate by the HighTech LA Board, will maintain employment to take
care of all necessary tasks and procedures required for a smooth closing of the school and student transfers.
The HighTech LA Board shall adopt a plan for wind-up of the school and, if necessary, the corporation, in accordance with the requirements of the Corporations Code.

The Charter School shall provide LAUSD within fourteen (14) calendar days of closure action prior written notice of any outstanding payments to staff and the method by which the school will make the payments.

Prior to final closure, the Charter School shall do all of the following on behalf of the school's employees, and anything else required by applicable law:
   a. File all final federal, state, and local employer payroll tax returns and issue final W-2s and Form 1099s by the statutory deadlines.
   b. File the Federal Notice of Discontinuance with the Department of Treasury (Treasury Form 63).
   c. Make final federal tax payments (employee taxes, etc.)
   d. File the final withholding tax return (Treasury Form 165).
   e. File the final return with the IRS (Form 990 and Schedule).

This Element 16 shall survive the revocation, expiration, termination, cancellation of this charter or any other act or event that would end HighTech LA’s right to operate as a Charter School or cause HighTech LA to cease operation. HighTech LA and District agree that, due to the nature of the property and activities that are the subject of this petition, the District and public shall suffer irreparable harm should Charter School breach any obligation under this Element 16. The District, therefore, shall have the right to seek equitable relief to enforce any right arising under this Element 16 or any provision of this Element 16 or to prevent or cure any breach of any obligation undertaken, without in any way prejudicing any other legal remedy available to the District. Such legal relief shall include, without limitation, the seeking of a temporary or permanent injunction, restraining order, or order for specific performance, and may be sought in any appropriate court.

**Facilities**

**District-Owned Facilities:** If Charter School is using LAUSD facilities as of the date of the submittal of this charter petition or takes occupancy of LAUSD facilities prior to the approval of this charter petition, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by LAUSD for the use of the LAUSD facilities as a condition of the approval of the charter petition. If at any time after the approval of this charter petition Charter School will occupy and use any LAUSD facilities, Charter School shall execute an agreement provided by LAUSD for the use of LAUSD facilities prior to occupancy and commencing use.

Charter School agrees that occupancy and use of LAUSD facilities shall be in compliance with applicable laws and LAUSD policies for the operation and maintenance of LAUSD facilities and furnishings and equipment. All LAUSD facilities (i.e., schools) will remain subject to those laws applicable to public schools, which LAUSD observes.
In the event of an emergency, all LAUSD facilities (i.e., schools) are available for use by the American Red Cross and public agencies as emergency locations which may disrupt or prevent Charter School from conducting its educational programs. If Charter School will share the use of LAUSD facilities with other LAUSD user groups, Charter School agrees it will participate in and observe all LAUSD safety policies (e.g., emergency chain of information, participate in safety drills).

The use agreements provided by LAUSD for LAUSD facilities shall contain terms and conditions addressing issues such as, but not limited to, the following:

- **Use.** Charter School will be restricted to using the LAUSD facilities for the operation of a public school providing educational instruction to public school students consistent with the terms of the charter petition and incidental related uses. LAUSD shall have the right to inspect LAUSD facilities upon reasonable notice to Charter School.

- **Furnishings and Equipment.** LAUSD shall retain ownership of any furnishings and equipment, including technology, (“F&E”) that it provides to Charter School for use. Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, shall provide maintenance and other services for the good and safe operation of the F&E.

- **Leasing; Licensing.** Use of the LAUSD facilities by any person or entity other than Charter School shall be administered by LAUSD. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement in the use agreement.

- **Minimum Payments or Charges to be Paid to LAUSD Arising From the Facilities.**
  
  (i) **Pro Rata Share.** LAUSD shall collect and Charter School shall pay a Pro Rata Share for facilities costs as provided in the Charter School Act of 1992 and its regulations. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding facilities costs in the use agreement; and

  (ii) **Taxes; Assessments.** Generally, Charter School shall pay any assessment or fee imposed upon or levied on the LAUSD facilities that it is occupying or Charter School’s legal or equitable interest created by the use agreement.

- **Maintenance & Operations Services.** In the event LAUSD agrees to allow Charter School to perform any of the operation and maintenance services, LAUSD shall have the right to inspect the LAUSD facilities and the costs incurred in such inspection shall be paid by Charter School.

  (i) **Co-Location.** If Charter School is co-locating or sharing the LAUSD facilities with another user, LAUSD shall provide the operations and maintenance services for the LAUSD facilities and Charter School shall pay the Pro Rata Share. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such in the use agreement.
(ii) **Sole Occupant.** If Charter School is a sole occupant of LAUSD facilities, LAUSD shall allow the Charter School, at its sole cost and expense, to provide some operations and maintenance services for the LAUSD facilities in accordance with applicable laws and LAUSD’s policies on operations and maintenance services for facilities and F&E. **NOTWITHSTANDING THE FOREGOING,** LAUSD shall provide all services for regulatory inspections, which as the owner of the real property is required to submit, and deferred maintenance and Charter School shall pay LAUSD for the cost and expense of providing those services. The parties may agree to an alternative arrangement regarding performance of the operations and maintenance services and payment for such services in the use agreement.

- **Real Property Insurance.** Prior to occupancy, Charter School shall satisfy those requirements to participate in LAUSD’s property insurance or, if Charter School is the sole occupant of LAUSD facilities, obtain and maintain separate property insurance for the LAUSD facilities. Charter School shall **not** have the option of obtaining and maintaining separate property insurance for the LAUSD facility IF Charter School is co-locating or sharing the LAUSD facility with another user.

**Facility status:** The charter petitioner must demonstrate control of a facility such as a commitment from the landlord, to ensure that the property is actually available to the charter developer, and that the facility is usable with or without conditions (such as a conditional code permit.) The charter school facility shall comply with all applicable building codes, standards and regulations adopted by the city and/or county agencies responsible for building and safety standards for the city in which the charter school is to be located, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Applicable codes and ADA requirements shall also apply to the construction, reconstruction, alteration of or addition to the proposed charter school facility. The Charter School shall implement any corrective actions, orders to comply, or notices issued by the authorized building and safety agency. The Charter School cannot exempt itself from applicable building and zoning codes, ordinances, and ADA requirements. Charter schools are required to adhere to the program accessibility requirements of Federal law (Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504).

**Occupancy of the Site:** The charter petitioner or developer shall provide the District with a final Certificate of Occupancy issued by the applicable permitting agency, allowing the petitioner to use and occupy the site. The Charter School may not open without providing a copy of the Certificate of Occupancy for the designated use of the facility. If the Charter School moves or expands to another facility during the term of this charter, the Charter School shall provide a Certificate of Occupancy to the District for each facility before the school is scheduled to open or operate in the facility or facilities. Notwithstanding any language to the contrary in this charter, the interpretation, application, and enforcement of this provision are not subject to the Dispute Resolution Process outlined in Element 14.

**Health & Safety:**
The school will comply with the Healthy Schools Act, California Education Code Section 17608, which details pest management requirements for schools. Developers may find additional information at: [www.laschools.org/employee/mo/ipm](http://www.laschools.org/employee/mo/ipm)
**Asbestos Management:**
The charter school will comply with the asbestos requirement as cited in the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), 40CFR part 763. AHERA requires that any building leased or acquired that is to be used as a school or administrative building shall maintain an asbestos management plan.
Additional Requirements

**Liability and Indemnity**
To the fullest extent of the law, HighTech LA will be deemed to be a “school district” for purposes of section 41302.5 and sections 8 and 8.5 Article XVI of the California Constitution.

The HighTech LA Board, the school administrative staff, and their respective representatives will be solely responsible for all aspects of the day-to-day operations of HighTech LA, including, but not limited to, making necessary provisions for accounting, budgeting, payroll, purchasing, liability, insurance, and the like. LAUSD will not be liable for the debts or obligations of HighTech LA.

HighTech LA will secure and maintain appropriate workers compensation, as well as liability coverage, bond coverage, and insurance coverage, providing for, among other things, insurance for operation and procedures, personal injury, and property, fire, and theft.

HighTech LA is an incorporated entity acting as a separate legal entity. The charter school has complete liability for all actions of the school and its employees in the performance of their duties. In the event that the charter school is dissolved, all remaining assets will be liquidated and all creditors will be paid first, except as otherwise required by HighTech LA’s bylaws or applicable law.

Additionally, HighTech LA will, at all times, maintain a funds balance (reserve) of its expenditures as required by the section 15443, Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. Currently, the required reserve is 5% of total operational expenditures.

**Business Plan**

**Facilities**

HighTech LA and LAUSD have extensively renovated old facilities and constructed new facilities on the Birmingham Community Charter High School campus to create a self-contained, state-of-the-art facility for the exclusive purpose of serving HighTech LA students, located at 17111 Victory Blvd. The founder, Roberta Weintraub, raised a significant amount of the money, $10.5 million or two-thirds of the total cost, to build the facility from foundations and other philanthropic individuals, some from matching Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) resources and some from a one time state grant for high tech schools. The facility was built and technology equipment purchased to specifically fill the needs of the HighTech LA curriculum. If for some reason the charter is revoked for any purpose, LAUSD would have the right to occupy the facility for a traditional public school or lease it to another charter school. If charter school ceases to operate LAUSD would have the right to occupy the facility.

**Direct Funding**

HighTech LA elects to receive funding directly. According to Education Code 47630.5 (b) charter schools assigned a number by the State Board of Education after June 1, 1999 are funded
based on the charter school Block Grant. They must apply directly for categorical funding outside the Block Grant and complete their own consolidated application. The state developed a Block Grant funding model for independent charter schools.

HighTech LA will elect to receive direct funding from the State Fund to be deposited into its own account at the County Treasury. All revenue generated by HighTech LA will be deposited in the Los Angeles County Treasury. All payments (including payroll) will be drawn on the County Treasury, which enables the County Program Budgeting and Accounting System (PBAS) to account for all revenue and expenditures. Two revolving accounts with a local financial institution will be maintained for day-to-day expenditures from the General Fund and from Food Services (if applicable). All expenditures over $500.00 will require two signatories.

The charter school will receive full and equitable funding pursuant to the Charter School Funding Model for all funds included in the funding model. This includes, but is not limited to, revenue limit apportionment, categorical block grant, economic impact aid, and state lottery funds. HighTech LA will receive revenue payments based on student attendance (ADA) records and eligibility requirements.

In accordance with applicable law, California’s Superintendent of Public Instruction is authorized to make payments and/or apportionment directly to the charter school, or to an account held in the name of HighTech LA. The charter school will notify the superintendent of schools of the county in the affected year. The County will transfer funds transferred directly from the State Fund to HighTech LA to the charter school account in the County Treasury in the most expeditious manner possible. Any charter school funds still flowing through the district will be transferred via journal voucher entry to the charter school account by the district in a timely manner of the district receiving the funds.

HighTech LA will apply directly for funds not included in the charter school categorical block grant, but for which charter schools can apply directly. This includes, but is not limited to, programs such as staff development buy-back, Title 1, deferred maintenance, and the After-School Learning and Safe Neighborhood Partnership Program. HighTech LA will report to federal and state taxing authorities as required by law. The charter school is responsible for payment of Social Security and all other applicable taxes.

HighTech LA reserves the right to evaluate and change its election to receive funds directly on an annual basis. The school will notify the county superintendent of schools and LAUSD by June 1st prior to the affected fiscal year if it opts for local instead of direct funding.

**Attendance Accounting**

HighTech LA will utilize an appropriate student information system for attendance tracking and reporting purposes, however, reserves the right to use the District’s SIS system if necessary. Attendance accounting procedures will satisfy requirements for LAUSD, LACOE, and CDE. Classroom teachers will record daily attendance on attendance cards. When a student is absent
from school, office personnel will verify absences. State school registers will be completed on a
monthly basis documenting the month’s attendance. Required reports will be completed
regarding daily attendance and submitted to the requesting agencies. This includes reporting
enrollment and attendance figures to LAUSD on a monthly basis.

Food Service Program

Eligible students will be provided meals for free or at a reduced rate in accordance with the
Federal Lunch Act. The projected number of students eligible for meals for free or at a reduced
rate, according to the Federal Lunch Act, is anticipated to be approximately 50% and will be
included in LAUSD’s reported student counts. HighTech LA may determine to provide meals
to all students for free if appropriate and cost effective, using the lunch services provided by
Birmingham High School and paying LAUSD the standard charge per meal for non-qualified
student meals.

Financial Plan

The HighTech LA financial plan contains a budget and forecast for the next five years of
operation, including monthly cash flows. Revenue entitlements were calculated based on
published information on the state direct funding model, and by identifying any additional
federal, state, and local funding for students in grades nine through twelve typically available to
a district-sponsored charter school based on characteristics of the school’s programs and student
make-up. HighTech LA will apply directly for funds not included in the charter school
categorical block grant, but for which charter schools can apply directly. HighTech LA will also
apply for competitive funds (grants, revolving loan), and in the event this funding is not secured
the school will establish a line of credit (as an entity with a history of securing funding) and/or
make appropriate budget cuts. Expenditures are reflective of HighTech LA historical costs for
personnel, materials, and certain operational expenses, published school financial information on
general operational costs, and research for outsourcing (vendors, insurance, and maintenance,
etc.). HighTech LA elects to receive direct funding from the State Fund to be deposited into its
own account at the County Treasury.

Business and Operations Management

HighTech LA is currently contracted with CharterWorks, to provide the Business and
Operations Management services. This will enable staff to focus their energies in areas of their
expertise, allowing sufficient time for reflection on instructional and curricular issues. The
school site administrator will coordinate with CharterWorks to manage budgeting, fiscal
planning, vendor services, personnel and payroll, accounts payable, attendance tracking systems,
completion and submission of compliance reports, and monitoring adherence to the charter
process and laws.

Fiscal Management

HighTech LA will be responsible for its own financial services (accounting, budgeting, and
payroll) and personnel services. HighTech LA will identify staff responsible for financial
administrative functions and the qualifications of staff assigned to these functions, and will also provide assurance that the accounting systems adopted would adhere to Generally Accepted Accounting Principals and describe the process of internal controls. HighTech LA shall conduct all of its financial operations in a timely manner and for all programs (regular, categorical, and special education) through procedures established by the State of California and the Federal Government, as appropriate. The accounting procedures must follow the generally acceptable accounting principles. For Federal programs, including Title I, the criteria for eligibility and fiscal guidelines will be as established by the Federal Government. HighTech LA has elected to receive funding directly, and therefore is responsible for meeting eligibility and fiscal requirements established by the Federal Government and for completing the Consolidated Application. HighTech LA shall provide the District with all financial and related reports, including enrollment attendance to enable the District to meet its requirements by law. Notwithstanding the petitioners' expectation to receive Title I funding under Federal guidelines, said funding may not be forthcoming until the school meets established criteria for a determined school year. HighTech LA un-audited financial statements will demonstrate the charter school’s fiscal sustainability for the length of the school’s operation. These statements will be submitted to the District’s Business Accounting Branch on the second week of July.

The school will depend on principal apportionment for the bulk of its operating resources, supplemented by state block grant and lottery income, federal Titles I, II and V allocations as well as federal drug/alcohol/tobacco and child nutrition funds. HighTech LA will also receive funds from the plethora of State funded programs such as special ed., etc. (See budget for detail). Finally, HighTech LA will receive local funds from the District in lieu of taxes for a portion of their charter school funding.

HighTech LA will comply with all requirements of AB 1994 and AB 1137.